

# 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

*Tony is a 19 year old Rover Scout. He, like many college students, is concerned about government proposals to increase college registration fees. Tony wants to find a novel way of highlighting the hardship these increases will cause for students.*

The project that Tony has chosen is:

- To gain enough knowledge of government proposals on college registration fees to be able to explain why Tony is so passionate about this issue.
- Tony has always had an interest in film-making so he can use these skills and additional ones he will learn (script writing for example) to make a film to present his opinion on college registration fees.
- Tony's action is to make a short film highlighting the potential hardship an increase in college registration fees could have on students.



## Sample Projects: Archery

*David is a 19 year old Rover Scout. He has been doing archery for nearly 8 years and wanted to try something new with it. On a recent school trip to an Outdoor Education Centre (OEC) he did archery and ended up showing others how to do it properly. He wants to look at teaching it to others.*

The project that David has chosen is:

- David should approach the local OECs or Scout Camp sites to get the experience of leading archery activities.
- Get the help of Archery Instructors to get some tips in how to work with people.
- He should see about doing an Instructor course.





## Sample Projects: Information Technology

*Maria is interested in computers. She spends a lot of time on social network pages, downloading music and surfing the web. She owns her own laptop. She wants to do 'something serious' with computers as she feels that she is 'playing' rather than being 'constructive' with her computer. She has devised the following challenge with the help of her leader.*

The project that Maria has chosen and agreed with the Group Leader is:

- Explore the concept/campaign 'One laptop for every child' (\$100 dollar laptop) and create a campaign with her friends and others to provide a number of laptops for children in developing countries.
- Learn how to design websites and create interactive quizzes that can be used to learn about Nature.
- Using 'You Tube' and other 'Learn to' video sites she is to learn at least 2 new skills.
- Visit each Section in the Scout Group and collect photos, recordings and comments, then create a short presentation to be shown at the annual parent's night to show 'Scouting in Action' in your Group.



## Sample Projects: Conservation

*Ruth is an 18 year old Rover Scout. She has just started college and found out how hard it can be to conserve energy in her new home and so keep the cost of heating down to a minimum. She has learned what she needs to do but now sees a value in conserving energy. She wants to tell others about this.*

The project that Ruth has agreed with her Team is:

- Run a jumper weekend where her Team promotes the value of wearing a jumper as opposed to using heating.
- Run an energy hunt with the Beaver Scouts to find what electrical appliances are not being used but still using power.
- Visit a local ecological centre and learn how alternative energy can be created and see if you can build an alternative energy source with the Venture Scouts.





## Sample Projects: Faith & Beliefs

*Emer is a 19 year old Rover Scout. She has always been close to her grandmother who taught her about being a 'Good Christian'. She wants to share some of those beliefs with her Patrol so she organises the spiritual aspect of their next camp.*

The project that Emer has chosen is:

- Run a Samaritan Challenge where the members try to do as many good deeds in the local town as possible.
- Plan a Scouts Own around the Scout Law and all that a Scout is.
- With her Team try and relive some traditions that their grandparents had and why they had them. They should talk to their grandparents about this.



## Sample Projects: Good Turn / Service

*Eoin is a 19 year old Rover Scout. His little sister has been diagnosed with a disability. Eoin is not sure how to react to this but he wants to find out more and put what he learns into practice to ensure his sister has a good quality of life.*

The project that Eoin has chosen is:

- Explore the physical and intellectual disabilities. Talk to people with disabilities and their carers to find out what challenges they face in their lives.
- Eoin will learn how to build a ramp to the front door of the house for his sister. Eoin will also learn to drive so he can drive his sister to her social events.
- Taking what he has learned, Eoin will present to the local council a number of ways they can make the town more accessible for people with disabilities and implore them to act on his findings.





## Sample Projects: Nature Study

*John is a 19 year old Rover Scout. John's sister is a wildlife photographer who has worked for television and on producing books depicting the world's most impressive creatures. John would love to get close to these animals e.g. lions, elephants, ostriches. John's special interest badge will be his working towards achieving this.*

The project that John has chosen is:

- John will first have to find out how he can get close to these creatures. A safari holiday is too expensive but there are a number of voluntary opportunities John can choose from. Before he goes John will have to undertake extensive preparation so his knowledge is sufficient to contribute to the voluntary opportunity.
- A number of skills are needed to track these animals in the wild and contribute to their continued well-being: radio telemetry, using GPS, navigation techniques, animal identification etc. John will have to learn these.
- John's action will be to spend at least 2 weeks on a voluntary expedition to a national park in Tanzania assisting the continued research into animal behaviour to ensure their survival.



## Sample Projects: Orienteering

*Evelyn is an expert in orienteering. She wishes to continue to test herself so she is entering the Provincial and Irish Championships. She has an excellent coach who is also a Scouter and now needs to start preparing.*

The project that Evelyn has chosen is:

- Devise a training plan to ensure maximum performance on the day of the Championships. This will involve diet, training time and leisure time while balancing college work and Evelyn's other responsibilities.
- Take part in a number of local orienteering events as part of the preparation for the Championships.
- Actively seek a local sponsor to assist with travel costs.
- Participate in the Provincial and Irish Championships.







## Sample Projects: Photography

***Carol has been into photography for some time. She selected photography as her skill element when taking part in the President's Award - which she did through school during transition year.***

The project that Carol has chosen is:

- She will explore some world-renowned photographers work and select one as a favourite or inspiration and complete her quest by studying his/her work more fully and selecting a series of photograph's which she will use to present an talk to the Rover Scout Section.
- She will join the photographic society in college and present some of her work in monthly competitions and exhibitions.
- She will produce a series of 20 photographs showing a wide range of subject matter and mount and display those images in a public venue, for example the Scout Den on parent's night, a college function, a private display opportunity, a photographers display function.
- She will undertake to set up a training workshop for buddy photographers in the Group.



## Sample Projects: Navigator

***Aoife is a 20 year old Rover Scout. She has been doing sailing for nearly ten years and has recently done her advanced boat handling. She now wants to look at bringing a group on a circuit of Ireland with some other Rover Scouts.***

The project that Aoife has chosen is:

- Discuss with the Rover Scout Section what the challenges will be and what each one needs to do while on board.
- Plan the trip and give a copy to the Scouter so that someone back at land knows where they will be.
- Talk to the local sailing club about her plans and ask for any advice that they have.





## Sample Projects: Wilderness Experience

***Mick has an interest in the spiritual aspect of the Wilderness Experience having studied aspects of a hermit's life during a transition year project. He has extensive Scouting skills and has been in wilderness situations on expeditions in the past.***

The project that Mick chosen is:

- Mick is to find out about wilderness areas in Ireland and choose one to visit and explore.
- Mick is to visit the chosen area, with others, and camp in this area for a number of nights, under a theme of "Back to Basics". One of the nights he should spend alone (away from the other members of the party) under the stars.
- Mick is to explore further the connection with wild places and spiritual well being and present a talk on the subject to the Rover Scout Section.
- Mick is to organise with others a Scouts Own / Reflection which is to take place on a hike or camp in a wilderness area.



## Sample Projects: World Cultures & Ways of Living

***Lisa is an 18 year old Rover Scout. During her first year in university she attended a talk by a member of an organization campaigning for democracy and environmental awareness in Zimbabwe. The story of persecution of anyone who speaks out against the Zimbabwean government had a deep effect on Lisa and she wants to contribute towards the movement to peace and environmental awareness in Southern Africa.***

- The project that Lisa has chosen and agreed with the Rover Scout Section is that she will work towards the Scouts of the World Award. This consists of two parts: Scouts of the World Discovery and Scouts of the World Voluntary Service.

For more see [www.scouts.org/scoutsoftheworld](http://www.scouts.org/scoutsoftheworld)



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):