Freedom Experiences for the Majors and Minors of the Freedom Award
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Overview

Fields: There are twelve (12) fields from which Trailmen can select Freedom Experiences.

Freedom Award Requirement: A Trailman must earn ONE major and TWO minors.

- **Majors:** A major is earned by completing two (2) Freedom Experiences in a single field.
- **Minors:** Each minor is earned by completing one (1) Freedom Experience in a field distinct from the major and the other minor.

Freedom Experiences: Freedom Experiences focus on doing something of interest in the community, enjoying the experience, and building a habit of active participation and citizenry.

The list of Freedom Experiences will be expanded as we review proposed options. See the Appendix.

Advisor Prior Approval: The Advisor must approve each Freedom Experience before the Adventurer begins. The experience must be on the approved list, and participation must meet minimum standards, with verification provided at completion.

Freedom Experience by Trail Badges: In some fields (where specified), a Freedom Experience may be credited for completing a group of Trail Badges. This is the one case where credit is allowed for experience that was not pre-approved. The Trail Badges may have been earned in Navigators or Adventurers; however, they must be in addition to the ten elective Trail Badges required for the Horizon Award.

The Trail Badge option may only be used to fulfill a requirement of one Freedom Experience. All other Freedom Experiences must be fulfilled using “non-Trail Badge” options.

Advisor Final Approval: An Advisor Conference is held upon completion of each Freedom Experience. The Trailman verifies completion, and the conference focuses on his experiences, gained knowledge, and growing judgment on the path to wisdom.

Verification: Acceptable means of verification include the following:

1. Letter from supervisor, coach, faculty advisor, or trip leader
2. Certificate of completion or participation
3. Portfolio
4. Display
5. Trip plans and logs or other forms of documentation
**Safety:** To help keep you safe while participating in Freedom Experiences, please adhere to all Trail Life USA safety and youth protection guidelines regardless of circumstances of the Freedom Experience. This includes, but is not limited to, the following guidelines:

1. Obtain a medical exam within one year prior to starting any strenuous activity.
2. Wear all required safety gear and clothing necessary during the activity.
3. Properly warm up before and cool down after strenuous physical activities.
4. Use experienced professional guides or personnel to safely plan and execute experiences beyond your capability. Some of these experiences may include climbing mountains with glaciers or rock climbing rated four or above, extended winter backcountry travel, Class III or higher rapids, and open water navigation beyond sight of land, etc.
5. Use the Buddy System, two-deep adult leadership, and no one-on-one contact to ensure a safe experience.
6. Follow the principles of low impact camping described in Chapter 8 of *The Trailman’s Handbook* unless an emergency or hazard dictates otherwise.

**Transfer from BSA:** A Trailman may receive credit for Freedom Experiences completed while a member in the BSA with the following limitations:

1. **Approved Freedom Experiences:** Only the specific Freedom Experiences listed in this booklet may be counted. Alternative or equivalent experiences may not be substituted.
2. **Age/Grade Requirement:** Must have participated AFTER completing eighth grade AND the Trailman must have been at least fourteen years old by October 31 in the program year completed (July through June).
3. **Advisor Conference:** The Adventurer must schedule an Advisor Conference to discuss possible credit and verification. Granting transfer credit is determined by the Advisor.
4. **Limit of Three Transfers:** Transfer credit is permitted for up to three (3) Freedom Experiences. Everyone, including Eagle Scouts, will need to complete at least one Freedom Experience while a registered member of Trail Life USA to obtain the Freedom Award. The Trail Badges a boy is credited with from his BSA experience are determined precisely by which Trail Badge credit is granted in the BSA-to-Trail Life Transfer Module. A similar BSA merit badge cannot be used to receive credit for a Trail Badge if that merit badge grants him credit for a specific Trail Badge in the Transfer Module.
Agriculture Freedom Experiences

Agriculture focuses on growing food and caring for farm animals either as an occupation or as a survival technique.

**Livestock**
- Raise and care for livestock
- Minimum duration: one year
- It must be completed to the satisfaction of your Advisor or Trail Guide.

**Crops**
- Plant, maintain, and harvest a garden or farm field of at least 2,500 square feet.
- Minimum duration: one growing season
- It must be completed to the satisfaction of your Advisor or Trail Guide.

**Agriculture Trail Badges**
- Earn any four elective Agriculture Trail Badges from the following list:
  - Gardening and Plant Science
  - Horsemanship
  - Meteorology
  - Zoology
Aquatics Freedom Experiences

The Aquatics field focuses on lifeguarding, adventure, and active water sports participation to build a habit of lifelong physical fitness and aquatics safety.

**Paddlesports Wilderness Trip**
- Example: canoe trip in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area
- Minimum duration: one week

**Sailing Trip**
- On the ocean or large lakes
- Minimum duration: one week

**Fishing Trip**
- Take a long fishing trip on the ocean, on a large lake, or in the backcountry.
- Minimum duration: one week

**Paddlesports Level 4 Course and Skill Assessment**
- Complete and pass any American Canoe Association Paddlesports Level 4 Course and Skill Assessment

**Scuba Certification**
- Complete the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) Open Water Diver scuba certification.

**Junior Lifeguard Program**
- Participate in your local Junior Lifeguard program.
- Minimum duration: 2 weeks

**Lifeguard Apprentice Program**
- Example: LA County Junior Lifeguard Cadet program [http://www.watchthewater.org/jg/indexII.cfm](http://www.watchthewater.org/jg/indexII.cfm)
- Minimum duration: 2 weeks

**Red Cross Lifeguarding Certification**
- Complete the Red Cross Lifeguarding certification [http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/program-highlights/lifeguarding](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/program-highlights/lifeguarding)
Aquatics Trail Badges

- Earn any four elective Aquatics Trail Badges from the following list:
  - Boating Safety
  - Canoeing
  - Fishing
  - Lifesaving
  - Swimming
Christian Education Freedom Experiences

Christian Education focuses on developing one’s faith, becoming a better witness for Christ, and Christian service.

Mission Trip
- Go on a short-term Christian mission trip
- Minimum duration: one week.
- Trip organizers may include:
  - Your church
  - Your troop charter organization
  - Youth with a Mission [http://www.ywam.org/]

Local Service Ministry
- Volunteer in a local service ministry
- Minimum cumulative service time: sixty (60) hours
- Examples: soup kitchen, thrift store, meals on wheels, homeless shelter, etc.

Worldview Academy Leadership Camp
- “Each camp features lively class sessions and discussions guiding students to better understand servant leadership, apologetics/evangelism, and comparative worldviews.” [from the Worldview web site - see link below]
- Complete Worldview Academy Leadership Camp [http://www.worldview.org/index.php/leadership-camps]

Attend Summit Ministries Student Worldview Conference
- Intensive two-week retreats designed to teach students how to analyze the various ideas that are currently competing for their hearts and minds.
- Attend Summit Ministries Student Worldview Conference [http://www.summit.org/conferences/student/]

Apologetics Training
- Complete an apologetics training program.
- Christian apologetics uses information and reasoning to defend the Christian faith. Be able to defend what you believe!
- Approved programs include:
  - Stand to Reason Ambassador Basic Curriculum (Gold) [http://www.str.org/training/ambassador-basic-curriculum]
**Additional Faith Building Activity**

- Complete an approved Trail Life USA high school faith building activity in addition to the one required for the Freedom Award.

**Values Trail Badges**

- Earn any four elective Heritage Trail Badges from the Values section of the Elective Trail Badge Requirements document.
Civics Freedom Experiences

Civics focuses on governing, active citizenship, and forensics to build a habit of active participation in citizenship and governance.

Student Government

- Actively serve in Student Government at your school
- Minimum duration: one school year

TeenPact

- “TeenPact trains young people to be leaders who will impact the nation and world for Jesus Christ.” [from TeenPact web site - see link below]
- Attend a TeenPact 4-day class
  [http://teenpact.com/state-classes/four-day-class/](http://teenpact.com/state-classes/four-day-class/)
- Then attend the one-day Political Communication Workshop
  [http://teenpact.com/state-classes/political-communication-workshop/](http://teenpact.com/state-classes/political-communication-workshop/)

TeenPact Alumni Event

- Attend a TeenPact Alumni Event

iGovern Summer Leadership Camp

- “iGovern provides leadership and character development opportunities through the real-world crises scenario, team building games, and daily corporate chapel.” [from the Generation Joshua web site - see link below]
- Attend a Generation Joshua iGovern Summer Leadership Camp

Teen Court

- Participate as an attorney or judge in a Teen Court.
- Minimum duration: six months
- “Teen Courts are problem-solving courts authorized by law in many states in America. Teen Court is also called Youth Court or Peer Court.” [from Wikipedia - see link below]
- For general information, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teen_court](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teen_court)
- For opportunities near you, check your local and county courts.
Forensics, Debate, or Speech Team

- Compete on a high school forensics, debate, or speech team.
- Minimum season length: three months
- Minimum number of major debate/speech events: three (national, regional, state, or district, qualifier, practice events with multiple clubs/teams represented)
- Qualifying events are those affiliated with and conducted under the rules of one of the following organizations:
  - National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA) http://www.ncfca.org/
  - National Catholic Forensic League (NCFL) http://ncfl.org/
  - Stoa USA http://www.stoausa.org/
  - National Forensic League http://www.nationalforensicleague.org/

Heritage Trail Badges

- Earn any four elective Heritage Trail Badges from the Heritage section of the Elective Trail Badge Requirements document.
Communication and Performance Freedom Experiences

Communication focuses on the use of electronic and print media to convey information clearly and with integrity. Performance focuses on communication of meaning and emotion through acting and music.

**Theater Production**
- High school or community theater production of a full-length musical, drama, comedy, or other play
- Minimum duration: two months with at least two performances
- Do one of the following:
  - Perform a major solo or speaking role.
  - Serve as director, stage manager, choreographer, music director, set designer, or costume designer.
  - Write a full-length play to be performed.
  - Participate in a theater summer camp with a theatrical production
- May get credit for another Freedom Experience for a different role in a different theater production.

**Music Performance**
- High school, church or community musical group
- Minimum duration: one school year with at least two concerts
- Do one of the following:
  - Choir
  - Band
  - Orchestra

**Music Business**
- Play as part of a musical group for hire functioning as a part-time business
- Minimum duration: one school year with at least three paying jobs.

**Journalism**
- Serve as a staff writer on the school newspaper or other publication.
- Minimum duration: one school year

**Yearbook Staff**
- Serve on the school yearbook staff.
- Minimum duration: one school year
**Electronic Communication**

- Minimum duration: one school year with posts or site updates averaging weekly
- Do one of the following:
  - Maintain a special interest blog.
  - Develop and maintain a special interest web site or portal.

**Communication and Performance Trail Badges**

- Earn any four elective Communication and Performance Trail Badges from the following list:
  - Art
  - Cinematography
  - Creative Writing
  - Internet Adventure
  - Music Appreciation
  - Music Performance
  - Photography
  - Puppetry
  - Theater
Emergency Services Freedom Experiences

Emergency Services focuses on First Aid certifications and service in the community to build a habit of preparedness and service to the community.

**First Aid Certifications**
- Complete the following three certifications or better:
  - Basic first aid from American Heart Association (AHA) or American Red Cross (ARC).
  - CPR-AED from American Heart Association (AHA) or American Red Cross (ARC).
  - Wilderness First Aid: ARC 16-hour weekend seminar or equivalent.

**TeenCERT Training**
- “Training to assist others in your neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available.” [from FEMA web site - see link below]

**Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**
- Repeat any of the following to get at least ten half-day events:
  - Participate with your CERT in a training exercise (count half days)
  - Participate with your CERT in an actual disaster (count half days)

**Emergency Service Volunteer**
- Do one of the following:
  - Volunteer fireman
  - EMS intern/volunteer
  - Ski patrol
- Minimum duration: one year
- Can complete a second option as a second Freedom Experience.
Exploration Freedom Experiences

Exploration focuses on preparation for, and active participation in, adventure travel using the safety and outdoor skills developed in Trail Life USA.

**Backpacking Wilderness Trip**
- Minimum duration: one week

**Bicycle Camping Tour**
- Minimum duration: one week

**Rock Gym Climbing**
- Organized climbing team or individualized training
- Minimum team season length: three months
- Minimum individualized training duration: six months
- Set a measurable goal for your program that you attain by the end.
- This cannot be in conjunction with training required for a Fitness Badge.
- It must be completed to the satisfaction of your Advisor or Trail Guide.

**Rock Climbing Class**
- Minimum duration: one week intensive full day classes or equivalent

**Mountaineering**
- Do one of the following:
  - Summit expedition of at least one week (example, Mt. McKinley)
  - Three different summit climbs of at least two days (examples: Mt. Whitney-Mountaineers route, Mt. Shasta, Mt. Rainier)

**Peak Bagging**
- To bag a peak means to successfully ascend to the summit of a mountain. Peak bagging refers to climbing multiple mountains for the purpose of checking off a list of desired mountain peaks to climb or compiling a list of successful summit ascents. On the summit of many mountains there is a summit register in which you can note your name, the date, and perhaps some comments.
- Do one of the following:
  - Climb five different peaks (each requires a full day)
  - Climb ten different peaks (each requires one half day)
  - Mix or combine the above to equal five full days
Day Hiking:
  • Do one of the following:
    ➢ Take five different full day hikes
    ➢ Take ten different half day hikes.

Backcountry Horse Trip
  • Do one of the following:
    ➢ Complete one trip of at least one week.
    ➢ Complete three different trips of at least two days each

Desert Backcountry Travel
  • Do one of the following:
    ➢ Complete one trip of at least one week.
    ➢ Complete three different trips of at least two days each

Winter Backcountry Travel
  • Do one of the following:
    ➢ Complete one trip of at least one week.
    ➢ Complete three different trips of at least two days each

Wilderness Hunting Trip
  • Minimum duration: one week

Exploration Trail Badges
  • Earn any four elective Exploration Trail Badges from the following list:
    ➢ Backpacking
    ➢ Cycling (if not used for the Horizon fitness badge requirement)
    ➢ Climb On!
    ➢ Hiking (if not used for the Horizon fitness badge requirement)
    ➢ Horsemanship
    ➢ Orienteering
    ➢ Wilderness Survival
Fitness Freedom Experiences

Fitness focuses on applied active participation in sports and fitness activities to build a habit of lifelong physical fitness.

**Organized Sports**
- Participate in a season of an organized sport or sports
- Minimum season length: three months
- May get credit for another Freedom Experience for a different sport
- May not use a sport to simultaneously complete multiple Freedom Experiences or a Freedom Experience and a Fitness or Sports Trail badge.

**Individualized Training Program**
- Participate in an individualized training or weight loss program
- Minimum participation length: six months
- Set a measurable goal for your program that you attain by the end
- May not use an individualized training program to simultaneously complete multiple Freedom Experiences or a Freedom Experience and a Fitness or Sports Trail badge.
- This cannot be done in conjunction with training required for a Fitness Trail badge, a Sports Trail badge, or an organized sport used for a Freedom Experience.
- It must be completed to the satisfaction of your Advisor or Trail Guide.

**Sports and Fitness Trail Badges**
- Earn any four elective Sports and Fitness Trail Badges from any combination of Badges from the following sources:
  - Up to four Trail Badges in the Sports section of the Elective Trail Badge Requirements document
  - Up to three of the four Fitness Trail Badges earned in addition to the one used to satisfy the Horizon Fitness Badge requirement
Mentoring Freedom Experiences

Mentoring focuses on applied servant leadership skills and teaching.

**Youth Leadership Training**
- Complete Trail Life USA Youth Leadership Training (YLT). This course is being developed and is expected to be available in the Fall of 2014.

**Teach Youth Leadership Training**
- Teach Trail Life USA Youth Leadership Training (YLT). Once you have participated in Trail Life USA Youth Leadership Training (YLT), you may return as an instructor for a following course.

**Camp Staff**
- Serve on staff at a summer camp
- Minimum duration: two weeks

**Mentoring Trail Badges**
- Earn any four elective Mentoring Trail Badges from the following list:
  - Camp Counselor
  - Recreation
  - Sign Language
  - Special Needs
Science and Technology Freedom Experiences

Science and Technology focus on achieving a greater understanding of God’s creation and how to creatively use the gifts He gave us to develop new technologies to help our fellow man and to exercise good stewardship over that which He gave us.

**High School County or State Science Fair**
- After qualifying by placing in your school science fair, enter a project in a high school, county, or state science fair.

**Robotics Team**
- Compete with a robotics team for a season.
- Minimum duration: three months with at least two major competitions

**Science, Engineering, and Programming Competitions**
- Minimum duration: three months for preparation and competition
- Do one of the following:
  - Compete in an engineering competition (e.g. Future Cities)
  - Compete in a science competition (e.g. Science Bowl)
  - Compete in programming competitions (e.g. 6 USA Computing Olympiad online contests)

**National Team in Science and Technology**
- Qualify for a national team in science and technology (e.g. USA Computing Olympiad).

**Science and Technology Trail Badges**
- Earn any four elective Science and Technology Trail Badges from the Science and Technology section of the Elective Trail Badge Requirements document.
Survival Freedom Experiences

Survival focuses on the planning, preparation, and caching skills needed to survive catastrophes whether acts of God or man.

Emergency Preparedness Update

1. Update your assessments and plans developed in the Emergency Preparedness Trail badge (requirements l-4).
2. Create or replenish a car emergency kit to last three days for each car in your family.
3. Create or replenish a two-week emergency kit for your home.
4. Make a six-month emergency survival plan for your family.
5. Gather the needed materials for six-months of survival.
6. Explain what a cache is and why you might use multiple caches, which are hidden or concealed.
7. Either explain or demonstrate how to store the materials in caches.

Wilderness Preparedness

1. Identify risks for an outing, such as an extended hike or canoe trip.
2. Develop a plan for preparation, including necessary training, equipment, and pre-trip organization. Document nearby medical centers, local resources, phone numbers, and addresses. Share these plans with at least three contacts before you leave.
3. Implement your wilderness emergency plan on a backcountry or paddlesports trip of at least five days.

Survival Skills Trail Badges

- Earn any four elective Survival Skills Trail Badges from the following list:
  - Archery
  - Astronomy
  - Backpacking
  - Fishing
  - Horsemanship
  - Meteorology
  - Orienteering
  - Pioneering
  - Sewing
  - Shooting Sports
  - Wilderness Survival
Trades Freedom Experiences

Trades focus on skilled labor as a path to becoming self-sufficient in life. Skilled labor provides the Trailman the opportunity to explore vocational choices, as well as earn money.

**Summer Business**
- Run a successful summer lawn care, handyman, painting, or other similar business.
- Minimum duration: ten weeks

**Summer Job**
- Get a full-time summer job with a lawn care, handyman, painting, restaurant, or other tradesman type company.
- Minimum duration: ten weeks

**Summer Intern or Apprentice**
- Apprentice or intern for the summer with a tradesman (plumber, electrician, contractor, etc.).
- Minimum duration: ten weeks

**Part-time Business**
- Run a successful part-time lawn care, handyman, painting, or other similar business.
- Minimum duration: one school year

**Part-time Job**
- Get a part-time job with a lawn care, handyman, painting, restaurant, or other tradesman type company.
- Minimum duration: one school year

**Part-time Intern or Apprentice**
- Apprentice or intern part-time with a tradesman (plumber, electrician, contractor, etc.).
- Minimum duration: one school year
**Trades Trail Badges**

- Earn any four elective Trades Trail Badges from the following list:
  - Aviation
  - Cooking
  - Food Science
  - Gardening and Plant Science
  - Handyman
  - Home Improvement
  - Vehicle Care
Appendix: Proposing New Freedom Experiences

Note: Before starting on any proposed Freedom Experience not listed herein, you MUST receive written approval from the Trail Life USA Home Office by emailing Freedom@TrailLifeUSA.com.

Trailmen and Adult Leaders may propose new Freedom Experiences to be added to this approved list. Proposals must be submitted well in advance, so that you may participate in the proposed experience. It will take up to ninety days for a decision after the Home Office receives sufficient information to evaluate and approve the proposed experience. No retroactive credit will be given for new Freedom Experiences completed before Home Office approval.

Proposed experiences must meet both minimum objective standards and subjective characteristics that encompass the spirit of the program. Below are the guidelines used to evaluate the proposed new Freedom Experiences:

1. It must fit into the spirit of what we are trying to accomplish with the Freedom Experiences and the majors and minors section
2. Requires preparation, learning, or study
3. Significant personal challenge with approximate minimum level of effort equivalent to four double-period summer camp Badges
4. Minimum experience time guideline:
   a. One intensive week
   b. Two hours per week average over one school year
   c. Eight hours per week average over the summer
   d. Three months participation in high school level sports
5. Characterized by one or more of the following:
   a. Applied leadership
   b. Active citizenship
   c. Community experience
   d. Application of TLUSA skills
   e. Acquisition of advanced knowledge and skills
   f. Vocational or business experience
   g. Accomplishment of advanced level of fitness or mastery in sports
   h. Service
6. Requires a means of verification such as:
   a. Letter from supervisor, coach, faculty advisor, or trip leader
   b. Certificate of completion or participation
   c. Award(s) / sports letter / certification, etc.
   d. Portfolio
   e. Display
   f. Trip plans and logs or equivalent documentation