

First Class Rank Requirements 9a-9c

(9a) Tell what precautions should be taken for a safe trip afloat. _____

(9b) Before doing the following requirements, successfully complete the BSA swimmer test: _____

(9c) With a helper and a practice victim, show a line rescue both as tender and as rescuer. (The practice victim should be approximately 30 feet from shore in deep water.) _____

b. Swim continuously for 400 yards using each of the following strokes in a strong manner for at least 50 continuous yards: front crawl, sidestroke, breaststroke, and elementary backstroke. _____

2. Explain the following:

a. Common drowning situations and how to prevent them. _____

b. How to identify persons in the water who need assistance. _____

c. The order of methods in water rescue.

d. How rescue techniques vary depending on the setting and the condition of the person needing assistance. _____

e. Situations for which in-water rescues should not be undertaken. _____

3. Demonstrate "reaching" rescues using various items such as arms, legs, towels, shirts, paddles, and poles. _____

4. Demonstrate "throwing" rescues using various items such as lines, ring buoys, rescue bags, and free-floating supports. Successfully place at least one such aid within reach of a practice victim 25 feet from shore. _____

5. Show or explain the use of rowboats, canoes, and other small craft in performing rescues. _____

6. List various items that can be used as rescue aids in a non-contact swimming rescue.

- _____ _____ _____ _____
- _____ _____ _____ _____
- _____ _____ _____ _____

Explain why buoyant aids are preferred. _____

7. Perform the following equipment-based rescues for a conscious practice subject 30 feet from shore. Use a proper entry and a strong approach stroke. Speak to the subject to determine his condition and to provide instructions and encouragement.

a. Present a rescue tube to the subject, release it, and escort the victim to safety. _____

b. Present a rescue tube to the subject and use it to tow the victim to safety. _____

c. Present a buoyant aid other than a rescue tube to the subject, release it, and escort the victim to safety. _____

d. Present a buoyant aid other than a rescue tube to the subject and use it to tow the victim to safety. _____

e. Remove street clothes in 20 seconds or less and use a non-buoyant aid, such as a shirt or towel, to tow the subject to safety. Explain when it is appropriate to remove heavy clothing before attempting a swimming rescue. _____

8. Explain the importance of avoiding contact with an active victim _____

and describe lead-and-wait tactics. _____

9. Perform the following non-equipment rescues for a conscious practice subject 30 feet from shore. Begin in the water from a position near the subject. Speak to the subject to determine his condition and to provide instructions and encouragement.

- a. Provide a swim-along assist for a calm, responsive, tired swimmer moving with a weak forward stroke. _____
- b. Perform an armpit tow for a calm responsive, tired swimmer resting with a back float. _____
- c. Perform a cross-chest carry for an exhausted, passive victim who does not respond to instructions to aid himself. _____

10. In deep water, show how to escape from a victim's grasp on your wrist. Repeat for front and rear holds about the head and shoulders. _____

11. Perform the following rescues for an unconscious practice subject at or near the surface 30 feet from shore. Use a proper entry and strong approach stroke. Speak to the subject and splash water on him to determine his condition before making contact. Remove the victim from the water, with assistance if needed, and position for CPR. _____

- a. Perform an equipment assist using a buoyant aid. _____
- b. Perform a front approach and wrist tow. _____
- c. Perform a rear approach and armpit tow. _____

12. Describe how to respond if a victim submerges before being reached by a rescuer, and do the following: _____

- a. Recover a 10-pound weight in 8 to 10 feet of water using a feet-first surface dive. _____
- b. Repeat using a headfirst surface dive. _____

13. Demonstrate knowledge of resuscitation procedures: _____

- a. Describe how to recognize the need for rescue breathing and CPR. _____
- b. Demonstrate proper CPR technique for at least 3 minutes using a mannequin designed to simulate ventilations and compressions. _____

14. Demonstrate management of a spinal injury: _____

- a. Explain the signs and symptoms of a spinal injury _____

b. Support a face up victim in calm, shallow water. _____

c. Turn a subject from a facedown to a face-up position while maintaining support.

15. Show that you know first aid for other injuries or illnesses that could occur while swimming or boating, including hypothermia, _____

heat reactions, _____

muscle cramps, _____

sunburn, _____

stings, _____

and hyperventilation. _____

Online Resources *(Use any Internet resource with caution and only with your parent's or guardian's permission.)*

Boy Scouts of America: ▶ scouting.org ▶ [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) ▶ [Age-Appropriate Guidelines](#) ▶ [Safe Swim Defense](#)
▶ [Scout](#) ▶ [Tenderfoot](#) ▶ [Second Class](#) ▶ [First Class](#) ▶ [Rank Videos](#) ▶ [Safety Afloat](#)

Boy Scout Merit Badge Workbooks: [BSA Troop 780](#) -or- usscouts.org -or- meritbadge.org Merit Badge Books: www.scoutstuff.org

[ExpertVillage First Aid Videos](#) ▶ [Make a First Aid Kit](#) ▶ [Basics](#) ▶ [Basics2](#) ▶ [CPR Basics](#) ▶ [Venomous Snake Bite](#)
[ExpertVillage Swimming Lesson Videos](#) ▶ [Tread Water](#) ▶ [Basics](#) ▶ [Freestyle](#) ▶ [Breaststroke](#) ▶ [Backstroke](#)

Application for BSA Lifeguard: <http://www.scouting.org/forms/34435.pdf>

The Lifesaving Society of Canada: <http://www.lifesaving.com>

The Royal Life Saving Society of Australia: <http://www.rlssa.org.au>

Surf Life Saving Australia Ltd.: <http://www.slsa.asn.au>

The Royal Life Saving Society of the United Kingdom: <http://www.lifesaversdirect.co.uk> or <http://www.rlss-notts.org>

The American Red Cross: www.redcross.org/

BSA: <http://www.scouting.org/> ▶ [Requirements](#) ▶ [Introduction to Merit Badges](#) ▶ [Awards](#) ▶ [Insignia & Uniform](#)

United States Coast Guard: <http://www.uscg.mil>

United States Lifesaving Association: <http://www.usla.org>

YMCA of the USA: <http://www.ymca.net>

SAFETY AFLOAT

Safety Afloat has been developed to promote boating and boating safety and to set standards for safe unit activity afloat. Before a BSA group may engage in an excursion, expedition, or trip on the water (canoe, raft, sailboat, motorboat, rowboat, floating in an inner tube, or other craft), adult leaders for such activity must complete Safety Afloat Training, No. 34159, have a commitment card, No. 34242, with them, and be dedicated to full compliance with all nine points of Safety Afloat.

1. Qualified Supervision

All activity afloat must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children in his or her care, who is experienced and qualified in the particular watercraft skills and equipment involved in the activity, and who is committed to compliance with the nine points of BSA Safety Afloat. One such supervisor is required for each 10 people, with a minimum of two adults for any one group. At least one supervisor must be age 21 or older, and the remaining supervisors must be age 18 or older. All supervisors must complete BSA Safety Afloat and Safe Swim Defense training and rescue training for the type of watercraft to be used in the activity, and at least one must be trained in CPR. It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in the planning and conducting of all activity afloat. For Cub Scouts: The ratio of adult supervisors to participants is one to five.

2. Physical Fitness

All persons must present evidence of fitness by a complete health history from a physician, parent, or legal guardian. Adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, a medical evaluation by a physician should be required by the adult leader.

3. Swimming Ability

A person who has not been classified as a "swimmer" may ride as a passenger in a rowboat or motorboat with an adult swimmer, or in a canoe, raft, or sailboat with an adult who is trained as a lifeguard or a lifesaver by a recognized agency. In all other circumstances, the person must be a swimmer to participate in an activity afloat. Swimmers must pass this test:

Jump feetfirst into water over your head. Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating. This qualification test should be renewed annually.

4. Personal Flotation Equipment

Properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation devices (PFDs) must be worn by all persons engaged in activity on the open water (rowing, canoeing, sailing, boardsailing, motorboating, waterskiing, rafting, tubing, kayaking, and surfboarding). Type II and III PFDs are recommended.

5. Buddy System

All activity afloat necessitates using the buddy system. Not only must every individual have a buddy, but every craft should have a "buddy boat" when on the water.

6. Skill Proficiency

All participants in activity afloat must be trained and experienced in watercraft handling skills, safety, and emergency procedures. (a) For unit activity on white water, all participants must complete special training by a BSA Aquatics Instructor or qualified whitewater specialist. (b) Powerboat operators must be able to meet requirements for the Motorboating merit badge or equivalent. (c) Except for whitewater and powerboat operation as noted above, either a minimum of three hours' training and supervised practice or meeting

requirements for "basic handling tests" is required for all float trips or open-water excursions using unpowered craft. (d) Motorized personal watercraft, such as the Jet Ski? and SeaDoo?, are not authorized for use in Scouting aquatics, and their use should not be permitted in or near BSA program areas.

For Cub Scouts: Canoeing, kayaking, rowing, and rafting for Cub Scouts (including Webelos Scouts) are to be limited to council/district events on flat water ponds or controlled lake areas free of powerboats and sailboats. Prior to recreational canoeing and kayaking, Cub Scouts are to be instructed in basic handling skills and safety practices.

7. Planning

Float Plan — Obtain current maps and information about the waterway to be traveled. Know exactly where the unit will "put in" and "pull out" and what course will be followed. Travel time should be estimated generously. Review the plan with others who have traveled the course recently.

Local Rules — Determine which state and local regulations are applicable, and follow them. Get written permission to use or cross private property.

Notification — File the float plan with parents or participants and a member of the unit committee. File the float plan with the local council office when traveling on running water. Check in with all those who should be notified when returning.

Weather — Check the weather forecast just before setting out, and keep an alert weather eye. Bring all craft ashore when rough weather threatens.

Contingencies — Planning must identify possible emergencies and other circumstances that could force a change of plans. Appropriate alternative plans must be developed for each.

For Cub Scouts: Cub Scout canoeing, kayaking, rowing, and rafting do not include "trips" or "expeditions" and are not to be conducted on running water (i.e., rivers or streams); therefore, some procedures are inapplicable. Suitable weather requires clear skies, no appreciable wind, and warm air and water.

8. Equipment

All equipment must be suited to the craft, to water conditions, and to the individual; must be in good repair; and must satisfy all state and federal requirements. Spare equipment or repair materials must be carried. Appropriate rescue equipment must be available for immediate use.

9. Discipline

All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe unit activity afloat. The applicable rules should be presented and learned prior to the outing, and should be reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the activity begins. When Scouts know and understand the reasons for the rules, they will observe them. When fairly and impartially applied, rules do not interfere with the fun. Rules for safety, plus common sense and good judgment, keep the fun from being interrupted by tragedy.

Note: For cruising vessels (excluding rowboats, canoes, kayaks, and rafts, but including sailboats and powerboats greater than 20 feet long) used in adult-supervised unit activities by a chartered Venturing crew/ship specializing in watercraft operations, or used in adult-supervised program activity in connection with any high-adventure program or other activity under the direct sponsorship and control of the National Council, the standards and procedures in the Sea Scout Manual may be substituted for the Safety Afloat standards.

SAFE SWIM DEFENSE

Before a BSA group may engage in swimming activities of any kind, a minimum of one adult leader must complete Safe Swim Defense training, have a commitment card (No. 34243) with them, and agree to use the eight defenses in this plan. One of the best opportunities for Safe Swim Defense training is in summer camp. The eight defenses are:

1. Qualified Supervision

All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of youth members in his or her care, who is experienced in the water and confident of his or her ability to respond in the event of an emergency, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. (It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in the planning and conduct of all swimming activity.)

2. Physical Fitness

Require evidence of fitness for swimming activity with a complete health history from physician, parent, or legal guardian. The adult supervisor should adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, an examination by a physician should be required by the adult supervisor. Those with physical disabilities can enjoy and benefit from aquatics if the disabilities are known and necessary precautions are taken.

3. Safe Area

When swimming in areas not regularly maintained and used for swimming activity, have lifeguards and swimmers systematically examine the bottom of the swimming area to determine varying depths, currents, deep holes, rocks, and stumps. Mark off the area for three groups: not more than 3 1/2 feet deep for nonswimmers; from shallow water to just over the head for beginners; deep water not over 12 feet for swimmers. A participant should not be permitted to swim in an area where he cannot readily recover and maintain his footing, or cannot maintain his position on the water, because of swimming ability or water flow. When setting up a safe swimming area in natural waters, use poles stuck in the bottom, or plastic bottles, balloons, or sticks attached to rock anchors with twine for boundary markers. Enclose nonswimmer and beginner areas with buoy lines (twine and floats) between markers. Mark the outer bounds of the swimmer's area with floats. Be sure that clear-water depth is at least 7 feet before allowing anyone to dive into the water. Diving is prohibited from any height more than 40 inches above the water surface; feet-first entry is prohibited from more than 60 inches above the water. For any entry from more than 18 inches above the water surface, clear-water depth must be 10 to 12 feet. Only surface swimming is permitted in turbid water. Swimming is not permitted in water more than 12 feet deep, in turbid water where poor visibility and depth would interfere with emergency recognition or prompt rescue, or in whitewater, unless all participants wear appropriate personal flotation devices and the supervisor determines that swimming with personal flotation equipment is safe under the circumstances.

4. Lifeguards on Duty

Swim only where there are lifeguards on duty. For unit swims in areas where lifeguards are not provided by others, the supervisor should designate two capable swimmers as lifeguards. Station them ashore, equipped with a lifeline (a 100-foot length of 3/8-inch nylon cord). In an emergency, one carries out the line; the other feeds it out from shore, then pulls in his partner and the person being helped. In addition, if a boat is available, have two people, preferably capable swimmers, take it out—one rowing and the other equipped with a 10-foot pole or extra oar. Provide one guard for every 10 people in the water, and adjust the number and positioning of guards as needed to protect the particular area and activity.

5. Lookout

Station a lookout on the shore where it is possible to see and hear everything in all areas. The lookout may be the adult in charge of the swim and may give the buddy signals.

6. Ability Groups

Divide into three ability groups: Nonswimmers, beginners, and swimmers. Keep each group in its own area. Nonswimmers have not passed a swimming test. Beginners must pass this test: jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface. Stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before and return to the starting place. Swimmers must pass this test: jump feet first into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be completed in one swim without stops and must include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating. These classification tests should be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of the season.

7. Buddy System

Pair every youth with another in the same ability group. Buddies check in and out of the swimming area together. Emphasize that each buddy lifeguards his buddy. Check everyone in the water about every 10 minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together. The adult in charge signals for a buddy check with a single blast of a whistle or ring of a bell, and call "Buddies!" The adult counts slowly to 10 while buddies join and raise hands and remain still and silent. Guards check all areas, count the pairs, and compare the total with the number known to be in the water. Signal two blasts or bells to resume swimming. Signal three blasts or bells for checkout.

8. Discipline

Be sure everyone understands and agrees that swimming is allowed only with proper supervision and use of the complete Safe Swim Defense. The applicable rules should be presented and learned prior to the outing, and should be reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the swimming activity begins. Scouts should respect and follow all directions and rules of the adult supervisor. When people know the reason for rules and procedures they are more likely to follow them. Be strict and fair, showing no favoritism.