

Eagle Palms Award Changes

Eagle Palms are bronze, gold and silver awards presented to young men who earn five, 10, 15 or more merit badges beyond the 21 required to become an Eagle Scout.

This week, the BSA has announced significant changes to the way Scouts earn Eagle Palms. The modifications take effect Aug. 1, 2017.

The changes bring Eagle Palm requirements in line with the needs of older Scouts. The National Boy Scouting Subcommittee has eliminated unnecessary obstacles, such as the Eagle Palm board of review, and expanded the definition of active participation.

But the biggest change affects young men who haven't yet earned Eagle. Beginning Aug. 1, all earned Palms may be awarded instantly to new Eagle Scouts at their Eagle court of honor. This abolishes the wait of months or years for these young men to receive all Palms available to them.

Here's a look at what's changing. Below that, an in-depth guide to the new Eagle Palm requirements.

What's changing?

1. **A new Eagle Scout can instantly receive, alongside his Eagle medal, all Eagle Palms he has earned for merit badges completed before he became an Eagle Scout.** These Palms recognize additional merit badges earned before completing the Eagle board of review. Previously, an Eagle Scout needed to wait three months between each Palm – even if he earned the extra merit badges before becoming an Eagle. This meant that, under the old rules, a young man who became an Eagle Scout at 17 years and 10 months, was mathematically unable to earn any

Eagle Palms.

- **Example:** Glenn, a 16-year-old Life Scout, has 36 merit badges at the time of his Eagle Scout board of review – 15 more than required. Previously, he would've needed to wait three months after his Eagle board of review to receive his Bronze Palm, another three months for his Gold Palm and another three for his Silver Palm. Under the new rules, he can get that Silver Palm (representing 15 additional merit badges) along with his Eagle medal at his Eagle Scout court of honor. No wait required.
- **Note:** After becoming an Eagle Scout and receiving the Palms already earned, additional Palms may be earned by completing the revised requirements, including the three months tenure between awarding each Palm.

2. **The three-month tenure requirement has been expanded** to allow active participation in any BSA program – not just the troop and patrol.

- This recognizes that as some Scouts get older, their Scouting participation shifts to the Order of the Arrow, summer camp staff or elsewhere.

3. **The leadership requirement has been broadened** to include “accepting responsibility” as well as “demonstrating leadership.”

4. **The Eagle Palm board of review has been eliminated.**

- Eagle Palms are not ranks, so the Eagle Palm board of review was seen as an unnecessary step. A unit leader conference is deemed to be sufficient and may be conducted at any time during the tenure requirement.

Eagle Palms: the official

requirements

These are effective Aug. 1, 2017.

After successfully completing your Eagle Scout board of review and being validated as an Eagle Scout by the National Service Center, you will be entitled to receive an Eagle Palm for each additional 5 merit badges you have completed before your Eagle Scout board of review. For these Palms only, it will not be necessary for you to complete any of the requirements stated below.

After becoming an Eagle Scout, you may earn additional Palms by completing the following requirements.

1. Be active in the Boy Scouts of America for at least three months after becoming an Eagle Scout or after the last Palm was earned. **
2. Since earning the Eagle Scout rank or your last Eagle Palm, demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Tell how you have done your duty to God and how you have lived the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your everyday life.
3. Continue to set a satisfactory example of accepting responsibility or demonstrating leadership ability.
4. Earn five additional merit badges beyond those required for Eagle or last Palm. ***
5. While an Eagle Scout, participate in a Scoutmaster conference. *

Notes

*For Varsity Scouts working on Boy Scout requirements, replace "Scoutmaster" with "Varsity Scout Coach." For Venturers working on Boy Scout requirements, replace "Scoutmaster" with "crew Advisor." For Sea Scouts working on Boy Scout requirements, replace "Scoutmaster" with "Skipper."

**Eagle Palms must be earned in sequence, and the three-month

tenure requirement must be observed for each Palm.

***Merit badges earned any time since becoming a Boy Scout may be used to meet this requirement.

Eagle Palms: the official requirements, annotated

Here are those same requirements annotated.

- The new requirements are in green. Remember, these take effect Aug. 1, 2017.
- The old requirements are in red.
- Notes in orange explain why each change was made. The text comes from the National Boy Scouting Subcommittee.

After successfully completing your Eagle Scout board of review and being validated as an Eagle Scout by the National Service Center, you will be entitled to receive an Eagle Palm for each additional 5 merit badges you have completed before your Eagle Scout board of review. For these Palms only, it will not be necessary for you to complete any of the requirements stated below.

By implementing this proposal, a Scout can be recognized with an Eagle Palm(s) for the extra work he has put into earning merit badges and acquiring additional education prior to earning the rank of Eagle Scout regardless of his age at the time he earns the rank of Eagle Scout. If the Eagle Scout has sufficient time remaining before his 18th birthday, he can then continue to earn additional Eagle Palms by completing the following proposed requirements.

After becoming an Eagle Scout, you may earn additional Palms by completing the following requirements.

1. Be active in the Boy Scouts of America for at least three months after becoming an Eagle Scout or after the last Palm

was earned.

1. Be active in your troop and patrol for at least three months after becoming an Eagle Scout or after award of last Palm

Requirement 1 has been changed to include being active in the "Boy Scouts of America" instead of just "troop and patrol." This allows a Scout to receive active participation time credit for programs such as the OA, Venturing, serving on camp staff, NYLT and NAYLE staff etc. In addition, participation in positive non-Scouting activities can be given consideration, as explained in topic 4.2.3.1 of the Guide to Advancement. This significantly broadens the opportunity for Scouts to stay involved in Scouting or other character-building activities and receive consideration toward earning additional Palms after earning the rank of Eagle Scout.

2. Since earning the Eagle Scout rank or your last Eagle Palm, demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Tell how you have done your duty to God and how you have lived the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your everyday life.

Requirement 2 is unchanged.

3. Continue to set a satisfactory example of accepting responsibility or demonstrating leadership ability.

3. Make a satisfactory effort to develop and demonstrate leadership ability.

Requirement 3 has been updated to include accepting responsibility as well as demonstrating leadership ability. This is not as restrictive as the current requirement, which focuses only on leadership. It is reasonable to make this change because Scouts can achieve Eagle Scout rank by serving in a position of responsibility rather than just serving in a leadership position. Accepting responsibility or demonstrating leadership should be sufficient. If a young man demonstrates

leadership, we can assume that at some point he developed it.

4. Earn five additional merit badges beyond those required for Eagle or last Palm.

Requirement 4 is unchanged.

5. While an Eagle Scout, participate in a Scoutmaster conference.

Requirement 5 is unchanged, expect for the addition of this footnote: For Varsity Scouts working on Boy Scout requirements replace "Scoutmaster" with "Varsity Scout Coach." For Venturers working on Boy Scout requirements replace "Scoutmaster" with "crew Advisor." For Sea Scouts working on Boy Scout requirements replace "Scoutmaster" with "Skipper."

6. *There isn't a No. 6 under the new requirements.*

6. Successfully complete your board of review for the Eagle Palm.

Requirement 6 has been eliminated. A Palm is an award to recognize achievement beyond the rank of Eagle Scout. It is not a rank itself, so it is not necessary to have a board of review. It also generates confusion, becomes a barrier to recognition because delays can result in a Scout being short of time to earn another Palm, and is one more duty for a unit advancement committee which should be devoting more attention to building advancement throughout the unit. These are Eagle Scouts; they've already reached the pinnacle. They represent youth with whom we have most likely already achieved our aims. Approval of the unit leader is sufficient.

The right way to wear a combination of palms

The Bronze Palm represents the first five merit badges beyond

the 21 required for Eagle. The Gold Palm represents the next five (10 total), and the Silver Palm the third five (15 total).

After that, you'll combine multiple Palms. While qualifying Eagle Scouts can wear multiple Silver Palms, they should never wear more than 1 Bronze or 1 Gold Palm. You'll see why in this handy chart that shows the proper Palm combinations.

Total number of merit badges	Number beyond minimum	Palm combination
21	0	None
26	5	1 Bronze
31	10	1 Gold
36	15	1 Silver
41	20	1 Bronze, 1 Silver
46	25	1 Gold, 1 Silver
51	30	2 Silver
56	35	1 Bronze, 2 Silver
61	40	1 Gold, 2 Silver
66	45	3 Silver
71	50	1 Bronze, 3 Silver
76	55	1 Gold, 3 Silver
81	60	4 Silver
86	65	1 Bronze, 4 Silver
91	70	1 Gold, 4 Silver
96	75	5 Silver
101	80	1 Bronze, 5 Silver
106	85	1 Gold, 5 Silver
111	90	6 Silver
116	95	1 Bronze, 6 Silver
121	100	1 Gold, 6 Silver

126	105	7 Silver
131	110	1 Bronze, 7 Silver
136	115	1 Gold, 7 Silver

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