



**SCOUTS**<sup>®</sup>  
South Africa

## BADGE COURSE MANUAL

# WATERMANSHIP SCOUTCRAFT BADGE



<i>Name</i>	
<i>Troop</i>	
<i>Course Date</i>	

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# Watermanship - Badge Requirements

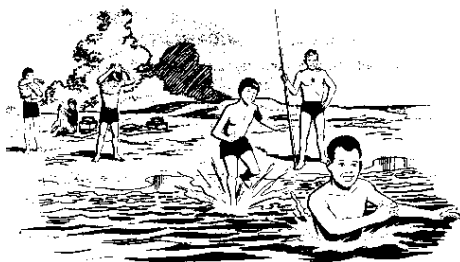
1. Have passed the Swimming Scoutcraft Badge or complete all the requirements for it. Be prepared to be examined on any requirement of the Scoutcraft Badge, with an age-appropriate level of skill.
2. Explain how to be safe around water.
3. Understand and apply the buddy system.
4. Demonstrate how to wear and care for a Personal Floatation Device.
5. Board a canoe or river kayak (not a polo boat) in the correct way and paddle a course of 200m defined by the examiner.
6. Act as crew for an older scout on a dinghy for at least 30 minutes.
7. Act as an oarsman on a pulling boat for at least 30 minutes
8. Demonstrate the following knots:
  - a. Reef knot
  - b. Figure of 8 Knot

## WATER SAFETY:

1. Never swim by yourself, no matter how good a swimmer you are.
2. It is always much safer to swim where a lifeguard is on duty.
3. If you are in charge of small children, never take your eyes off of them around water. They can fall in and drown quickly.
4. If you are just learning to swim, stay in shallow water.
5. People who are poor swimmers, or can't swim, should not float on tubes, rafts or even try to water ski.
6. Even if you are a good swimmer, you may get a cramp or get tired. Never attempt a long swim, unless you have a boat following you.
7. If you get a cramp in your arm, leg or foot while you are swimming; **No big deal:**
  - Stop and stretch it. Hold your breath, reach down and work it out. You will float.
  - It is a technique called drown-proofing.
  - If you feel a cramp coming on, change the way you are swimming.
8. It is recommended that you NEVER swim at night in the ocean, a lake, river, pond or unlighted swimming pool. This is especially true in the ocean, where a lot of fish feed at night.
9. Never call for help around water unless you need it. If you need it, yell, wave your arms, etc.

## THE SEVEN SAFETY SWIMMING STEPS:

1. **Qualified Supervision.** A responsible adult must be in charge at all times when Scout swimming is conducted. He must be qualified with water-safety training or have trained assistants under his direction.



2. **Safe Swimming Area.** The bottom of the swimming area is examined to make sure it is safe, with no deep holes, stumps, or rocks. It is then marked off in three sections: not more than 1m deep for non-swimmers, up to just-over-head depth for beginners, and deep water for swimmers (not over 3.6m).

3. **Lifeguards.** Two older Scouts who are good swimmers are guards. They stand at the edge of the water, equipped with a lifeline, ready to assist any swimmer in trouble. In addition, if a boat is available, two older Scouts, preferably good swimmers, should man it. One should be at the oars. The other should be equipped with a reaching pole or an extra oar, and he should be in the stern, but turned around so that both he and the oarsman are facing the swimmers. The boat is stationed just outside the swimming area, with stern toward the swimmers, ready to backwater toward anyone who needs help.

4. **Lookout.** A lookout stands where he can watch all swimmers. It is best if he is high above so that his view is never blocked.



5. **Ability.** Before group swimming starts, each Scout's swimming ability is tested. The Scouts are then divided into three groups: non swimmers who are just learning; beginners who have jumped feet first into deep water and swum 7.5m, then reversed direction and swum another 7.5m to their starting point; and swimmers who have passed this test: Each group stays in its own area during the swim.

6. **Buddy System.** Each Scout is paired with another of about the same swimming ability. The two check in together on the buddy board or an equivalent, keeping within 3m of each other at all times, and checks out together. Whenever a buddy signal is sounded, buddies grasp each other by the hand and hold their arms high so that the lookout can check up on the number of buddy pairs.



7. **Good Discipline.** The adult supervisor sees to it that there is intelligent discipline -- with strict attention to the rules, but with a chance for everyone to have a good time and to become better swimmers.

### **PLUS**

**Physical Fitness.** It is important that the swim supervisor be aware of the physical condition of all participants in or out of the water and take special precautions when needed. A current individual health history that includes information on heart, lung, breathing, and ear/hearing conditions is normally sufficient.

## **THE BUDDY SYSTEM:**

The Buddy System entails dividing swimmers or paddles into small groups of 2 or 3. This is not only an effective way to help manage large groups where it is difficult to monitor everyone, but it also reinforces the character development trait of responsibility. Each Buddy is responsible to keep track of the other members of the group. If a Buddy is having a problem, someone else in the group can alert the lookouts or activity leader.

The members of buddy group can be of similar ability or one strong and one weaker for a training scenario. Buddies must remain in the same area and should be instructed not to perform rescues before alerting the lookouts or activity leader that their buddy is in trouble. If a buddy needs to leave the water for any reason (eg. bathroom), all members of buddy group must also leave until all are ready to return. If a buddy board is in use, they must also report to the lifeguard or activity leader to ensure that they are logged on the Buddy Board.

### **Purpose of the Buddy System**

- It is an effective way to help manage the safety of large groups.
- If a person is alone, no one may notice if they go missing or have trouble. With two or more together, someone will notice and be able to help.
- It reinforces the character development trait, provides responsibility, and promotes friendships.

### **Setting up the Buddy System**

- Have at least one buddy or partner with you when on water. A buddy team may consist of three Scouts if there is an odd number in a group.
- Buddies should know each other and be comfortable together.
- Your buddy should be of similar age, swimming ability and maturity.
- Always know where your buddy is and stay close to each other.
- If your buddy leaves the water, you must leave as well until you are both ready to return.
- Each buddy is responsible for the other.
- If your buddy is having a problem, you must alert the leaders in charge.

### **Buddy Checks**

Buddy Checks should be conducted at regular intervals during the swim period. The length of these intervals to be determined by the leader or lifeguard. Conducting Buddy Checks at least every 10 minutes ensures that Buddies are near each other, being responsible, and that a check can be performed quickly and efficiently. The check is initiated by the leader or lifeguard using a predetermined signal (whistle blows). At the sound of the signal, all pairs should raise each other's hands to show that buddies have not split apart. The leader or lifeguard does a Buddy Count. Staff must begin an immediate search if a buddy or buddy pair is unaccounted for. When all Buddies are accounted for, the swimmers may re-enter the water and resume activities.

### **Buddy Boards**

Swimmers leaving and returning to the swim area should be accounted for with a Buddy Board. Swimmers are accounted for before they enter the water and after their swimming period is over. With the Buddy Board system, every swimmer gets a tag with his or her name on it. Swimmers hang their tag on a peg board as they enter the water and remove it when they leave the water; both under the watchful eye of a Lifeguard or staff member. At the end of the swim period, the group leader can easily check to see that all swimmers have left the water.

## PERSONAL FLOATATION DEVICES (PFDs):

PFDs are often referred to as lifejackets, but this is incorrect. A PFD will assist a person to remain on the surface of the water but requires the wearer to be conscious and able to keep their head above the water. A life jacket will turn an unconscious person face up and keep their head above water.

**Example of a lifejacket**



**Example of a PFD**



### Care and Maintaining PFDs

Only personal floatation devices that are in good, working condition are safe to use. PFDs that are damaged in any way should be discarded immediately as even the slightest damage can greatly reduce their effectiveness.

- **Check for damage.** Rips, tears, cracks, holes, or any other significant wear.
- **Check for waterlogging.** A PFD that absorbs water can actually weigh the person down more than help keep them afloat.
- **Check for air leaks.** If, after gently squeezing an inflatable PFD, air can be heard to be escaping the buoyant material, it is likely that there is damage to the exterior casing.
- **Check for mildew.** A PFD that smells or appears mouldy is not shedding water properly. It is likely that water has saturated into the PFD.
- **Check the buoyant material.** If the buoyant material inside the PFD appears to have shrunk, it may not be as effective in keeping someone afloat.
- **Never alter a PFD in any way.** If a PFD needs to be altered to fit an individual then another one should be found.
- **Allow PFDs to dry before placing in storage.** Storing a wet PFD can cause the buoyant materials to break down. Allow PFDs to dry naturally and not in direct heat.
- **Do not use PFDs for anything other than their intended use.** Using any type of PFD as a boat bumper, kneeling pad, or seat cover can decrease the device's buoyancy.
- **Store your PFDs properly.** Store them in cool, dry places and keep them out of direct sunlight when not in use.

### Usage Requirements

The PFD must be correctly sized and fitted to the wearer. A PFD that is too small may not provide sufficient buoyancy and a PFD that is too large may float over the head of the swimmer. The wearer should be able to float comfortably with their head well out of the water. If the PFD rides up on the wearer this could indicate that the PFD is too large.

Whether using a PFD that fastens via zips, clips or clamps, it is important that it closes completely and stays closed while wearing it. To make sure a PFD fits and fastens properly, lift your arms above your head and have someone grab the top of the arm openings and lift upward, if the PFD stays in place, it will most likely not come loose in the water.

## **KNOTTING:**

### **Reef Knot**

A flat, secure knot, best known for tying parcels and triangle bandages. Used to tie ropes of the same thickness together.



### **Figure of Eight**

A single strand Stopper Knot, usually when only a temporary stopper is required



### **Bowline**

One of the simplest and most useful way of putting a fixed loop into the end of a rope.

**Make sure you can do the bowline without having to use your waist!**



### **Round turn & two half hitches**

This combination is used to secure a heavy load to a spar, ring or shackle, such as a buoy or shackle of a mooring buoy. It will never jam and can be cast off quickly. The end should be stopped to the standing part.

