

# Special Interest Badges

Archery

Orienteering

Wilderness Experience

World Scouting

Languages

Tidy Towns

Mountain Biking

Patrol Camp Leadership

Sailing Adventure

Personal Fitness

Painting & Art

Community Radio

World Cultures

Navigation

Music

Dancing

Good Turn

Gardening

Photography

Nature Study

Recycling

Swimming

Cooking

Farming

Crafts

Soccer

Any subject or interest you like can become a Special Interest Badge



You design your own badge for what you are interested in

# Any subject or interest can be used to develop a Special Interest Badge

## There are five Special Interest Badge areas

### Skills

This can be any new personal skill e.g. technical, mechanical, music, drama, arts & crafts

### Adventure

This should be an adventure journey that includes something completely new i.e. a new location, new method of travel, etc

### Physical

This can include any physical pursuit, activity or sport

### Community

Being involved in your community. This could be a service type project and you should create a plan that outlines what you will do and who will benefit.

### Environment

This can be any project that improves the environment in any way.



Adventure



Physical



Community



Skills



Environment



Special Interest Badges 'Bar'

- Whatever subject or interest you pick must be linked to one of the Special Interest Badge areas.
- A Scout may achieve recognition for the same Special Interest Badge Area up to three times in any one Section. You are awarded the badge the first time you do a Special Interest Badge and a 'bar' for each of the others in this Special Interest Badge area.
- You have to chance to do 15 badges in each Section
- The Scout keeps a badge until it is replaced by an equivalent in the next Section.
- Special Interest badges have different colour combinations for each Section.



# Choosing a subject or interest

Below are some suggested subjects that have been aligned with the Special Interest Badge areas. There are many more ideas that can be included. No matter what subject or interest you choose it will fall into one of the areas, sometimes it will fall into two or even three areas.

Community Involvement	Personal Skill	Physical Recreation	Adventure Journey	Environment
Good Turn / Service	Photography	Archery	Cycling Expedition	Ethical living
World Cultures & Ways of Living	Entertaining	Orienteering	Wilderness Experience	Eco-energy
World Scouting	Film/video production	Athletics	Horseback Expedition	Organic Gardening
Guide / Interpreter	Home repairs	Ball Games	Sailing Adventure	Weather Watch
Heritage	Information technology	Climbing Wall	Canoe Adventure	Animal welfare
Health Awareness	Music & Dance	Gymnastics	Bivvy Adventure	Conservation
Representation	Painting / Art	Water Safety	Camp Leadership	Nature Study
Tidy Towns	Crafts / Sculptor	Personal Fitness	Back Packing	Carbon footprint
Disability Awareness	Cooking	Swimming	Journey in a Strange Land	Environmental Audit
Active Citizenship	Motors	Martial Arts	Mountain Journey	Recycling
Faith & Beliefs	Navigator	Triathlon	Extended Hiking Expedition	Food Production
Community Radio	Observer / Tracker	Caving	Exploring	Naturalist
Current Affairs	Leadership / Mentoring	Snorkeling / SCUBA	Camping	Sustainable Building
Campaigning	Public Speaking	Mountain Biking	Nature Study Expedition	River Care
Languages	Archeology	Body Surfing	Photography Safari	Local Beautification
Surveys	Creative Writing	Canoeing	Treasure Quest	Tidy Towns
Interculturalism	Farming	Rock Climbing	Overseas Project	Nature Reserve

# Creating your Special Interest Badge



**Step 1** - Pick your subject or interest

**Step 2** - Decide what Special Interest Area your subject or interest falls into.

**Step 3** - Design your challenge in consultation with your Scouter or Mentor

**Step 4** - Complete the challenge in agreed time

**Step 5** - Wear the badge with pride

## The Challenge

When designing your badge it should :-

- Challenge you to learn new skills or develop existing ones
- Help to increase your knowledge of the particular area
- Contain a practical element which will benefit others.

A template is provided to allow you to set out your plan, which Personal Challenges you can undertake during the Special Interest Badge and to help you look back at what you have achieved.

[Link to Template](#)

You can use another method to document your Special Interest Badge e.g. poster, diary, email, social networking website etc.

Check out how some Scouts have designed their Special Interest Badge

Beaver Scouts

Cub Scouts

Scouts

Venture Scouts

Rover Scouts

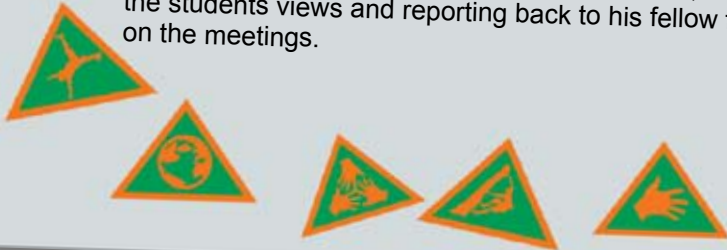


## Sample Projects: Active citizenship

*Liam is a 13 year old Scout. He has just started secondary school. The school is currently undergoing renovations which result in young people not being able to hear in class with construction work and have to walk to and from school through the dirty building site. Liam wants to join the school council as a first year representative to highlight these issues.*

The project, agreed between Liam and the Scouter is:

- Liam will find out about the school renovation work - the plans, when it will finish etc. and what benefits the renovation will have for young people.
- Liam will canvass for votes among his fellow first years and learn about public speaking skills to do this effectively.
- Liam will explore negotiating skills and conflict resolution skills with his uncle who works for the Labour Court so he will have basic skills which will be of use in School Council meetings
- Liam will illustrate his active citizenship by taking a full part in the School Council as a first year representative, representing the students views and reporting back to his fellow first years on the meetings.



## Sample Projects: Archery

*Robert is a 13 year old Scout. The theme for this year's annual camp is Lord of the Rings. Robert would like to assume the character of Legolas who is a skilled archer and run a small base on basic archery skills.*

The project, agreed between Robert and the Scouter is:

- Robert will watch the three Lord of the Rings films again to see the design of Legolas's bow and arrows and his archery technique.
- Robert will make a number of bows and arrows based on the designed found in the films.
- Robert will run the base with the help of the local archery club.





## Sample Projects: Information Technology

*Mick just loves computers. He has an extensive library of music, which he uploads to a MP3 player. He is also keen on comedy and explores and plays videos from 'You Tube' regularly. He talked to his Scouter about what would challenge him and he agreed with his Scouter that he is more a 'user' than a 'creator'. So, he has devised a number of challenges that will enable him to explore his creative side and share his creations with others on the web.*

The project, agreed between the Scouter and Mick, with the Patrol, is:

- Find out how to make a movie, including; scripting, storyboard, different angles, timing etc.
- Make separate recordings of your video pieces and create a movie by overlaying sound on top using window movie maker or similar software.
- Make a series of Scout skills videos with members of your Patrol and upload to 'You Tube'.
- Design and create a website for your Patrol.



## Sample Projects: Conservation

*Mary is a 13 year old Scout. Recently while walking to the Scout Den she has seen a lot of dead animals on the road. She is concerned that there will be no wildlife will be left in her town if the unfortunate accidents continue to occur.*

The project, agreed between Mary and the Patrol Leader's Council is:

- Spend a week of the summer holidays surveying the road each day, recording the animals killed and the other animals she sees in the dense undergrowth either side of the road.
- Write to and meet the local council to express her concern about the rising numbers of dead animals on the road and ask for a reduced speed limit to be introduced in the interests of the wildlife and pedestrians.
- Work her Patrol and Scout Troop to establish a small nature reserve around the Scout Den.





## Sample Projects: Faith & Beliefs

*Mary is a 13 year old Scout. Her older sister recently returned from Southeast Asia. Mary has heard her sister talking about converting to Buddhism. Mary would like to find out about more about the Buddhist family of beliefs and practices.*

The project, agreed between Mary and the Scouter is:

- Find out about the life of the founder of Buddhism, Gautama Buddha
- Do a web search of the main concepts of Buddhism e.g. karma, samsara, middle way.
- Mary and her sister will talk to her Troop about Buddhism as part of a 'Religions of the World' night where the other Scouts also let the Troop know of the religious tradition (or none) which they were brought up with.



## Sample Projects: Good Turn / Service

*Anne is a 12 year old Scout. Anne's dad helps out every week delivering meals to homeless people around the city. Anne has always wanted to help out her dad as it seemed like an adventurous night while also helping less fortunate people.*

The project, agreed between Anne and the Scouter is:

- Anne will find out about why people need the service. Anne will also find out why certain food and not others are given out (food nutrition) with a view to becoming a long-term volunteer.
- Anne will learn new skills such as cooking highly nutritional meals, recognising people's needs through body language etc.
- Anne's action will be to participate in the meals service for 3 weeks with a view to then becoming a long-term volunteer.





## Sample Projects: Nature Study

*Grace is a 13 year old Scout. Her uncle works for the National Biodiversity Data Centre. Living on a farm, she is interested in the general area when she goes to university and finding ways that can allow farmers to make a living while protecting Ireland's unique biodiversity.*

The project, agreed between Grace and the Scouter is:

- Find out what terms like biodiversity, invasive species, ecosystem and so on mean and example of biodiversity, invasive species and ecosystems in Ireland.
- Learn about the work of the National Biodiversity Data Centre and how the Scout Section and the entire Group could get involved.
- Record the plant and animal life of the family farm to measure the level of biodiversity and recommend what needs to be done to maintain or increase the biodiversity.

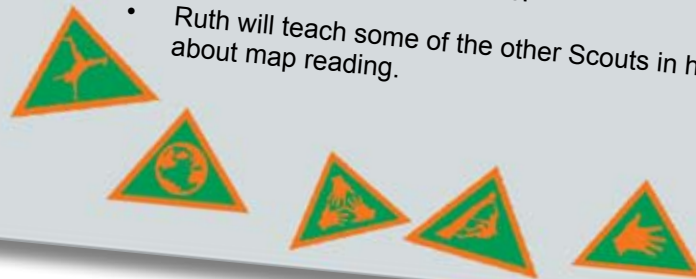


## Sample Projects: Orienteering

*Ruth's friend is into orienteering and is a member of a school based club. Ruth has attended a few events and developed an interest in the sport. She has some basic knowledge and would like to build on her knowledge, perhaps using orienteering as a way of improving her navigation skills on the mountains.*

Ruth had a chat with her Scouter and they decided on the following project.

- Ruth will refine her navigation ability by improving her map reading skills and her compass work skills.
- Ruth will enter at least 2 competitive events, relevant to her experience and seek to improve her discovery of markers and overall times between each event.
- Ruth will act as hike leader on a Scout mountain adventure, choosing the route, making the route card and navigating the adventure.
- Ruth will teach some of the other Scouts in her Troop about map reading.







## Sample Projects: Photography

*Mary would love to do photography. She takes pictures on her mobile and sometimes uses her parent's camera. At Christmas she got a camera for her birthday and now she wants to develop an interest/hobby in photography.*

The project, agreed Mary and the Scouter is:

- Find out about her camera and know how to use all the functions other than the programme mode.
- Attend a photography course at school.
- Take a wide variety of photographs over a two month period and display her personal favourites on the notice board.
- Act as 'Official' photographer for the Section or Group newsletter and capture the action and spirit of Scouting activities in her Section.
- Submit one of your photographs to National Office and try to have it published on the Association's website or in a Scouting publication.



## Sample Projects: Navigator

*Anne is a Scout who has always wanted to go sailing. She asks her Scouter what she has to do to be a navigator as she wants to know how to find her way at sea.*

The project, agreed between Anne and the Scouter is:

- Go to your nearest Lifeboat centre and ask about using charts at sea and the various parts of the charts.
- See what things are in common with ordinary maps and what the differences are.
- Go on a boat in the inland waterways to get accustomed to reading water depths and features on the inland charts.





## Sample Projects: Wilderness Experience

*Sandra has heard that a Bear Grylls is the Chief Scout of The Scout Association (UK). She has seen some of his television programmes and has been inspired by his ability to overcome all kinds of obstacles in the wilderness. When she gets older Sandra would like be a wilderness adventurer.*

The project, agreed between Sandra and the Scouter is:

- One of Bear Grylls television programmes sees him tackling the wilderness of western Ireland. Two of the skills he uses are rock climbing and bog snorkeling. Sandra has not tried these activities before so she will attempt to gain some experience.
- Sandra will learn survival techniques such as lighting fires, bivvying and backwoods cooking and put these into practice on a survival camp.
- Sandra will take the lead in organising a camp in summer based on the theme of Bear Grylls's wilderness expeditions.



## Sample Projects: World Cultures & Ways of Living

*Mark is a Scout. His brother works for a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Asia. Every few months Mark gets photos from his brother of what looks like a different world. Only some of the people can afford to wear designer clothes and live in comfortable houses like in Ireland. Mark is curious about these differences and wants to find out more.*

The project, agreed between Mark and the Scouter is:

- Mark's brother has worked primarily in South-East Asia. Pick 2 of the cultures present there and find out which aspects of the culture are as a result of injustice and inequality and which parts of the culture are traditional, unique and worthy of celebration.
- What would it be like to live in conditions similar those prevalent in South-East Asia? Try building and living in shelters like those in South-East Asia and keeping food without a fridge while on your next Scout camp. (Life Development Education resource can help you with this).
- It is easy to take action to highlight the injustices and inequalities in South-East Asia. There are many options to take action at home. Mark will try one of these.



Which Special Interest Area are you going to work on?

What is your project? Describe what you want to do and the steps to get there

What do you hope to achieve doing this badge? How will you know you are finished?

Which Personal Challenges will this help you with?

At the end: How did your plan go? What did you learn from it?

## Special Interest Badge Design template



Planned Start Date:

Planned Finish Date:

Signed (youth member):

Signed (Mentor):