

Honors Guide

Prepared by the Youth and Young Adult Department of the
North American Division

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HONORS GUIDE

OVERVIEW

Welcome to the exciting world of Honors where you can learn about everything from coral reefs to rainforests, from lashing to robotics, and soccer to pickleball. You can earn Honors on disciples and apostles, praise and worship, and Christian team building.

PURPOSE

From the beginning, Honors were developed as a way for youth and adults to experience hands-on learning in an area of interest. Each Honor is designed as a study that introduces a subject that has practical value and will enhance the life of the person pursuing the Honor.

Today we have more than 600 Honors, and many Honors have an advanced option. Honors have become a key part of the Pathfinder Club Ministry and are also used by youth groups, families, and schools as a way to discover more about the world they live in and the One who created our world.

HISTORY

The first 16 Vocational Merits were introduced in 1928. In 1929 the name was changed from Merits to Honors and 19 new Honors were added. Honors were designed to develop the physical, mental, and spiritual capacities of youth and adults and for many years were done in church schools, JMV, and MV Societies.



WHO DECIDES WHAT HONORS ARE AVAILABLE?

When the General Conference adopted Adventist Youth and Pathfinders, additional Honors were created based on the interests and expertise of the leaders. The General Conference Youth Ministries Department continues to add Honors and Divisions of the General Conference also create Honors for the clubs within their territory.

In the North American Division, the development of Honors is overseen by the Club Ministries Committee. Local clubs can find the process for submitting their idea for an Honor at ClubMinistries.org/Pathfinders.

Honors from other Divisions

In the North American Division, AdventSource stocks patches for Honors created by the General Conference and the North American Division. Clubs earning Honors produced by other Divisions, Unions, or Conferences must purchase those Honor patches directly from the organization that created the Honor.

Each year the committee meets to review all the submissions and decide what new Honors should be made available to clubs in the North American Division.

HONOR CATEGORIES

Honor categories are identified by the background color of the Honor patch.

- Arts, Crafts and Hobbies – Light Blue
- Health & Science – Purple
- Household Arts – Yellow
- Nature – White
- Outdoor Industries – Brown
- Spiritual Growth, Outreach and Heritage – Dark Blue
- Recreation – Green
- Vocational – Red



SKILL LEVELS

Each Honor is assigned a skill level to guide leaders in selecting age-appropriate Honors for their club members. Skill levels are generally determined by three factors: time required for completion, complexity, and grade level. However, an Honor that is less complex but takes a longer amount of time could still be a Level 1 Honor. Skill levels are divided into Level 1 (Grades 5–6), Level 2 (Grades 7–10), and Level 3 (Grade 11 and above). These levels are recommendations designed to guide leaders in their choice of Honors. It is important to note that if you choose a Level 1 Honor, you may want to add more in-depth study and additional activities for older Pathfinders than you ask from the younger Pathfinders.

ADVANCED HONORS ☆

Many of the current Honors have an advanced level. Once Pathfinders complete the requirements for an advanced Honor, they may add a small star to their Honor patch.



INSTRUCTOR DIAMOND ◇

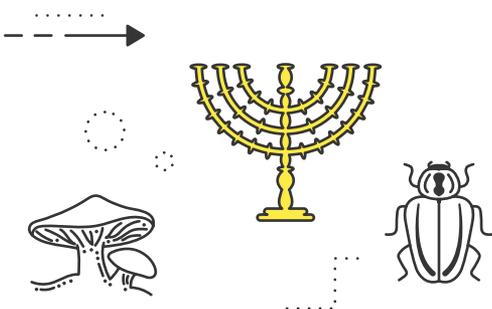
Some Honors require a specialized instructor—these are noted in the Honor requirements. The instructor may be a teacher or a church or community friend who is qualified to give the necessary guidance to safely complete the Honor. For most Honors, the instructor may be one of the Pathfinder Club staff. All individuals who serve as instructors for an Honor are eligible to receive a diamond that may be attached to their Honor patch.



MASTER AWARDS

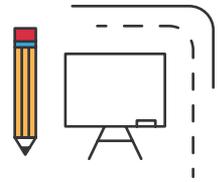
By completing seven eligible Honors, Pathfinders can qualify for a Master Award patch which recognizes mastery in the category. The eligible Honors list may be found at ClubMinistries.org/Pathfinders (click on Honors). The Master Award patches are larger than the regular Honor patches and reflect the subject matter. The 15 Master Awards currently available are:

- Aquatic Master Award
- Artisan Master Award
- Conservation Master Award
- Family, Origins, and Heritage Master Award
- Farming Master Award
- Health Master Award
- Homemaking Master Award
- Modern Technology Master Award
- Naturalist Master Award
- Recreation Master Award
- Spiritual Growth and Ministries Master Award
- Sportsman Master Award
- Technician Master Award
- Wilderness Master Award
- Zoology Master Award



TEACHING AN HONOR

Honors are a central component of Pathfinder Club Ministry and a tool in leading young people to Christ.



An instructor should not forget that the main purpose of Honors is building character while making a personal connection with Jesus. These activities are avenues to reach the hearts of young people, helping them to find satisfaction in mastering new skills and learning new information, and giving them a feeling of accomplishment with the possibility of finding a vocation or an enjoyable hobby for the future.

Each Honor is designed to create an ongoing learning environment for your Pathfinders. When you are teaching an Honor, you should intentionally:

- Inspire and motivate Pathfinders.
- Bring out spiritual lessons and applications that Pathfinders can incorporate in their personal relationship with God.
- Emphasize quality, not quantity, of learning.
- Build on knowledge that has been gained in earlier Honors or activities.
- Allocate time to practice new concepts and skills.
- Focus on understanding rather than memorization.
- Consider the developmental and individual abilities of each Pathfinder.
- Use effective and flexible strategies to aid in the learning process.
- Use meaningful activities.

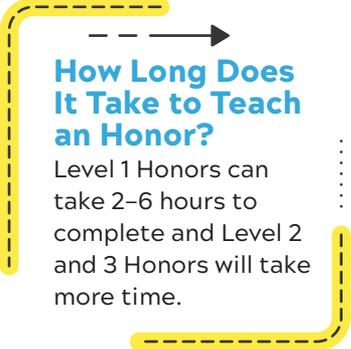


What to Consider When Selecting Honors to Teach

- Investiture Achievement level requirements and Honor Enrichment.
- What do your Pathfinders enjoy? Give them several options they may be interested in.
- Choose a variety of Honors. That way you will meet the interests of all your Pathfinders.
- Find instructors from your church, other clubs, and community organizations like American Red Cross, city agencies or country/ state resource personnel.

The Honors should not be made so easy to obtain that the youth are not challenged. The goal is not to complete an Honor and get a patch; the goal is to learn and internalize the information and new concepts that come with the process. Some Honors require more time than others. If you don't have time to complete the Honor without rushing through the process, the Honor should not be taught.

It is important that the instructor is familiar with the Honor requirements and in some cases the instructor must have specialized training. It is highly recommended the instructor complete the Honor prior to actually teaching it. The Honor requirements are designed to inspire multiple levels of learning and to help Pathfinders internalize information. All requirements must be completed before the Honor patch is given to the Pathfinder.



How Long Does It Take to Teach an Honor?

Level 1 Honors can take 2–6 hours to complete and Level 2 and 3 Honors will take more time.

There are some instances when the instructor identifies Honor requirements that are not up to date with current practices or laws. In that case the instructor should make the appropriate modifications.

Enthusiasm is important when teaching Honors. Pathfinders will have as much enthusiasm as the instructor shows. They will be listening to the instructor's voice and watching the instructor's face and body language. If you do not feel enthusiastic, ask God to give you an experience that will help you passionately share the subject with the Pathfinders.

A critical part of the learning process is the bond between the Pathfinders and their instructors. This is an opportunity for instructors to share their life experience and to listen and encourage the Pathfinders as they grow and make decisions that will have lifetime impacts. Instructors need to realize that Honors serve as another avenue to connect the young people with Jesus and encourage them to decide to follow him.