

Everything you need to know about merit badge sashes

<http://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2014/03/21/everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-about-merit-badge-sashes/>

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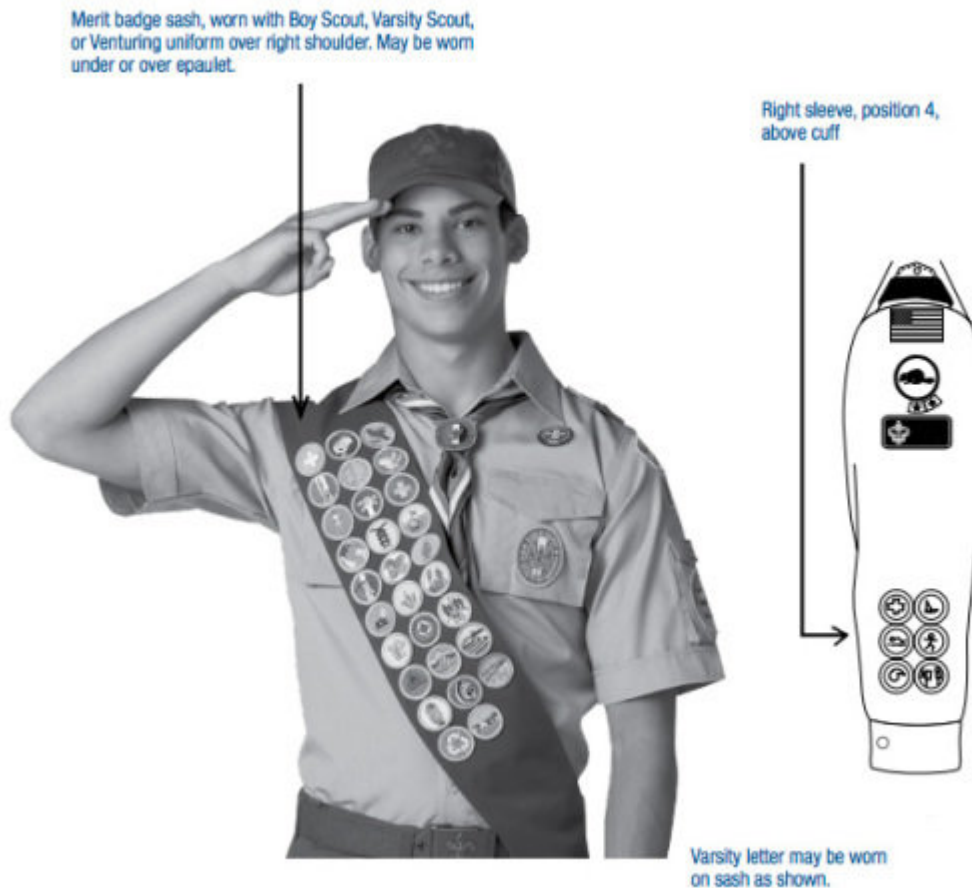
A merit badge sash is like a trophy case you can wear.

These answers come from the expert, Christopher Hunt, head of the BSA's advancement team.

Where to put merit badges

You have two options for where to sew merit badges.

- **Right sleeve:** The first, *less common option*, is to sew up to six merit badges onto the right sleeve of a long-sleeved uniform shirt. Long-sleeved uniforms aren't seen very often these days, but if a Scout owns one, he may put up to six patches, in rows of two, above his right cuff (see below). Long-sleeved uniforms were much more common in past generations.
- **Merit badge sash: Most Scouts will choose this option.** The *Guide to Awards and Insignia* says you're limited to a "maximum of three per row as shown, no limit." You couldn't fit more than three in a row anyway.
 - As for the badges' order on the sash, there's nothing specified. Most Scouts will simply add them as they earn them. Others like to separate the Eagle-required ones (those with a silver border) in some way.
 - Per the picture below, the top row of merit badges should be placed approximately 4" to 6" from the very top of the sash, so the badges are visible with the shirt collar over the sash.



No minimum number

Chris Hunt says, “I’m taking ‘no limit’ to mean just that. The Scout isn’t limited to wearing a minimum number of badges on his sash.”

So right when a Boy Scout earns that first merit badge or three, I say go ahead and get him a sash so he can show off his new “trophies.”

Only one merit badge sash

While you may come across a Scout wearing two merit badge sashes in a criss-cross pattern, that’s *not* permitted. That rule is straight from the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*: “Boy Scouts may wear only one merit badge sash at a time.”

Essentially, there’s no official maximum number of merit badges a Boy Scout may wear, “unless he’s got more merit badges than will fit three across on the front and back of the sash,” Hunt says.

Where to wear the sash (and where not to)

There's only one right place for a merit badge sash: over the right shoulder. It can be worn over or under the epaulet (shoulder loop).

And keep in mind "a merit badge sash is never worn on the belt," according to the *Guide*.

Who may wear the sash

"Merit badge sashes are worn only by Boy Scouts and Venturers who are earning Boy Scout advancement."

Varsity Scouts may wear the merit badge sash, too, of course.

Merit badge sash and Order of the Arrow (OA) sash

This one's pretty clear: "The merit badge sash and the Order of the Arrow sash may not be worn at the same time."

For more on when to wear your Order of the Arrow sash, **read:**

<http://blog.scoutingmagazine.org/2014/01/27/ask-the-expert-when-should-scouts-and-scouters-wear-their-oa-sash/>

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