Collections Merit Badge Presenter’s Guide



A reference resource provided by the International Scouting Collectors Association for use by individuals who counsel Scouts interested in earning Collections MB.



This document is provided as a service to the scouting community. It is designed to aid individuals who are asked to present information about building a collection and earning the Collections MB to Boy Scouts, and/or other interested individuals.

**Mission Statement: The International Scouting Collectors Association (ISCA) is a non-profit organization that promotes education regarding the history of the scouting movement through the collecting and trading of scouting memorabilia. All members subscribe to our** [**Code of Ethics**](http://www.scouttrader.org/Code_of_Ethics.shtml)**to ensure fair trading amongst its members.**

**For more information:** [**www.Scouttrader.org**](http://www.Scouttrader.org)

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ISCA has no official affiliation with the Boy Scouts of America. This publication does not replace any information or publication of the BSA that relates to the Collections MB.

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**RESOURCES:**

* The banners are available as a PDF document for adult scout leaders and experienced collectors and can be downloaded at **(ADD LINK)**.
* The *Collections Merit Badge Presenter’s Guide* is available for download in PDF form at **(ADD LINK).**
* Collections MB Requirements worksheet. Double-sided printable on 8.5” x 14” paper as a PDF Doc. **(ADD LINK)**

The International Scouting Collectors Association members are collectors of scouting memorabilia. ISCA has sponsored the Collections merit badge at numerous National Jamborees, and over 3,000 scouts have achieved their merit badge. ISCA is a member of the Association of Collecting Clubs, which currently lists over 6,300 members.

This presentation and group of banners uses scouting memorabilia as a major portion of the information for working toward the merit badge. Please note that the only restriction from BSA regarding the Collections MB is that a collection of coins and/or stamps cannot be used as a collection for this badge.

I believe that an experienced collector of any interest area can adapt this presentation and guide a scout through the work to complete this badge.

**Introduction**

This guide is an outline of the banners ISCA has developed as individually paced, self-motivated process to complete the Collections MB while at the National Jamboree. It is intended to allow **scouts** to work on the requirements at **their pace and ability**, with guided assistance from counselors and experienced collectors.

The objective of this program is for the scout – or anyone who receives this information – to develop an understanding of the difference between being an acquirer (hoarder) verses a being a collector. Scouts also learn about the potentially lifelong friendships that can develop through a shared experience of building a collection.

Slide 1 – Provides **quick insight** into why people collect things; establishes that each banner has the needed information to complete the requirements of the MB.

Slides 2-4 – Lists the **requirements** of earning the Collections MB, with space for the scout to provide the applicable information about his collection. There is a separate worksheet printable on 8.5”x14” paper (two-sided) to use as the actual work document.

Slide 5 – Contains **general definitions** used within the collecting community.

**Requirement #1 Outline of a Collection**

Slide 6 - The scout provides information about his collection, including: any known history of the collection interest, why he has chosen this collection, and what the scout has learned and enjoys about this collection.

**Requirement #2 Growth and Development of a Collection**

Slide 7 –The scout discusses why he started his collection, his progress, and future expectations he has for the collection.

Slide 8 – Many scouts choose to collect patches and other scouting items while at a Jamboree or other event where scouting memorabilia is available. It is also possible to find other items with which to start a collection, such as business cards, promotional pens and items from vendors or other individuals.

**Requirement #3 Preserving and Displaying Your Collection**

Slide 9 – **(3a)** Addresses precautions that a collector should consider while working the items of a collection. The scout / counselor can address issues of work areas, materials and equipment at this point, with an emphasis on handling, cleaning, storage and how best to display a collection.

Slide 10 – **(3b)** Provides reasons why a well-organized and researched display can bring educational value to the collection.

Slide 11 – Shows ways to display a collection that provides security and safety to the items while allowing for informational applications to educate the viewer of the items in the collection.

Slide 12 – **(3c)** Lists various types of events and programs that a collector should seek out in order to associate with other collectors in their interest area. This list is directed toward a scouting-memorabilia collector as examples of similar events.

*Museum programs can provide information on methods used in the care, cleaning, storage, and preservation of many different types of materials and considerations for the local environment.*

**Requirement #4 Investing in Your Collection**

Slide 13 – Explains factors that determine the value of collections over the years, and describes pitfalls of those changes. Explores the issue of what will become of the collection once the collector is no longer able to continue collecting.

1. Discuss the difference between investing and speculation as it applies to the collection interest.
2. Suggests considerations a collector should review when purchasing an existing collection.
3. Provides the collector with ways to define his goals for the collection, including what is his expectation for a return on his investment in the short and long term, or when looking to sell all or part of a collection. The scout also considers how much is too much and the effect on his family regarding his collection.

**Requirement #5 Terminology & Grouping: Organizing Your Collection**

Slide 14 – **(5a)** Lists the terms associated with scouting memorabilia collections. This is where the scout should list terms and definitions related to his collection interest.

*Some areas may have only a few terms unique to the items being collected. The counselor can expand the field of terminology for a scout’s collection through the use of general terms, such as terms describing condition and grading ratings*.

**(5b)** Discusses thegrouping and organizing of a collection at the Jamboree.

*We request that the scout shows his collection in two groups of 15-20 items. A group can be as simple as RED border and BLACK border patches, or round verses square patches. While we do see a lot of council sets and high count patch pieces, we do not require a scout to collect 15-20 items in this area. The focus is on identifying two groups of items, i.e., Council, Order of the Arrow, and BSA.*

Slide 15 – Examples of some of the many areas of scouting patches to provide an introduction to the various terms used by scouting collectors.

Slide 16 – **(5c)** Pricing a collection and the role that the market plays in determining value at time of sale. Many factors play into the value of a collection, and some of them are discussed here. Some reference websites are shown to aid in researching the value of items. Printed guides for scouting memorabilia and other collection interests are available to provide scouts with collection ideas at the Jamboree.

Slide 17 – **(5d)** Collection interest areas often use a grading system or appraisal to help value pieces. This can be an additional cost factor when buying and selling a collection. Physical defects, quantity, and age of the pieces can have good and bad effects on the value and future of the collection. The size of the collection interest or market in the collecting community will also impact the acquisition of and later sale of a collection.

Slide 18-19 – Discusses collecting items that might be considered “rare,” such as one-of-a-kind items, first editions, and items from 100+ years ago.

Slide 20 – Explains classifications and ratings used to identify categories and groups of items

*Commonly used condition terms are included; however, be mindful that there can be some slight differences in usage among a specific collection interest.*

Slide 21-22 – **(5e)** Lists various collection responsive associations for scouting memorabilia on many levels; provides a web link to the Association of Collecting Clubs, providing a listing of over 6,000 interest areas. These resources help new and experienced collectors as they build their collection.

Slide 23 – Discusses the methods used for verifying the authenticity of an item, to assist collectors in checking that it is an official item from the desired company or organization.

**Requirement #6 Plans for Continuation: Future Outlook of Collections**

Slide 24 – Asks the scout to explain his plans for continuing this collection.

*Possible areas for the scout to discuss: What is your plan for continuing the collection? What happens to collection interests that have faded over the years and then have a resurgence of interest in a new generation?*

**Requirement #7 Changes in Collecting: Why and How**

Slide 25 – Explores how collecting has changed over time and discusses differences in how exchanges are done; looks at the impact of computers and the Internet, design and material changes, the availability of items and the ability to acquire a collection.

**Requirement #8 Career Opportunities**

Slide 26 – Invites scouts and others interested in collecting to explore how to build a career as a collector or collections dealer, and what points to consider if becoming a dealer is of interest to the individual collector.

**Additional Information**

Slides 27 -30 – Lists specific terms related to the Order of Arrow collector, a note from the Collections MB staff, and additional information about the International Scouting Collectors Association.