



My First Year **Brownie**

A complete guide for your first
year of leading a Girl Scout Brownie troop

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Thank you for deciding to volunteer as a Girl Scout Troop Leader! We want to make sure you have all the tools you need to make your first year a success! This guide takes the guesswork out of leading a troop. All links in this guide can be found in our companion website using the QR code below.

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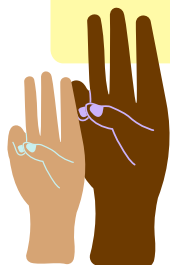
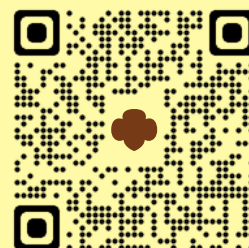
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Have a printed copy? Scan the QR Code to be directed to all links included in this handbook.



Checklist for New Troop Leaders

Starting a New Girl Scout Troop

Week 1**

- ☐ Complete a [Background Check](#) through this link or ask your Regional Executive (RE) for an invitation from Sterling Volunteers
- ☐ Email or call all new troop families to introduce yourself - your RE will provide you this list
- ☐ Create an online account with [CouncilAlignMENT \(CA\)](#).
- ☐ Complete the "Volunteer to be a Troop Leader or Co-Leader" form through the button on your CouncilAlignMENT homepage
- ☐ Register yourself as an adult member through CA - do not pay! Your membership is free as a leader
- ☐ Accept invite from our [eLearning platform](#) and create an account

Week 2

- ☐ Complete self-guided Youth Protection course through our [online leader training platform](#)
- ☐ Complete the New Leader Training modules through our [online leader training platform](#)
- ☐ Meet with your co-leader, and plan your first meeting. Utilize [co-leader discussion questions](#)
- ☐ [Email or call all new troop families to invite them to the first meeting](#). Ask families to register their girl in CouncilAlignMENT
- ☐ Connect with your RE - They will be there to support you during your Girl Scout journey
- ☐ Start the process of opening a bank account with your RE, and complete [Funding the Fun training](#)

Week 3

- ☐ Work with your RE to complete your bank account set-up and apply for [tax exemption status](#)
- ☐ [Hold your first meeting with your families](#). Utilize [family meeting agenda](#) on page 14
- ☐ Review [Volunteer Essentials](#)

Week 4

- ☐ Plan your first Troop Meeting! Explore the Plan a Troop Meeting module on our [online leader training platform](#)
- ☐ Connect with your [Service Unit Manager](#) and attend your first leader meeting
- ☐ Purchase [uniforms](#) for troop
- ☐ Learn about [Product Programs](#)

** The time in which you complete these steps is completely individual and can be spread out over a longer or shorter amount of time. However, this is the order we recommend you complete these tasks!



Your Brownie Year-at-a-Glance

Troop Meetings

Your troop goal can be to host two meetings a month - one for badge earning and another for a fun adventure! Try completing three badges this year.

Each Brownie badge has 5 steps that must be completed to earn the badge. Each step can be completed in a variety of ways! Activity options for each step can be found in booklets called Badge Requirements. These booklets are for purchase in the Cabin.

Here are a few badge suggestions to start:

Girl Scout Way

1. Sing everywhere
2. Celebrate Juliette Low's birthday
3. Share sisterhood
4. Leave a place better than you found it
5. Enjoy Girl Scout traditions



My Cookie Customers

1. Learn about Girl Scout Cookies
2. Decide how to use your cookie money
3. Find customers
4. Handle money and make change
5. Connect with customers



Space Science Adventurer

1. Meet the neighbors
2. See more than before
3. Investigate the Moon
4. Be a stargazer
5. Celebrate and share



Learn all about being a Brownie by using the Girl Scout Brownie Handbook!

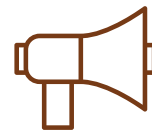


The Girl Scout Secret Sauce

The “secret sauce” is the vehicle that distinguishes Girl Scouts from other youth organizations and the driver of amazing leadership outcomes!

WHAT

Girl Scouts do activities in Four Focus Areas



STEM, Outdoor Adventure, Life Skills, and Entrepreneurship

**Traditions | Troop Meetings | Field Trips
Badges | Patches | Journeys | Camp
Cookie Program | Take Action Projects**

HOW

Girl Scouts experience our unique environment and process

Environment = all-girl safe space with supportive adult mentors (you!)

Process = girl-led, learn by doing, cooperative learning

WHY

Girl Scouts become people of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

Research based outcomes, or benefits, of the Girl Scout experience include:

**Strong Sense of Self • Positive Values
Healthy Relationships • Challenge Seeking
Community Problem Solving**

Welcome to Girl Scouts!

We're so excited for you to join the Girl Scout movement. Girl Scouts empowers girls everywhere to stand up and make a difference. Since Girl Scouts founding in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low, Girl Scouts have been making the world a better place. By nurturing innovation and developing leadership skills, we prepare girls to overcome challenges and advocate for their ideas now and later. With an emphasis on self-discovery, character building, and community impact, Girl Scouts helps girls become a powerful force for good in the world.

Our Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

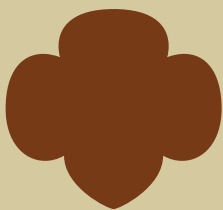
Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To serve God* and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

No matter where or how you volunteer, you'll make a difference in Girl Scouts' lives. This go-to guide will prepare you to effectively lead during your first year as a Girl Scout volunteer. Need help along the way? Let us know! We have tools, training resources, and people to help support you through each step.

What does it mean to be a Girl Scout leader? That is something you will discover throughout your time with the girls and adults in your troop as well as relationships you make with fellow Girl Scout volunteers and families. It is an exciting adventure! It is the amazing journey of helping girls build courage, confidence, and character through Girl Scouts.

As a leader, it is important to remember that leadership can bring many joys, including developing a personal relationship with each girl in the troop, building new adult friendships through the sisterhood of Girl Scouts, receiving sincere appreciation and thanks from parents and, most importantly, knowing that you are shaping the future by working with a girl today.



Troop Leaders

Help Girl Scouts reach their potential as creative, courageous leaders

Create a space where Girl Scouts try new things without worrying about failing

Teach lessons Girl Scouts will use for decades to come

Try new things along with their Girl Scouts

Develop leaders' own organizational and leadership skills

Join a global community of sisterhood

**The word "God" can be interpreted in a number of ways, depending on one's spiritual beliefs. When reciting the Girl Scout Promise, it is okay to replace the word "God" with whatever word your spiritual beliefs dictate.*

Our Council

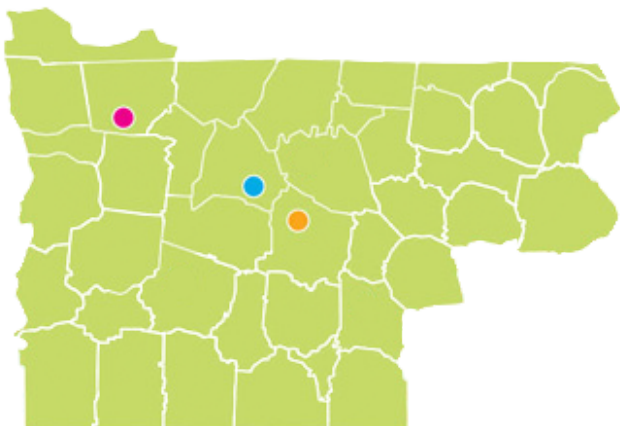
Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee is the premier leadership organization for all girls to have the opportunity to pursue greatness, create sustainable change in their communities, and actively transform the world around them now and for future generations.

Locally, the first troops were started in 1917, with the Nashville Girl Scout Council receiving its charter in 1926. Today, Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee serves 39 counties that include more than 10,000 Girl Scouts and 5,000 volunteers.

We prepare girls for their future by educating them in the areas of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), Outdoor Adventures, Life Skills, and Entrepreneurship. Together we are empowering girls and changing the world.

Where We are Located

- **Nashville Service Center**
Main Office & Cabin*
4522 Granny White Pike
Nashville, TN 37204
(615) 383-0490
- **Clarksville Service Center**
331 A4 Union Street
Clarksville, TN 37040
(931) 648-1060
- **Murfreesboro Service Center**
2690 Memorial Boulevard, Suite C1
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
(615) 690-7057



Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
and
responsible for what I
say and do,
and to
respect myself and
others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better
place,
and
be a sister to every Girl
Scout.



Getting Started

New leaders often spend the first few weeks getting started and setting up their troop. Don't forget to complete your CHECKLIST on page three!



Setting up your Troop

Number of members to expect in your troop

As a new troop, you can expect to have 10-12 members. Research has found this is the 'sweet spot' – small enough to encourage individual development and large enough to provide an interactive and cooperative learning environment. Our minimum for troop formation is 5 members. If your troop doesn't have enough members assigned or you would like a larger group, GSMIDTN is here to help you!

Troop Interests/Goals/Personality

Think about what your troop will want to accomplish this year. What are some goals? Will the troop focus on one theme for the year? Every troop has a unique 'personality.'

Will the Girl Scouts speak a different language? Focus on recruiting Girl Scouts with disabilities or learning differences? Do all members enjoy a specific sport or activity?

Meeting Location and Times

Remember, set meeting times that work with your schedule! You will need to choose a location for regular meetings – a local park, library, school, private homes – the troop can meet anywhere that follows the GS safety guidelines. You will also need to decide what day of the week and how often the troop will meet. Most of our troops meet twice a month. So, think about what day, which weeks of the month and the time-frame (1, 1 1/2 or 2 hours) – right after school, weekday evening, or weekend.

Some meeting locations require a Certificate of Insurance (COI). To request this document, email your Regional Executive with the meeting place and address. COIs expire September 30 and will automatically reissue.

Looking to grow your troop more?

As a troop leader, you can make sure your Regional Executive is aware that you are open for new members. As individuals express interest, you will be connected with these families through your RE. If you would like help growing your troop, contact your Regional Executive at any time throughout the year to brainstorm recruitment ideas!

Building an Inclusive Troop

Establishing an inclusive environment that welcomes every girl, fosters a sense of belonging and provides a safe space for everyone should be a top priority.

Girl Scouts have a better experience when they are warmly welcomed into a troop.

New Leader Training

Required Training is Virtual, Self-Guided, and Free!
Plan to complete all four within one month.

1. New Leader Training (required, self-guided, training platform)
2. Youth Protection (required, self-guided, training platform)
3. Funding the Fun: Banking and Finance Procedures (required, self-guided, training platform)
4. Daisy Essentials (optional, self-guided, strongly encouraged, training platform)

Additional Training you need to know about:

- **Live Question & Answer sessions** with Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee staff
- **Online Camping Skills Training** (self-guided) is a required training for any volunteer, parent, or staff member that plans to utilize GSMIDTN camp properties or other outdoor locations for any amount of time.
 - If your troop is reserving a property for Day-Use Only, no other Camping Skills trainings will be needed.
 - **First AID/CPR** is required for all reservations/activities.
 - Only one adult attending a property reservation is required to complete this training.

To prepare your troop for more fun and outdoor adventure, GSMIDTN is pleased to offer each troop 3 free trainings per Girl Scout year - one of each of the following.

- When your troop is ready to go on outings/field trips outside the regular meeting place, at least one registered/background checked adult will need to take a qualifying **First AID/CPR Training**. (Required for field trips & camping, recommended for troop meetings)
- **Camping Skills 1** prepares you to take your troop for a day outdoors or overnight in a building with a fully equipped kitchen, stove, refrigerator, electricity, and running water. (Online Camping Skills is a prerequisite)
- **Camping Skills 2** (designed to be taken after completing Camping Skills 1) prepares you for camping in cabins without kitchens, screened cabins, platform tents, or designated tent camping sites with bathroom facilities, water, and a pavilion.

Please refer to our [Free Trainings Flyer](#) to learn how to apply your troop's free training credits to your account.

Check these out at gsmidtn.org/volunteer/adult-training/

Volunteer Resources

Girl Scout Handbooks and Badge Requirements

There is a handbook for each level with information, traditions, and all the fun options Girl Scouts have. There are separate badge requirement packets for each badge and each level. Put the handbook and badge requirements together to make a unique experience for your troop! You can purchase these and other Girl Scout gear at the Nashville Cabin.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

This is an online list containing everything you need to know to be prepared and keep your troop safe during a number of different kinds of activities outside of the normal Girl Scout troop meeting. This can be found in [Troop Resources under Safety and Travel](#).

Volunteer Essentials

[Volunteer Essentials](#) contains information, policies and procedures to guide our volunteers and staff and to ensure that the Girl Scout program is delivered in a safe, consistent manner for Girl Scouts across our council. By agreeing to be a Girl Scout volunteer, you're agreeing to follow the items laid out in this resource. The policies and procedures document is updated on a regular basis, and the newest version can always be found on our website. This can be found in Troop Resources under Resources.

GSMIDTN Social Media

Want to know what other troops are doing? Interested in new activities for your troop? Like sharing photos and videos? Stay connected and help us share the Girl Scout love on social media! Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram. Email CommunicationsDept@gsmidtn.org to submit photos (make sure your girls have a [signed photo release](#)!) and be sure to include troop number and name for a chance to be featured!

Newsletter

Every Wednesday we send out the Girl Scout Weekly Connection. It lets you know important information as well as new activities and opportunities for you and your Girl Scouts. When you register as an adult, you are automatically signed up for these newsletters.

Troop Resources

Now available online gsmidtn.org/troop-resources, this is the place where forms and information live. This resource center will help you plan meetings, be safe, and get started or keep your troop running.

Check out these and other resources at gsmidtn.org/volunteer/troop-resources/

A New Leader's Support System

Your Support System

Girl Scouts is all about relationships. As a leader, you are not alone! Your troop co-leader(s) and caregivers are your primary team. Get to know them and allow them to help!

Your Service Unit

What is a Service Unit? Service Units are located within a specifically defined geographic area that is designed to best serve the Girl Scouts and volunteers in that area. These may be based on a cluster of schools, neighborhoods, or as large as an entire city or county.

Service Unit teams consist of experienced Girl Scout volunteers who are there to support one another through the Girl Scout year. The team can include a manager, treasurer, product coordinator, and more.

These volunteers work together to support you by providing activities and event opportunities in your area throughout the year. And, they hold monthly meetings for leaders.

Service Unit Meetings

These meetings are usually held monthly and can be in person or virtual.

- Meet and network with fellow volunteers
- Learn about upcoming events and trainings, etc
- Share resources and materials

Your Regional Executive can get you connected to the volunteers in your Service Unit.

Your GSMIDTN Council Staff

We are here for you! Your Regional Executive will be here reaching out to you throughout your first year as a troop leader. You will receive a 30-60-90 day email series to help guide you through your first two months. If you have a private matter, a conflict to discuss, issues with registration or any other needs at any point during your Girl Scout journey, GSMIDTN can help! Contact your Regional Executive.

Getting Connected, Socially

Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee Community group is a special Facebook group just for GSMIDTN members! This community is a great forum to get questions answered in real time and to get ideas for activities during meetings, planning ideas, and events of all kinds. Our staff members moderate the group. This is also a great place to reach out for help at any time.

We also have a blog where you can find tips and tricks for an even more successful Girl Scout year - <https://gsmidtn.org/blog/>

Co-Leaders - Leading Together

Each troop needs at least two unrelated adults who are Girl Scout members and have completed a background check to be able to meet. A friend, neighbor, or another parent are all great people to lead a troop with. If you need assistance recruiting a co-leader, talk to your RE.

Before meeting with caregivers or your troop, you will want to get together and make some decisions about your troop. Once you have your family meeting you will include them in these decisions.

Meeting Logistics:

- ☐ When will we meet, and for how long (length of each meeting and until what part of year)?
- ☐ How frequently should we schedule troop meetings?
- ☐ Where will we meet?

TIP

Your meeting space should be somewhere safe, clean, and secure that allows all Girl Scouts to participate. Some great meeting space ideas include schools, places of worship, libraries, and community centers.

Your Troop:

- ☐ Are we splitting duties 50/50? If not and one person is taking on more responsibilities than the other, are we both okay with that arrangement?

TIP

Schedule regular check-ins with each other to help build your co-leader relationship!

- ☐ How are we going to work with our troop to decide on activities that are what they want to do, age appropriate, and help them discover, connect, and take action?

TIP

Girl Scouting is girl-led, so knowing how your troop will make decisions and what form of troop governance the troop will follow will help pave the way for success.

Troop Communication:

- ☐ Who will take the lead on communicating with families?
- ☐ How and how often are we going to communicate to parents/guardians?

TIP

Keep everyone in the loop to make sure they know when, where, and what the activities will be and that Girl Scouts are prepared for the activity. Effective communication will help set expectations and clarify caregiver responsibilities.

Money Management:

- ☐ Will our troop charge dues, use product program proceeds, and/or charge per activity?
- ☐ How much money will we need to cover supplies and activities?

TIP

Outline a financial plan, and then fill in the details once your troop determines what they want to do this year.

- ☐ Which components of the uniform will families need to purchase?

Working with Brownies

Girls at this age have a variety of skills at different levels. Reading abilities, attention spans, and small motor coordination are still developing. As you get to know your troop, you'll better help them plan activities and adjust your own expectation levels. Be sensitive to their feelings about their differences and remember that each girl is an individual.



Girl Scouts is
Girl-Led

Brownies (2-3 Grade Girls)	This means
Have lots of energy and need to run, walk, and play outside.	Taking your session activities outside whenever possible.
Are social and enjoy working in groups	Allow girls to team up in small or large groups for art projects and performances.
Want to help others and appreciate being given individual responsibilities for a task.	Let girls lead, direct, and help out whenever possible. Allow group decisions about individual roles and responsibilities.
Are concrete thinkers and focused on the here and now.	Do more than just reading to girls about the Brownie Elf's adventures. Ask questions to gauge understanding and allow them to role-play a pretend visit to a new country.
Need clear directions and structure, and like knowing what to expect.	Offer one direction at a time, and have girls create the schedule and flow of your get-togethers and share it at the start.
Are becoming comfortable with basic number concepts, time, money, and distance.	Offer support only when needed. Allow girls to set schedules for meetings, count out money for a trip, etc.
Are continuing to develop their fine motor skills and tie shoes, use basic tools, beginning to sew, etc.	Encourage girls' creative expression by making things with their hands. They may still need some assistance with things like holding scissors or threading needles.
Love to act in plays, create music, and dance.	Girls might like to create a play about welcoming a new girls to their school or telling a story through dance or creative movement.
Know how to follow rules, listen well, and appreciate recognition of a job done well.	Acknowledge when the girls have listened or followed directions well, which will boost their motivation to listen and follow directions again.

Letting Brownies take the lead:

- Encourage girls to be creative and add their own flair to projects and activities.
- Let the girls try new things and make mistakes in the attempt.
- Let the girls do the talking with meeting guests, their troop mates, other troops, or the Service Units.
- Ask thoughtful questions instead of just providing answers.
- Let girls make decisions between multiple options.
- Use the buddy system with Brownies at each meeting or outing.
- Brownies can lead meetings with a caregiver or as a small group with adult guidance!

Brownie Troop Management

Kaper Charts

A kaper chart is a classic Girl Scout tradition—a creative chart or board that helps Girl Scouts learn about taking turns.

From taking attendance to cleaning up after the meeting, there are a lot of logistics that need to happen during a troop meeting. Some people may call these “chores”, “tasks”, or maybe even “agenda items”, but at Girl Scouts, we like to use the term “kapers”.

Troop Behavior Agreements

Creating a troop agreement is an excellent way to prevent and manage conflict and create a happy, safe, and healthy environment – both with troop members and caregivers.

- It sets clear expectations from the very beginning, which avoids misunderstandings.
- It avoids jealousy, blaming, or frustration with others.
- It is easier to approach someone if you have their commitment in writing.
- It provides accountability.
- It teaches integrity, responsibility, and professionalism.

Troop Government

Every grade level of Girl Scouting uses some form of troop government. Brownies use the Brownie Ring.

- Troop government is a way for Girl Scouts to learn responsibility, independence and how to become leaders!
- Troop government is designed to be progressive, building on the skills learned in previous years.
- When Girl Scouts reach Juniors and on through Ambassadors, they take on more responsibility of running the troop and thus should decide which form of troop government they will use.

The Brownie Ring

The Brownie Ring is the planning portion of troop meetings, where decisions for the troop are made. Through engaging in large group discussions, Brownies learn essential communication and decision-making skills. We recommend keeping this segment of the meeting brief, no more than 15 minutes. Whether it takes place at the beginning or end of a meeting, the Brownie Ring is an integral part of a troop's Girl-led experience.

Leaders can either create a list of options or have the girls generate their own ideas. If you gather ideas, consolidate, record, and offer a final list of options for group decision-making. Pictures, charts, and Girl Scout Journey books can assist Brownies in making decisions.

- **Sit in a "Ring" aka Circle**

All girls sit in a circle so everyone can hear.

- **Let Girls Try Moderating**

A girl may begin to lead discussions—with leader guidance—and brainstorm activities for the troop. It's important to ensure that every girl has a chance to take on this leadership role at some point during the year.

- **Give Brownies Structure**

- Use a “talking buddy”—pick an object and the person holding it is the only one who should talk.
- Quiet sign—when someone raises their right hand, everyone must do the same and become quiet.
- Establish a troop rule that nobody criticizes any ideas that anyone may offer to the group.

Check out our [Creating A Troop Agreement Activity Guide](#)

Working with Families

Unlike many other activities, a Girl Scout troop needs parent and caregiver support to thrive!

Family Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and introductions to one another and to Girl Scouts. Ask about each new Girl Scout and get to know them a little.
- Share how important each family will be to the troop.
- Discuss meeting location, day and times, uniforms and troop dues (you may want to collect at the meeting).
- Set expectations for communication and response times and how caregivers can get involved to help the troop (Behavior Agreements, 4Her).
- Have caregivers complete health history forms, annual permission forms. Share contact info for all troop members.
- Brainstorm the types of activities the troop will participate this year (regular meetings, field trips, events, camping trips).
- Answer any questions families may have.

Helpful Tips!



- Don't try to do this alone! Ask family members directly to help with the troop – list out specific needs (4Her).
- Invite a member of your Service Unit team to attend if you need help with this meeting.
- Have a Meet My Girl Scout info sheet so that families can share helpful info for working with their child.
- Have a craft or simple activity to keep Girl Scouts engaged while you're speaking with families

Ask your parents, caregivers, and family members to promise 4 Hours, 4 Her!

The “4Her Promise” is an open door for all adults in a Girl Scout's life to participate in Girl Scouts and support their troop. Girl Scouts who have family support and participation in their Girl Scout adventures are more likely to stay in Girl Scouts. And families want to ensure their child feels supported. In fact, one out of four people say they don't volunteer because no one asked them to—so, let's ask!

Check out our pre-recorded Your First Family Meeting training

How Many Volunteers?

Troop co-leaders are responsible for arranging and maintaining proper adult supervision for meetings and activities. Each troop meeting or Girl Scout group must have at least two unrelated adult members and a background check on file present at all times, plus additional adult volunteers as necessary. Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old, and one adult in every group must be a woman.

Use the table to identify how many adults you need based on the number of girls participating:

Volunteer to Girl Scout Safety Ratio	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one woman) for number of girls:	Plus one additional volunteer for each additional number of girls:	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one woman) for number of girls:	Plus one additional volunteer for each additional number of girls:
Daisies (grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8
Cadettes (grades 6-8)	25	1-12	20	1-10
Seniors (grades 9-10)	30	1-15	24	1-12
Ambassadors (grades 11-12)	30	1-15	24	1-12

Safety Responsibilities for Girls

Girls who learn about and practice safe and healthy behaviors are likely to establish lifelong habits of safety consciousness. For that reason, each Girl Scout is expected to:

- Assist you and other volunteers in safety planning.
- Listen to and follow your safety instructions and suggestions.
- Learn and practice safety skills.
- Learn to “think safety” at all times and to be prepared.
- Identify and evaluate an unsafe situation.
- Know how, when, and where to get help when needed.
- Practice the buddy system when participating in troop activities.

Keeping Girls Safe

While working with Girl Scouts and learning new skills is fun and rewarding, assuming responsibility for other people's children means that some level of risk management and due diligence is involved. There are several resources we use to help you minimize risk and keep Girl Scouts safe.

Planning Safe Activities

When preparing for any activity with Girl Scouts, start by reading the Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints for that particular activity. Each Safety Activity Checkpoint offers you required guidelines on where to do this activity, how to include Girl Scouts with disabilities, where to find both basic and specialized gear required for the activity, how to prepare yourselves for the activity, and what specific steps to follow on the day of the activity. Safety Activity Checkpoints will note if a First Aider is required. This can be found in the [Troop Resources](#) online under Safety & Travel.

What to Do in an Emergency

Although we all hope the worst never happens, it's important to know and follow our council's procedures for handling emergency incidents. At the scene of the incident, safety is your first priority. Provide care for the injured person or obtain medical assistance and then immediately report the emergency to your GSMIDTN Regional Executive.

First Aid Kits

Make sure a general first-aid kit is available at your group meeting place and accompanies Girl Scouts on any activity (including transportation to and from the activity).

Please be aware that you may need to provide this kit if one is not available at your meeting place. Purchase a Girl Scout first-aid kit, buy a commercial kit, or you and the Girl Scouts can assemble a kit.

Always keep your first aid kit with the troop. Caregiver consent forms and health histories may be included as well.

Check the kit regularly. Check expiration dates and replace any used or out-of-date contents.

Items to include:

- Adhesive bandages
- Sterile gauze pads
- Antibiotic ointment packets
- Hydrocortisone ointment packets
- Antiseptic wipe packets
- Nonlatex gloves
- Instant cold compress

Brownie Uniforms

Uniforms are an important part of the Girl Scout experience, connecting members to Girl Scout traditions, displaying their accomplishments, and creating memories to last a lifetime. Girl Scouts at each level now wear one required element (tunic, sash, or vest) to display official pins and awards. Girl Scouts can mix and match pieces from the official Girl Scout collection to complete the uniform. Troop Leaders may opt to collect money from families and purchase sashes, vests, and insignia from council, or ask families to purchase items on their own.

Uniform Basics

Brownies may choose between a brown sash or a brown vest. For formal events, vests and sashes are worn with white shirts and khaki pants or skirts. In addition to the standard white and khaki option, Brownies may choose to wear a full uniform ensemble, which includes a beanie and leggings or a skirt.

The Front of the Uniform

All official patches, pins, and insignia are placed on the front of the Brownie uniform. A Brownie might not earn all of these awards—it depends on her length of time in the program. See pages 18-20 for a How to Wear It guide and short descriptions of each pin, badge, and award.

The Back of the Uniform

If Girl Scouts can't fit all the official awards and patches on the front of their uniform, they can place them on the back. However, the back of the uniform is meant for all unofficial patches including Council's Own, cookie, camp, and fun patches. Fun patches reflect Girl Scouts' participation in events, projects, or special personal interests.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is available for the required parts of the uniform. Please have those who request assistance fill out our Uniform Financial Assistance form.

Brownie Vest Option



Use our My First Uniform resource to collect uniform orders from families before placing a bulk order!

See page 27 for the difference between badges and patches

You can order uniforms, Girl Scout gear, and more on our online shop!

Brownie Uniforms

How to Wear It

Brownie Vest

American Flag Patch

Girl Scout Council
Identification Set

Troop Crest

Troop Numerals

Membership Stars and Discs

Bridge to Girl Scout Brownie Award

My Promise, My Faith Pins

Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins

Safety Award Pin

Girl Scout Brownie Badges

World Thinking Day Award

Global Action Award Year 1

Brownie Insignia Tab

World Trefoil Pin

Girl Scout Brownie
Membership Pin

Journey Summit Award Pins

Journey Award Badges

Place your Journey
awards at the bottom of
your vest or sash.

As you earn
additional
awards, work
your way up.

Brownie Sash

If your Journey
awards and
badges don't fit
on the front of your
vest or tunic, you can
wear them on the back.



Brownie Uniforms

Pins, Badges, & Awards

All official patches, pins, and insignia are placed on the front of the Brownie uniform. A Brownie might not earn all of these awards—it depends on her length of time in the program. The following are the only pins, patches, and awards that belong on the front of the Brownie Girl Scout uniform.

American Flag Patch*

This patch identifies Girl Scouts living in the USA. Daisy Girl Scouts may wear the flag patch on the right shoulder of the tunic above the Girl Scout Council ID set.

Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins

Girls who participate in the Cookie Program are eligible to earn the cookie pin by developing essential business skills and meeting activity requirements. These pins move on to the next program level uniform as to continually represent the years the girl has participated in Cookie sales. Brownie enamel pins are brown with a Thin Mint for Year 1 and an Adventureful for Year 2.

Bridge to Girl Scout Brownie Award

Bridging awards mark a girl's transition from one leadership level to the next. An exciting time in a Girl Scout's life, the earning of the award and completion of the activities are designed to emphasize the continuity of one Girl Scout program and to welcome girls to an anticipated "next level."

Brownie Insignia Tab*

This tab is used to hold the World Trefoil Pin and Membership Pin.

Girl Scout Brownie Badges

These are triangular and placed along the bottom of the sash or vest on the right hand side. It is acceptable for these badges to be placed upside down in order to fit the pieces together like a puzzle. If there is no more space on the front, overflow badges can be placed on the bottom around the back of the vest or sash.

Girl Scout Brownie Membership Pin*

This pin, worn only by Brownie Girl Scouts, shows that a girl is a member of Girl Scouts at the Brownie Girl Scout age-level. It is worn on the Brownie Insignia Tab on the left side of the uniform, centered above the heart.

Girl Scout Council Identification Set*

This set includes the Girl Scouts of USA strip and Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee council ID strip.

Global Action Award Year 1

This award connects the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) sisterhood by helping girls work together to make a difference on an issue that affects girls and women all over the world.

Continued on next page

Brownie Uniforms

Pins, Badges, & Awards

Journey Award Badges

These awards signify the Daisy Journey activities a girl has completed. When the original three Journey activities are completed, they are put together to make a special picture.

Journey Summit Award Pin

This pin signifies that a Girl Scout has completed three Brownie Journeys. Girl Scouts who earned the Journey Summit Award Pin can carry their award over to their Junior uniform.

Membership Stars and Discs

These signify the completed years in any given program level. For every year completed, a star is placed on the uniform. These stars will move on to the next program level uniform as to continually represent the years the girl has been in Girl Scouts. A green colored disc rests behind the star to represent the Brownie program level. Membership Stars with Discs are worn directly beneath the troop numerals on the right side of the vest or sash in year order from right to left.

My Promise, My Faith Pins

These pins signify girls who've completed steps to identify what their faith and Girl Scouting have in common, using the Girl Scout Law as a guide.

Safety Award Pin

This pin signifies completion of a five-step process for staying safe, tailored to Girl Scout Brownies.

Troop Crest*

This crest is a symbol for the troop's goal, interest, or character. A crest is voted on by all troop members. The crests are worn by Girl Scout Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors. Center the troop crest directly under the council identification strip.

Troop Numerals*

Upon joining Girl Scouts, girls will receive a troop number.

World Thinking Day Award

World Thinking Day Award – This award is earned by participating in activities and projects on World Thinking Day.

World Trefoil Pin*

The World Trefoil Pin shows that you are part of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). On it are three leaves representing the Girl Scout Promise, with a flame that stands for loving all the people in the world. The compass needle is to guide you, and the two stars are the Girl Scout Promise and Law. The outer circle represents the World Association, and the golden yellow trefoil on a bright blue background stands for the sun shining over the children of the world. Center this pin above the Girl Scout Membership Pin on the insignia tab.

Girl Scout Troop Finances

Bank Accounts

- Regional Executives will help Troop Volunteers set up an account with one of our bank partners.
- At least two unrelated volunteers are needed for each account.
- Expect your Regional Executive to contact you for receipts and explanation of transactions as part of the Council's routine financial reviews.
- An Annual Year End report is sent out in April/May and due at the end of June.

Troop Budgets

Keeping good financial records is a must! Keep receipts and track troop activity costs. Troops should share financial information with families 2-3 times a year. When planning make sure to keep the troop budget in mind and to save money to help fund next year's activities, too.

Troop Dues

Most troops have troop dues. Make sure to be flexible with families when collecting troop monies. Troop dues/fees should be just enough to cover the cost of supplies and badges/patches. Dues average \$1-2 per meeting but should be no more than \$40 dollars for the full year. Families can also subsidize additional activities as needed.

Tax Exempt Status

Troops are able to have their own tax exempt ID. This is not required to set up a troop bank account. Fill out the [Application for Exempt Organization](#) from the Tennessee Department of Revenue and turn in to your Regional Executive.

Fundraising

A troop's primary money earning should come from the GSMIDTN Fall Product and Cookie Program. Each year, once a troop has participated in both Product Programs, they are able to apply to participate in other money earning activities such as garage sales or car washes. Requests must be submitted 30 days in advance.

Girl Scout Brownies

Financial Management & Product Program Abilities

As with other Girl Scout activities, girls build their financial and sales savvy as they get older. Every girl will be different, but here you'll find some examples of the abilities and opportunities for progression of girls at Brownie level.

- The group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and shares some of the group budgeting responsibilities.
- Brownies discuss the cost of activities (supplies, fees, transportation, rentals, and so on) with guidance from their volunteer(s).
- Brownies set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product programs.
- Brownies may decide to pay dues to contribute to the cost of activities.



Financial Assistance

Financial Assistance is made available to all members and is intended to ensure the cost of membership never keeps a girl from experiencing Girl Scouts. For more information, please reach out to your Regional Executive.

For more information about finances check out [Volunteer Essentials](#)

Useful Troop Forms

As a troop leader, you will find that forms are a necessity! Some useful forms you will need include:

Girl Health History Permission Form

To be completed by caregivers each year and held on the Troop Leader's person at all troop events

General Permission Form

To be completed by caregivers before a non-troop meeting activity

Uniform Financial Assistance Form

Filled out by caregivers and returned to council for uniform financial assistance

Permission to Conduct an Additional Money Earning Activity Form

This form is required for any money-earning activity beyond the Girl Scout cookie program or fall product program.

Tax Exemption Form

Used to apply for Tax Exemption with the TN Dept. of Revenue. For use whenever purchasing troop supplies, etc.

Intent to Travel Packet

This packet is to be used by troop leaders to submit to council and notify their Regional Executive of trip/travel plans that meet certain conditions.

Find these forms in the Online Troop Leader Binder at gsmidtn.org/troop-resources

Troop Communication

Good communication is essential to a well-run troop. It's a great idea to discuss how troop communications will be handled. Does everyone need to be in a special troop Facebook group, an email group, etc.? Will you make phone call reminders or text? Be sure to include response expectations in this conversation. A good idea is to always provide a deadline for communication responses. Do you have a parent who will be the designated communications person?

It's also important to keep an open and honest line of communication with caregivers regarding behavior/special needs of girls.



Girl Scout Traditions

Traditions give Girl Scouts a sense of history—and inspire them to be the best they can be. Sharing traditions with millions of Girl Scouts helps remind girls they belong to a big, powerful sisterhood. Whether at a troop meeting, a council-wide event, or meeting Girl Scouts around the world, here are a few traditions that every Girl Scout knows.

Girl Scout sign

Girl Scouts make the Girl Scout sign—raising three fingers of the right hand with the thumb holding down the pinky—when they say the Girl Scout Promise. The three fingers represent the three parts of the Promise.

Greeting

Girl Scouts can greet one another with the Girl Scout handshake, used by Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all over the world. The handshake is made by shaking hands with the left hand and making the Girl Scout sign with the right. The left hand is nearer to the heart and signifies friendship.

Kaper Charts

A chart dividing up troop responsibilities. Indicates all the jobs available and who is responsible during a meeting or a camp-out.



Slogan

The Girl Scout slogan is “Do a good turn daily.” The slogan, which has been used since 1912, is a reminder that Girl Scouts can make a difference in big and small ways.

Motto

The Girl Scout motto is “Be prepared.” In the 1947 Girl Scout Handbook, the motto was explained this way: “A Girl Scout is ready to help out wherever she is needed. Willingness to serve is not enough; you must know how to do the job well, even in an emergency.” The same holds true today.

SWAPS

Small tokens of friendship that girls often make and take to events or while traveling to swap with other Girl Scouts – “Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere.”

Friendship Circle

Representing the unbroken chain of friendship among Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world, the Friendship Circle involves Girl Scouts standing in a circle, crossing their right arms over their left, and clasping hands with their friends on both sides. Everyone then makes a silent wish as a friendship squeeze is passed from hand to hand around the circle (shown on the left)

Your Year in Girl Scouts

August	September	October	November
<p>Invite New Girls to Your Troop</p> <p>Back to Girl Scouts</p> <p>Plan Your Year</p> <p>Fall Product Program Begins</p>	<p><i>Hispanic Heritage Month</i></p> <p>Investiture Ceremonies</p> <p>Invite New Girls to Your Troop</p> 	<p>Girl Scout Membership Year Begins</p> <p>Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday</p> <p>Fall Product Program Ends</p> 	<p><i>Native American Heritage Month</i></p> <p>Plan for Cookie Program</p>
December	January	February	March
<p>Cookie Program Family Meeting</p> <p>Cookie Program Begins</p>	<p>Troop or Service Unit Cookie Rally</p> <p>Cookie Initial Orders Due</p> 	 <p>Cookie Pick Up</p> <p>Cookie Booths Start</p> <p>World Thinking Day</p> <p><i>Black History Month</i></p>	<p>Cookie Program Ends</p> <p>Girl Scout Week</p> <p><i>Women's History Month</i></p> <p>Girl Scout Faith Celebrations</p> 
April	May	June	July
<p>Girl Scout Leader Day</p> <p>National Volunteer Month</p> <p>Early Bird Renewal</p> 	 <p>National Bridging Week</p> <p><i>Mental Health Awareness Month</i></p> <p><i>Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month</i></p> <p>Troop End of Year Party</p>	<p>Year End Report Due</p> <p>Residential Summer Camps</p> <p>Day/Twilight Camps</p> <p><i>LGBTQ+ Pride Month</i></p>	<p>Residential Summer Camps</p> <p>Day/Twilight Camps</p> 

Planning Your Girl Scout Year

Think about completing at least one activity for each element – remember you can combine activities. Taking a hike to complete an outdoor badge can count for both Outdoors and Badges & Awards.

<p>Badges & Awards</p> <p>Ideally, each troop year should aim for four badges, or a journey and two badges!</p> <p>Try to rotate badges/activities based on the Four Focus Areas</p> <p>STEM Outdoors Life Skills Entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Traditions</p> <p>Aim to do at least one Girl Scout tradition activity at every meeting. Ex. sing Girl Scout songs, do a friendship circle, or celebrate Girl Scout special days like Girl Scouts' birthday (March 12). Wearing your uniform is a tradition too!</p>
<p>Outdoor Adventure</p> <p>Get outside with your troop at least once a year or as often as possible! Take a trip to a local park, have a cookout, or go camping!</p> <p><i>Don't forget to check Safety Activity Checkpoints</i></p>	<p>Community Service</p> <p>Aim to do at least one Community Service project. Find someone or something the troop really cares about helping. Identify a community need by starting with your own school or neighborhood and build from there.</p>
<p>Product Programs</p> <p>Year One Troops can aim to take part in the online portion of Fall & Cookie Product Programs to earn troop proceeds & rewards. Year Two is a great time to add in booth selling during the Cookie Program.</p>	<p>Special Events</p> <p>Aim to do at least one special event each year. For example, your troop could attend a Service Unit event, or go on your own field trips such as visiting the fire department, farmer's market, or pet shelter.</p>

Resources to help you plan

- [GSMIDTN Troop Resources Page](#)
- Service Unit leader meetings
- Get ideas from experienced Troop Leaders
- GSUSA Badge Requirements & Journeys
- GSUSA & GSMIDTN [Patch Programs](#)

Here are some tips and tricks to plan your Ultimate Girl Scout Year!

- Choose your dates – be sure to consider holidays and schedules.
- Decide how many Girl Scout meetings/ activities a month the troop will do.
- Decide how the troop will choose meeting topics and activities. Remember to keep it girl-led.
- Have a list of ideas for the troop to vote on doing and when to do each, or have the troop bring ideas to your meeting for a vote.
- Alternate regular meetings with fun outings, field trips or events.
- Include a wide variety of activities for the troop to participate in throughout the year.
- Will the troop do one activity each month during the summer or be on a break?
- Keep it age appropriate.
- Consider what the troop will do during inclement weather, illness, etc. Is virtual an option for your troop?
- Remember to be flexible – be prepared for a meeting plan to run askew and adjust – keep it fun! If a Girl Scout misses a meeting, it's okay. Making up a badge is voluntary.
- Take time to get to know your troop members and their interests – make sure at least one meeting meets each Girl Scout's individual interests.
- As you plan your year, engage caregivers with the troop – have each Girl Scout sign up to lead a meeting with her caregiver, they choose the badge/activity and you serve as their mentor.

Your First Troop Meeting

Your first troop meeting is a great chance to get to know the girls and brainstorm all the exciting things they want to do in the year to come. If you're feeling a little nervous about leading troop meetings and experiences with your girls, that's OK! Just remember that:

It doesn't need to be perfect.

Did an activity run over time? Or, maybe a field trip didn't go according to plan? Take a deep breath, roll with the changes, and have fun! The girls aren't expecting perfection from you: your time, attention, and guidance are the best part of your leadership.

Learn with your girls.

Keeping activities girl-led also means that at some point, the girls will want to earn a badge or complete a project in a subject unfamiliar to you. Don't let that hold you back. Be open with the girls and when you don't know something and that you will be learning together. You'll show them that learning is a lifelong process and that with an open mind, they can overcome any challenge that comes their way.

Six Elements of a Great Troop Meeting

The only requirement for your troop meetings is that your girls are engaged and having fun! Many leaders use this basic structure for troop meetings:

1. Ramp Up –

Plan an opening activity for girls upon arrival at the meeting so that have something to do before the meeting begins. Plan about five minutes for this, it could be snack, or creating a thank you card, coloring a page, etc.

2. Opening –

Each troop decides what they will do regularly. Most begin with the reciting the Girl Scout Promise & Law, a song, game, story, or other activity designed by the girls. Plan 5-10 minutes for this.

3. Troop Business –

Collect dues, take attendance, make announcements or plan upcoming activities while parents may be present.

4. Let the fun begin!

This is your activity for the meeting, work on a badge, journey, or complete other activities during this time plan 30 minutes to 1 hour according to your meeting time.

5. Clean Up –

Girls clean up all supplies because Girl Scouts always leave a place cleaner than they found it. Plan about five minutes.

6. Closing –

As a troop, girls decide how they will end each meeting – a song, a game, a Girl Scout tradition. Plan 5-10 minutes for this.

Got Snacks?

Snacks are optional, but if your troop has chosen to include snacks, guide families to consider healthy snacks and always share any food allergies the girls in your troop may have. Include snack time as part of your troop meeting.

First Meeting Checklist

- ☐ Cover the basics. Review the details about when and where the meeting will take place and make sure parents/caregivers are aware.
- ☐ Get ready. Compare the list your RE gave you to your roster on CouncilAlignMENT - remind any stragglers to register! This might also be a great time to remind parents to bring health history forms, uniform orders, and troop dues to the meeting. Make sure all girls who plan to participate are registered by the second meeting.
- ☐ Know the agenda. Refer to the Six Elements of a Troop Meeting list and your meeting agenda/plans.
- ☐ Review and practice your agenda. You'll feel calmer during the actual meeting and ready to make adjustments as needed.
- ☐ Prepare for Fun! When the girls and parents see that you're prepared for the meeting and ready to have a great time, they'll follow your lead!

The Girl Scout Program

Girl Scouts participate as a troop or as individuals to earn badges, take trips, get outdoors, complete service projects and explore their own personal interests. There are many opportunities to earn badges and patches depending on the path a troop chooses to follow. So what's the difference between the two?

Badges

- Created by GSUSA and available to every council
- Created for a specific level of Girl Scouting
- Guidelines to earn can be found online and in your Girl Scout's badge book
- Placed on the front of the vest or tunic

Patches

- Earned separately from Badge or Journey requirements
- Can be earned by visiting a new place, participating in a council- or Service Unit-sponsored event, or completing a certain set of requirements created by a council or organization
- Placed on the back of the vest or tunic



Badges (A)

Badges are the most traditional way of showcasing individual skill-building accomplishments of a Girl Scout. For each badge, a girl completes activities related to a specific subject and demonstrates proficiency at each. Life Skills, Outdoors, Entrepreneurship, and STEM are the four focus areas Girl Scouts concentrate on as skill-builders. In addition to skill-building badges, Daisies have unique badges called petals. Petals introduce Girl Scout values to Daisies by focusing on the different lines of the Girl Scout Law. Seven legacy badges are also available for Brownies to Ambassadors.

Council's Own Patches (B)

Council's Own patches are created by Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee. They each have their own list of requirements developed by our council or a partner organization. They are great options when planning troop meetings or excursions.

Council's Own patches focus on different areas of girl interest, including camping, sports, music, and the outdoors. Find a list of available patches and their requirements on our [website](#). Council's Own Patches are available for purchase [online](#) or in the Cabin. Email nashvilleshop@gsmidtn.org to check for patch availability.

Fun Patches (C)

Fun patches can be earned for any number of fun activities your troop or Service Unit completes together. These can include camporees, pool parties, a trip to the movies, or a visit to a museum.

Many fun patches are available for purchase online or in the Cabin. Check out our online shop or email nashvilleshop@gsmidtn.org to check availability. If you need a specialty patch for an event that we do not keep in stock (like roller skating), we can order them for you with no additional cost.

Fun patches are a wonderful way to commemorate fun experiences with your Girl Scouts.

A.



B.



C.



Check Out Our [Badge Explorer!](#)

Program Activities

Council-Sponsored Programs

Council-Sponsored programs are created and run by Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee. You can sign up with your troop or as an individual Girl Scout. Information about which programs are coming up can be found in the weekly Girl Scout Connection newsletter, on the website event calendar, and on CouncilAlignMENT.

Partner Programs

Partner programs are run by partner organizations in the community, but registration is handled by Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee. Refund and organizational policies may differ from those of Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee. You can register for these programs on CouncilAlignMENT.

On Your Own Programs

On Your Own programs are offered by partner organizations. Registration and money collection will be handled by the partner organization on their external website. These programs are not found on CouncilAlignMENT, but links to the registration page will be found on the website event calendar and in the weekly GS Connection newsletter.

Many On Your Own programs can be done at troop outings for fun or to help you earn a badge. See list of all on your own partnerships on the [event calendar](#) or [Community Opportunities](#) page. For more ideas for troop meetings, check out our [Council Quest](#) and [Travel Activity](#) programs!



Go to pg 37 to learn how to register for these amazing programs!

Brownie Equestrian Programs

We offer a variety of horse programs at Camp Sycamore Hills. During the year, Brownie Girl Scouts can participate in ground lessons like Pony Ready or Loving & Grooming. Brownies can even start riding on their own by taking a lesson with their troop!

There are physical restrictions for some of our equestrian programs. For more information, visit the [Equestrian page](#) on our website

To view our program calendar, check out gsmidtn.org/calendar/

Ready, Set, Take Action!

Community Service and Take Action Projects

Make the world a better place! For over 100 years, Girl Scouts have been encouraged to do anything they set their sights on, and as a result, Girl Scouts continue to make an impact locally and globally.

Community Service Projects

Community service projects address an immediate need in the community and are appropriate for every Girl Scout – Daisy through Ambassador! Community service makes the world a better place for some people right now.

Take Action Projects

Take Action projects transform a community service project into a long-term, lasting impact for the community. With Take Action projects, Girl Scouts are challenged and encouraged to research, plan, and lead projects that tackle the root of a local, national, or global problem. They learn about getting to the root causes of issues, mobilizing and engaging community members and volunteers, and striving toward creating a lasting change in their world. Girl Scouts are encouraged to solve and address the problem in a way that will prohibit the problem from reoccurring. Take Action projects aim for long-term benefits that change the world in a meaningful, measurable, and sustainable way!

Girl Scouts will create and carry out a Take Action project with every Journey they complete. The Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards all require the completion of a Take Action project.

Girl Scouts must also make sure each Take Action project is sustainable and that the impact is measurable.

Sustainable:

Girl Scouts must make arrangements to ensure that the project creates lasting change and is not a one-time event. (Collaborate with community leaders and/or organization; creating relationships with mentors)

Measurable:

The success of the project can be determined based on the number of people the project helped, the number of people who were involved, any reduction in the community's need, and other concrete numbers.

Steps of a Good Take Action Project



1. Girl Scouts identify assets and needs in a community.
2. Girl Scouts reach out beyond their circle to meet others. Try to meet people affected by your issue and people who are trying to solve it.
3. Girl Scouts make a decision about what they will take action on.
4. Girl Scouts learn the steps needed to carryout an action plan.
5. Girl Scouts assist with project logistics.
6. Girl Scouts take action alongside community members.
7. Girl Scouts reflect on their action and assess what they gained from it.
8. Girl Scouts celebrate their community accomplishments.

Journey Awards & Council Quests

Journey Awards

Explore what really matters to you and use your passion to change the world—that's what Girl Scout Journeys are all about. Girl Scout Journeys are multi-session experiences created by GSUSA in which Girl Scouts dig deeper into their interests and use the skills they gain along the way to make a difference in their community. While badges show the world you've learned a new skill, Journey awards say, "I found a way to make a difference." During a Journey, Girl Scouts do hands-on activities, connect with experts, and take the lead on a Take Action project with their community. And once a Junior, Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador completes their Journey, they're ready to drive lasting change in their communities by going for their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award.

What are the benefits of a Journey?

Daisies and Brownies learn about the traditions of Girl Scouting and gain skills to create change in their communities. Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors can use their Journey Awards to help complete the requirements for their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Awards.

How do I complete a Journey?

Journey programs can be completed in three different ways: with your troop, at Service Unit events, or at council-led events. Journey programs put on by Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee can be registered for on CouncilAlignMENT.

Council Quests

Council Quests are a unique opportunity for Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee to explore and address issues relevant to their lives in a fun and innovative way. Like Girl Scout Journeys, they can be completed by a troop over several meetings, with your Service Unit, or over the course of a council-led program.

Council Quests help Girl Scouts develop their leadership and communication skills through girl-led discussions and roleplays. These Quests are designed to tackle difficult topics and inspire Girl Scouts to think critically and creatively. Council Quests promote thoughtful approaches to community service through the completion of a Ready, Set, Go! project after participation in a Council Quest program. Overall, Council Quests provide an exciting platform for Girl Scouts to learn, grow, and make a positive impact on their communities.

Council Quests are different from Journeys. They cannot be used toward Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award requirements. Council Quests are offered at three different levels for each topic: Brownie/Junior, Cadette, and Senior/Ambassador.

	Journeys	Council Quests
Created By	Girl Scouts of the United States of America	Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee
Girl Scout Levels Available	Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior, Ambassador	Brownie/Junior, Cadette, and Senior/Ambassador
Can you complete during troop meetings?	✓	✓
Can you complete at council-sponsored events?	✓	✓
Earn patch for uniform?	✓	✓
Use towards Highest Awards requirement?	✓	✗

Highest Awards

Girl Scouts' highest awards, the Gold, Silver, and Bronze Awards, are the highest honor a Girl Scout can earn and are awarded to Girl Scouts who display leadership while engaging in projects that benefit their communities. Your Brownies may not be eligible to pursue them - yet! - but it's important to know they are an option for your troop as they bridge to older levels.









Juniors earn the Bronze Award by teaming up with other Girl Scouts to make a difference in their towns and/or communities. Cadettes earn the Silver Award by researching an issue, making a plan to address it, and then taking action to improve their communities.

Seniors and Ambassadors earn the Gold Award—the highest award in Girl Scouting—by developing and carrying out lasting solutions to issues in their communities and beyond. Gold Award Girl Scouts truly are the world changers, rock stars, role models, and real-life heroes we all look up to. Plus, they're amazing candidates for colleges, scholarships, competitive internship programs, and exciting careers.

To get started on your Highest Awards, Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee offers virtual trainings for each level of award. Gold Award recipients who plan to attend college following graduation are eligible for the Agenia Clark Scholarship for Excellence in Leadership.

Why Highest Awards?

Highest Awards teach leadership skills and give Girl Scouts a template to more thoughtfully consider how they can “Make the World a Better Place.” Highest Awards give Girl Scouts the tools to identify things in their community that they want to improve and offer a concrete template to make that dream a reality.

	 Bronze	 Silver	 Gold
Level	Junior	Cadette	Senior/Ambassador
Journey Required?			
Suggested Time	20hrs	50hrs	80hrs
Proposal?			
Final Report Deadline	Sept 30 of the year they complete 5th grade	Sept 30 of the year they complete 8th grade	Sept 30 of the year they complete 12th grade
Team Size	Troop	Small Group	Solo

Product Sales Program

5 Skills + Financial Literacy

Each year, troops have two opportunities to participate in council sponsored money earning activities: the Fall Product Program and the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Each of these programs offer Girl Scouts and troops the opportunity to earn funds to power their Girl Scout adventures, as well as rewards to keep Girl Scouts engaged and motivated. Remember to refer to the [Troop Finances](#) section of this manual to see Brownie Product Program Abilities.

Through their participation in product programs, Girl Scouts are able to launch their very own businesses while learning important life skills along the way:



Goal Setting | Decision Making
Money Management
People Skills | Business Ethics

There are also Cookie Business Badges and curriculum that help troop volunteers guide Girl Scouts on this journey to develop their confidence in having a voice to set their goals, decide what they want to do with the money earned, and understand how to successfully run their Cookie Program.

- With the support of a volunteer in your Service Unit and the council Product Programs team, you will be connected to resources and support to ensure that you and your troop have everything that you need to have a successful experience.
- It's important to remember that any funds earned through money earning activities become property of the troop as a whole to further the Girl Scout experience.
- It must also be a girl-led decision on how these funds should be spent. Troop funds can be used towards meeting supplies, badges, field trips and activities, camping, experiences and more.

Fall Product Program | Aug– Oct

This is a great way to get Girl Scouts and families comfortable with participating in council sponsored money earning activities.

What: Girl Scouts sell nuts, candy and magazines online to family and friends.

How: Customers can select to have their order delivered by the Girl Scout or shipped directly to them. Products to be delivered by Girl Scouts will be shipped directly to the troop in November for distribution to Girl Scouts and families.

Why: Troops earn 20% of total sales that will be deposited into troop bank accounts in December.

Cookie Program | Dec – Feb

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world! The bulk of the troop's funds are earned through Girl Scouts' participation in the Cookie Program, and it's where they truly get to put the 5 Skills they have learned into action.

What: Girl Scouts sell cookies to customers near and far online, in-person, and at booth sales.

How: Family and friends support their Girl Scout by purchasing cookies to help her reach her goal. With the support of caregivers and troop volunteers, Girl Scouts can also participate in booth sales at local grocery stores, restaurants, and more.

Why: Troops earn proceeds on each package of cookies sold, and Girl Scouts earn rewards based on the number of packages they sell.

Our Properties

When Girl Scouts get outside and connect with nature in a girl-led setting, they grow in self-confidence, develop their leadership skills, and foster a passion for environmental stewardship. Many Girl Scouts will tell you that camping trips and summer camp are some of the best things about their Girl Scout experience.

Our Camps and Properties

With a camp-trained adult along, Girl Scouts can go troop camping or spend the day at one of our three beautiful camps throughout the school year. Summer brings day/twilight camps and sleep away camping for our Girl Scouts to enjoy. Summer opportunities are announced in December/January each year.

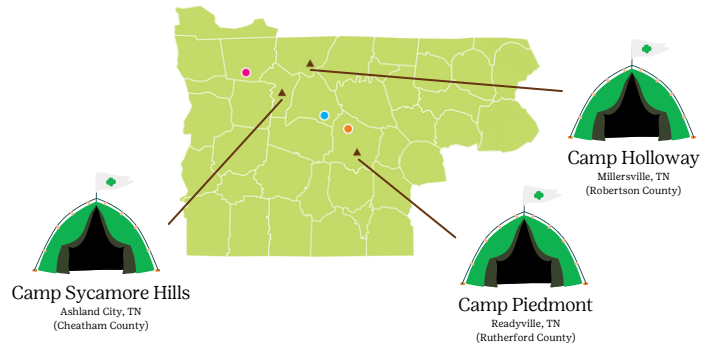
Property Availability Guidelines

Generally, 3rd weekend of the month is available for troop camping, and the 4th & 5th weekend of the month is first come/ first served for property reservations at Camp Properties

For day use and troop camping, reservations can be made up to 90 days in advance with one active reservation at a time.

Camp Sycamore Hills

Camp Sycamore Hills, established in 1958, is located on 742 acres of beautiful bluffs and meadows in Ashland City, Tennessee. Sycamore Hills is the largest Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee summer residential camp – often used for troop and Service Unit camping – and holds our equestrian facility. It offers many opportunities to experience the great outdoors including archery, canoeing, cookouts, high ropes, an obstacle course, team adventure, and tree climbing.



Camp Piedmont

Camp Piedmont, established in 1967, is located on 29 acres near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Throughout the acres of wooded trails, campers are always just minutes away from the base camp. The Lodge boasts an activity room that is large enough to accommodate an entire troop.

Camp Holloway

Camp Holloway is located on 76 acres in Millersville, Tennessee. It is named in honor of Josephine Groves Holloway, the first Black Girl Scout leader in Middle Tennessee, who was instrumental in creating this camp. Established as a camp for Black girls in 1952, today Girl Scouts of all races, religions, and backgrounds gather at Camp Holloway to discover the fun, friendship, and power of Girl Scouts together – just as Josephine intended.

Nashville Service Center

Headquarters of Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee, located in the Green Hills area of Nashville; offers indoor and outdoor meeting spaces.

Troops may reserve the City Center at the Nashville Service Center for troop lock-ins or the small footbridge for a bridging ceremony!

Reminder!

Check our website for [training requirements!](https://www.gsmidtn.org/training-requirements/)

For more information about camp check out gsmidtn.org/ways-to-camp/

Brownie Adventure Activities

We have put together a huge list of exciting activities and adventures that Brownies can do at our camp properties during a Day Use reservation, Troop Camping trip, or Service Unit Camporee. Take a dip in the pool, create a custom t-shirt, or go on a scavenger hunt... whatever you're into, we've got you covered! As girls level up, they will have more activity options like kayaking!

	Camp Holloway	Camp Sycamore Hills	Camp Piedmont
Archery	●	●	●
Campfire Cooking	●	●	●
Canvas Creations	●	●	●
Corcl	●	●	
Creek Explorers	●	●	●
Knife Safety	●	●	●
Knot-so-Fast	●	●	●
Lego Robotics	●	●	●
Letterboxing	●	●	●
Marble Maze	●	●	●
Marshmallow Shooters	●	●	●
Mission Egg Possible	●	●	●
Night Hike	●	●	
Obstacle Course	●	●	
Ozo Bots	●	●	●
Rock Climbing	●	●	
Screen Printing	●	●	●
Sling Shots	●		
Slime	●	●	●
Songs and S'mores	●	●	●
Spaghetti Tower	●	●	●
Swimming	●	●	
Swing by Choice	●		
Tie Dye	●	●	●
Troop Team Building Games	●	●	●
Woodcraft		●	

For more information on these activities as well as the most up to date list of all activities we offer for all levels, check out our [website!](#)

Brownie Travel Activities

We understand girls may not always be able to make it to our camps, and we're happy to provide travel activities and adventures wherever you need them. We offer a variety of activities that girls love and designed them to be portable. From Knife Safety to Ozo Bots, we've got something for every troop and we're happy to send one of our top-notch facilitators to your location to lead an unforgettable experience.

- Archery
- Canvas Creations
- Canvas Creations
- Creek Explorers
- Knife Safety
- Knot-so-Fast
- Lego Robotics
- Marble Maze
- Marshmallow Shooters
- Mission Egg Possible
- Night Hike
- Ozo Bots
- Screen Printing
- Slime
- Songs and S'mores
- Spaghetti Tower
- Swimming
- Swing by Choice
- Tie Dye
- Troop Team Building Games



Fill out a [Travel Activities Request Form](#) to reserve! All requests are due no later than 45 days prior to the event date. Late requests may not be accommodated. We will email or call to confirm and, if needed, discuss any scheduling conflicts. You will be notified when your request is approved. Approved requests will be placed in your CouncilAlignMENT account for payment. Payment must be made via CouncilAlignMENT and received no less than 30 days prior to your requested date.

For more information on these activities as well as the most up to date list of all activities we offer for all levels, check out our [website](#)!

Ways to Camp

Summer Camp

Summer Camp is one of the most iconic Girl Scout programs. Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors can attend one of our Day Camp programs, while Brownies and up can attend a Residential (overnight) camp. You do not have to be a registered Girl Scout to attend camp. Both Camp Holloway and Camp Sycamore Hills offer Residential camp. We offer Council run Day Camps at Camp Holloway and Camp Piedmont. Camp Sycamore Hills offers our Equestrian programs.

Information about which programs are available and when are detailed in the camp guide. The summer camp guide is released each year in mid-December. Summer Camp registration opens the first week of January. Registered Girl Scouts can sign up for camp through CouncilAlignMENT. Non-registered girls can find sign-up info on the Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee website.

Financial assistance for registered Girl Scouts is available for our summer camp programs.
Forms for financial assistance will be due in late spring.

Heads up!

Summer camp registrations fill up fast – especially the equestrian programs!

Service Unit Camporees and Volunteer Run Day Camps

Day camps are coordinated by local Girl Scout volunteers and are held at local religious buildings, parks, and schools and are generally offered during June and July across Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee's 39 counties. Registration for volunteer-run day camps is managed by each volunteer director or Service Unit hosting the day camp. More information on those can be found on our [website](#).

A camporee is a weekend event where new and seasoned troops can enjoy camping at one of our camp properties with other troops in their Service Unit. Enjoy troop time, amazing activities, adventure opportunities, and equestrian programs with everyone in the Service Unit. Camporees are planned and run by a Service Unit volunteer team and are a great way to volunteer outside of your troop!



Day Camp patch example

Troop Camping

Our camp properties provide everything needed for all levels of camping from brand new Daisies to Ambassadors. We offer several different types of units to accommodate your preferences including climate-controlled cabins, screened cabins, platform tents, and space to pitch your own tent. In addition to spending a night or two in the great outdoors, we have dozens of amazing activities, adventure opportunities, and horse programs you can request along with your camping reservation!

Generally, the third weekend of each month is available for troop camping. Troops may also request other open dates on CouncilAlignMENT on a first-come-first-served basis. Reservations can be made a maximum of 90 days prior to your desired date. One troop can reserve up to two units at a time. Reservations are limited to one active reservation at a time.

For more information about camp check out gsmidtn.org/ways-to-camp/

CouncilAlignMENT

Property Reservations & Program Registration

How do I reserve a property for Troop Camping or Day Use?

Property reservations are completed through CouncilAlignMENT. You will need a reservation any time you plan to visit our properties – even for Day-Use. Select Property Reservations on your home screen and select “Make New Reservation.”

The adult reserving the property, the Camping Skills trained adult, and the adult responsible for First Aid/CPR must have the [Property Liability Waiver](#) completed through CouncilAlignMENT in order to reserve the property.

The reservation deposit is due at the time of your reservation. Reservations are first come-first-serve and are not complete until the reservation deposit has been made.

Property Liability Waivers must be completed before reservation date for everyone attending.

How do I sign up for an Adventure Activity or Travel Activity?

For adventure activities on one of our camp properties (Holloway, Sycamore Hills, or Piedmont), make a property reservation for that camp on CouncilAlignMENT. Once your reservation is approved, you will be able to request adventure activities. Property reservations can be made for one activity or three! Even if you want to come up for Day-Use and do not plan on camping out overnight, you can participate in our Adventure Activities.

To request travel activities for a troop meeting or Service Unit event, fill out the form located in the [Girl Programs](#) section of the website. All requests are due at least 45 days prior to the requested date.



How do I register for a Council Sponsored Program

To sign up for Council Sponsored programs, log in to your CouncilAlignMENT account and visit the events calendar. When you click on a program, you will have the option to register a girl or register a troop. You may only have one registration per troop at a time, so register all your attendees at once. If you have questions about a program or need assistance with your registration, reach out to the contact person listed in the description of the event.

Program registrations close three weeks in advance of the event, but many programs will fill up before that deadline. Make sure you let your Girl Scout parents know about events they may want to attend well in advance and register early. Girl Scouts and adults may also attend programs without your troop and can register on their own CouncilAlignMENT account.

Check our [website](#) for training requirements and availability guidelines!

CouncilAlignMENT

Registration Statuses and Refund Policy

Registration Statuses

You may see a few different statuses of your registration on CouncilAlignMENT. Here's what they mean:

- **Waiting for Placement:** Once you have registered for the program, you may see this status anywhere from one day to several weeks, depending on whether minimum program attendance has been met. If the minimum program attendance has been met, your registration will be placed at 12am of the day you registered.
- **Placed:** Once the program is open and you have secured a spot, you will see this status. Once you are placed in a program, you will have ten days to pay for it before you are marked as Placed - Past Due. You should receive a reminder email when you are placed as well as five days after placement. Make sure your email notifications are turned on for CouncilAlignMENT.
- **Placed – Past Due:** This status means you have been placed in the program for more than ten days without payment. While your spot is still currently secured, you may be automatically removed to a waiting list if the program fills up.
- **Not Placed – Previous Past Due Bill:** This means you are already Placed in a different program and have not yet paid. Make sure you check your Registered Events cart on CouncilAlignMENT to ensure all registered activities are paid for. If you believe there to be an error on your account, please contact the manager of the program you are attempting to register for.

Refund Policy

Cancellations for programs must be received 3 weeks prior to the program for a refund. Unpaid registrations do not count as notice of cancellation and full payment is expected. If the program is cancelled for any reason, a refund will be issued based on the program expenses. The Program's team will contact you if the program is postponed, rescheduled, or cancelled due to inclement weather. Please use your best judgement when traveling with Girl Scouts. Full payment is required unless written cancellation is received 3 weeks prior to the event. Refunds for unexpected sickness or family emergencies will be considered upon request.



