



My First Year
Junior

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

Table of Contents

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.

Volunteer Basics

- 3 Checklist for New Troop Leaders
- 5 Welcome to Girl Scouts
- 6 Our Council
- 7 Getting Started
- 8 New Leader Training
- 9 Volunteer Resources
- 10 A New Leader's Support System
- 11 Co-Leaders—Leading Together
- 14 Working with Families
- 15 How Many Volunteers?
- 16 Keeping Girls Safe and First-Aid Kits

Junior Leadership

- 4 Your Junior Year at a Glance
- 12 Working with Juniors
- 13 Junior Troop Management
- 17 Junior Uniforms
- 21 Girl Scout Troop Finances
- 34 Junior Adventure & Travel Activities

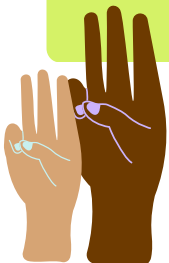
Troop Basics

- 22 Useful Troop Forms
- 22 Troop Communication
- 23 Girl Scout Traditions
- 24 Your Year In Girl Scouts
- 25 Planning Your Girl Scout Year
- 26 Your First Troop Meeting

The Girl Scout Program

- 27 The Girl Scout Program
- 28 Program Activities
- 29 Ready, Set, Take Action
- 30 Journey Awards & Council Quests
- 31 Higher Awards
- 32 Product Programs
- 33 Our Properties
- 36 Ways to Camp
- 37 Property and Program Reservations

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 the New Leader Training modules through the [training platform](#)
 - You will complete the required trainings when you complete the New Leader Survey module.
- 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 Scout in CouncilAlignMENT
- Start the process of opening a bank account with your RE, and complete Funding the Fun through the [training platform](#)
- Sign up for additional new leader and grade level trainings on the [Event Calendar](#)

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 Planning Your Girl Scout Year 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 Junior Year-at-a-Glance

Troop Meetings

There is no one “right way” to do Girl Scouts, but most troops tend to meet twice a month- once for badge earning and another for a fun adventure! Try completing three badges this year.

Each Junior 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. Match songs to an occasion
2. Celebrate the Girl Scout birthday
3. Share sisterhood
4. Leave a place better than you found it
5. Enjoy Girl Scout traditions!

Cookie Collaborator

1. Get to know the Girl Scout Cookie business
2. Decide on your goals
3. Collaborate on a troop budget
4. Reach more customers
5. Learn from your customers



Entertainment Technology

1. Animate your own artwork
2. Dig into video game development
3. Try the science of amusement park rides
4. Create your own special effects
5. Surf a sound wave



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



The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is our research-backed, data-driven, foundation of Girl Scout programming that distinguishes us as a premiere leadership organization for girls.

WHAT

Girl Scout programming focuses on four areas: STEM, Outdoor Adventure, Life Skills, and Entrepreneurship



Girls experience and try new things through:

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

HOW

Girl Scouts experience our unique environment and processes:

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 Leadership 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 of 2 million members across the United States of America and the world! 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.

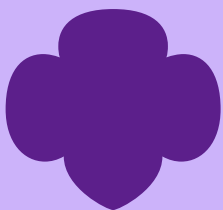
Girl Scout Promise

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? The experience looks different for every leader, but one thing is for sure, it is an exciting adventure! It is the amazing journey of helping girls build courage, confidence, and character through Girl Scouts.

As a leader, you will experience 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 girls reach their potential as creative, courageous leaders

Create a space where girls try new things without worrying about failing

Teach lessons girls will use for decades to come

Try new things along with their girls

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

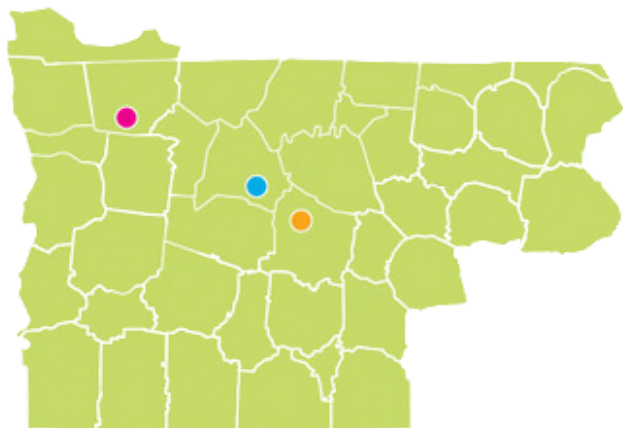
Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee is the premier leadership organization in middle Tennessee for all girls to have the opportunity to pursue greatness, create sustainable change in their communities, and actively transform the world around them now and for future generations.

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.

GSMIDTN prepares 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 and 2 leaders. If your troop doesn't have enough members assigned or you would like a larger group, reach out to your Regional Executive for options to build your troop!

Troop Interests/Goals/Personality

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

Keeping your girl's experience "girl-led" is an important aspect to their development as leaders. One easy way to introduce "girl-led" to your troop is to have your girls help to plan their year!

Meeting Location and Times

Remember, set meeting times that work for you! As the Girl Scout Troop Leader, you have the flexibility to set the troop meeting schedule for the year. 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 for the next Girl Scout year.

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 trainings for new Troop volunteers:

1. **New Leader Training Series**

- 6 modules. self-guided, required for new Girl Scout Troop Leaders

2. **Funding the Fun: Banking and Finance Guidelines**

- required for signers on any Troop bank account, self-guided, training platform

As a First Year Leader, we encourage you to take the following supplemental trainings:

- **Junior Grade Level and Girl-led** (offered virtually and self-guided) is designed to help leaders learn how to get and keep girls engaged in grade-level appropriate ways
- **How to Earn a Badge** (offered virtually and self-guided) is designed to help leaders learn how to earn Girl Scout badges during troop meetings
- **Kaper Charts** (offered virtually and self-guided) is designed to help leaders learn about, and how to use, Kaper Charts (a Girl Scout tradition) in troop meetings

Other trainings we offer:

- **Camp Ready** (self-guided, training platform) is a required training for at least one adult that plans to utilize GSMIDTN camp properties or other outdoor locations for any amount of time.
 - **Outdoor Skills** (in-person) is required for any experience beyond a Day-Use rental. (See below.)
- **First Aid/CPR** (in-person) is required for all reservations/activities.

To prepare your troop for more fun and outdoor adventure, GSMIDTN is pleased to offer each troop 2 FREE trainings per Girl Scout year - one of both of the following:

- When your troop is ready to go on outings/field trips outside of 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 and camping, recommended for troop meetings). Troop Leaders may submit existing First Aid/CPR certifications to volunteerresources@gsmidtn.org.
- Outdoor Skills prepares you to take your troop camping at any GSMIDTN property or park with running water and bathroom facilities. Learn the basics of building a fire, cooking outdoors, knife safety, and more.

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

Learn more at gsmidtn.org/volunteer/adult-training/

Resources for Volunteers

Girl Scout Handbooks and Badge Requirements

Girl Scouts of the USA offers a handbook for each level with information, traditions, and all the fun options Girl Scouts have. The handbooks are designed for girls to follow along and reflect on their own Girl Scout experience. There are separate badge requirement packets for each badge and each level. Both the handbook and badge requirements are optional but will support you in planning your Girl Scout year! You can purchase these and other Girl Scout gear in the Nashville Cabin.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Safety Activity Checkpoints is an online list containing everything you need to know to be prepared and keep your troop safe during 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, in Troop Leader Resources under Resources.

GSMIDTN Social Media

GSMIDTN is actively sharing the Girl Scout mission on social media! Interested in new activities for your troop? Like sharing photos and videos? 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

The Girl Scout Weekly Connection is a newsletter that GSMIDTN sends out every Wednesday to inform you of upcoming programming, as well any updates or important information specific to Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee. When you register as an adult, you are automatically signed up for these newsletters.

Troop Resources

Troop Leader Resources is your go-to place for forms and information related to your role as a Girl Scout Troop Leader. This resource center will help you plan meetings, be safe, and get started or keep your troop running and can be found at gsmidtn.org/troop-resources.

Leader Mentor Program

Build up a close Girl Scouting community and support around you with the mentor program. Get together and learn from the experienced and your peers within the mentoring pairs or buddy groups. Mentoring pairs and buddy groups are safe, friendly spaces to ask questions, formulate new ideas, and learn from others' experiences to make your Girl Scout leadership experience more enjoyable and sustainable.

To sign up, fill out our [interest form](#).

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. Beyond your troop team, you will have the support of your Service Unit team, and all the staff at GSMIDTN.

What is a Service Unit?

A Service Unit is 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.

Service Units hold monthly meetings for leaders, and work together to support you by providing activities and event opportunities in your area throughout the year. Most Service Units run Facebook pages to stay connected and informed. Ask your RE or Service Unit Manager if you would like to join your Service Unit Facebook group.

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

Reach out to your RE to connect 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. 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. Search: [facebook.com/groups/GSMIDTNGroup](https://www.facebook.com/groups/GSMIDTNGroup) to join!

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 Regional Executive

Before meeting with caregivers or your troop, you will want to get together and make some decisions about your troop. A list of possible questions to review are listed below. We encourage you to review this list with your co-leader(s) prior to your first family meeting.

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.

Money Management:

- Will our troop charge dues, use product program proceeds, and/or charge per activity? More information about troop dues is located on page 21.
- 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? More information about the Girl Scout Daisy uniform is located on pages 17-21.

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 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. More information on troop governance is located on page 13.

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.

Working with Juniors

As a Junior leader, you will discover how fun the girls are as they begin to develop leadership skills, test boundaries, pursue new interests and become more independent. This is also a time girls will be learning how to build their relationship skills. Your job as the troop facilitator will be to ensure that activities are age-appropriate and based on their needs, interests and abilities.



Girl Scouts is
Girl-Led

Juniors (4-5 Grade Girls)	This means
Want to make decisions and express their opinions.	Whenever possible, allowing girls to make decisions and express their opinions through guided discussion and active reflection activities. Also, have girls set rules for listening to others' opinions and offering assistance in decision making.
Are social and enjoy working in groups	Allowing girls to team up in small or large groups for art projects, performances, and written activities.
Are aware of expectations and sensitive to the judgments of others.	Although it's okay to have expectations, the expectation is not perfection! Share your own mistakes and what you learned from them and be sure to create an environment where girls can be comfortable sharing theirs.
Are concerned about equity and fairness.	Not shying away from discussing why rules are in place and having girls develop their own rules for their group.
Are beginning to think abstractly and critically and are capable of flexible thought. Juniors can consider more than one perspective as well as the feelings and attitudes of another.	Asking girls to explain why they made a decision, to share their visions of their roles in the future, and to challenge their own and others' perspectives.
Have strong fine and gross motor skills and coordination.	Engaging girls in moving their minds and their bodies. Allow girls to express themselves through the written word, choreography, and so on.
Love to act in plays, create music, and dance.	Girls might like to tell a story through playwriting, playing an instrument, or choreographing a dance.
May be starting puberty, which means some beginning breast development, skin changes, and weight changes. Some may be getting their periods.	Being sensitive to girls' changing bodies, possible discomfort over these changes, and their desire for more information. Create an environment that acknowledges and celebrates this transition as healthy and normal for girls.

Helpful Tips!

- Let the girls establish troop rules with you.
- Give girls the opportunity to express themselves.
- Give girls the responsibility for tasks.
- Vary troop activities.
- Use secret ballots to vote.
- Teach girls how to build consensus.
- Have girls take turns partnering with each troop member.
- Consider creating secret sister opportunities during the year.
- Allow the girls more independence while keeping them safe at the same time.

If you'd like additional support with girl-led troops, check out our list of available training dates for Junior level-trainings on our [Event Calendar](#).

Junior Troop Management

Establishing troop meeting habits and structures is a great way to manage troop dynamics and ensure successful troop meeting. Here's a few research-backed ways to manage Junior dynamics.

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

- Troop government is a way for girls to learn responsibility, independence and how to become leaders!
- Troop government is designed to be progressive, building on the skills learned in previous years.
- At this age, girls should decide which form of troop government they will use.

Every grade level of Girl Scouting uses some form of troop government. Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors can choose from the Patrol, Executive Board, and Town Meeting Systems.

Town Meeting

In the Town Meeting system, there is no formalized government structure. The girls discuss and make decisions as an entire troop.

This system requires a girl moderator to ensure that everyone gets a chance to speak and provide input. Girls should be leading the discussion with very little help from the leaders, so it's especially important to establish guidelines for discussion.

Patrol System

In this system, girls are divided into small groups called "patrols," consisting of four to six members. Each patrol selects a patrol name, symbol, patrol lead, and assistant patrol leaders.

The patrol leader represents her group in a Court of Honor, which includes other patrol leads and an adult leader who guides decision-making. The patrol leader communicates all decisions made in the Court of Honor back to their patrols.

Executive Board

In this system, the troop relies on a single leadership team called the "Executive Board." Girls in the troop elect board positions such as president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. The number of officers and positions may vary depending on the troop's needs.

The board holds meetings separate from regular troop meetings to discuss troop matters. They are responsible for reporting decisions made to the troop and seeking feedback and input from the troop before final decisions are made.

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

Working with Families

Girl Scouts is a family activity! We recommend hosting a family meeting at the beginning of each year to set clear expectations and share your plans for the year.

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.
- Have caregivers complete health history forms, annual permission forms. Share contact info for all troop members.
- 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).
- 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, guardians, and family members to promise 4 Hours, 4 Her!

The “4Her Promise” is an open door for all adults in a girl's life to participate in Girl Scouts and support their troop. Girls 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 girl 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?

You 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, registered, approved, adult volunteers** 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 Girl Scouts 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 outlines the 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 GSMIDTN. Refer to Safety Activities Checkpoint for more information on Emergency Action Plans.

First Aid Kits

The Girl Scout Motto is "Be Prepared." In order to "be prepared" 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.

After you've established your First Aid kit, check it 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

Junior 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. We encourage girls to wear their uniform when they are representing Girl Scouts outside of troop meetings.

Uniform Basics

Juniors may choose between a green sash or a green vest. For formal events, vests and sashes are worn with white shirts and khaki pants or skirts.

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.

Junior Sash Option



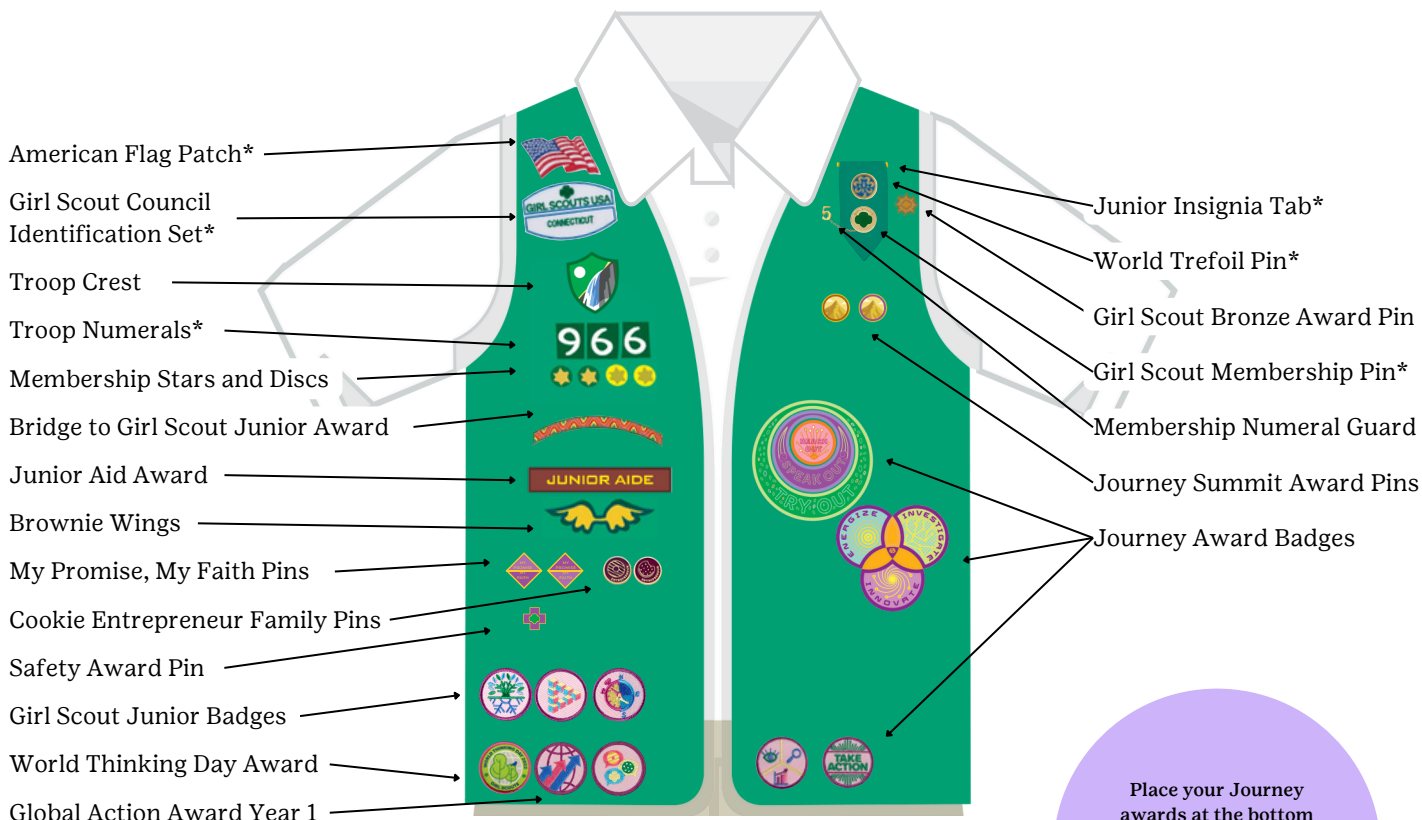
Use our [My First Uniform](#) resource to collect uniform orders from families before placing a bulk order!

See page 27 for the difference between badges and patches

You can order uniforms, Girl Scout gear, and more on our [online shop!](#)

Junior Uniforms

How to Wear It



Place your Journey awards at the bottom of your vest or sash. As you earn additional awards, work your way up.

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



Insignia marked with an asterisk can be added to girls' uniforms right away!*

Junior Uniforms

Pins, Badges, & Awards

The following are the only pins, patches, and awards that belong on the front of the Junior 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 Junior 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."

Junior Insignia Tab*

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

Brownie Wings

Brownie Girl Scout Wings show that a girl has completed her years as a Brownie. She is ready to "fly up" to Junior Girl Scouting. This is a tradition that goes back to when Brownie Girl Scout leaders were called Brown Owls. The wings are worn on the Junior sash or vest, centered horizontally directly under the Junior Aide Award, or if she does not have that, directly under the Bridge to Junior Award.

Girl Scout Junior Badges

These are circular and placed along the bottom of the sash or vest on the right hand side. 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 Membership Pin*

Worn by Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, Ambassadors, and Girl Scout Adults, this pin signifies fulfillment of membership requirements. It is worn on the Insignia Tab on the left side of the uniform, centered above the heart. A Girl Scout can choose from among current membership pins.

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.

Girl Scout Bronze Award

Juniors earn the Bronze Award by teaming up with other girls to make a difference in their community.

Girl Scout Council Identification Set*

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

Junior Uniforms

Pins, Badges, & Awards

Junior Aid

This award is intended for Junior Girl Scouts to earn and place on their uniform sash or vest. Juniors can earn their Junior Aide award by making and completing a plan to guide Girl Scout Daisies or Brownies on one of their Journeys. Place this award directly beneath the Bridge to Junior Girl Scouts Award.

Journey Award Badges

These awards signify the Junior 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 has completed three Junior Journeys. Girls who earned the Journey Summit Award Pin can carry their award over to their Cadette 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 yellow colored disk rests behind the star to represent the Junior 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

Each Girl Scout troop has their own bank account for troop use. This is where you will manage your troop funds.

- 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 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.

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.

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.

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 Junior level.

- The group volunteer retains overall responsibility for long-term budgeting and record keeping but shares or delegates all other financial responsibilities.
- Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product programs.
- Girls decide on group dues, if any. Dues are collected by girls and recorded by a group treasurer selected by the girls.
- Girls budget for the short-term needs of the group based on their plans and income from the group dues.
- Girls budget for more long-term activities, such as overnight trips, group camping, and special events.
- Girls budget for Take Action projects including the Girl Scout Bronze Award if they are pursuing it.

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.

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

Find these forms in our Troop Leader Resources at gsmidtn.org/troop-resources

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.

*denotes a form that is recommended to have at your family meeting

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, historic sisterhood. Whether at a troop meeting, a council-wide event, or meeting Girl Scouts around the world, here are a few traditions to teach the Girl Scouts in your troop.

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 Girl Scout 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.

See page 13 for more information.

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 Girl Scouts 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)

Ceremonies

Girl Scouts celebrate milestones in Girl Scouts with specific ceremonies. When someone joins Girl Scouts they might participate in an Investiture Ceremony. When Girl Scouts move from one Girl Scout level to the next, they could partake in a Bridging Ceremony. Although less common, some Girl Scouts will rededicate themselves to the mission of Girl Scouts, with a Rededication Ceremony.



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> 

Check out our [Council's Own Patches](#) that highlight different backgrounds and/or cultures. Visit gsmidtn.org/calendar to learn more about our events and find the most up-to-date information. All events are subject to change without notice.

Planning Your Girl Scout Year

Aim to complete at least one activity for each element– remember you can combine activities. For example, taking a hike to complete an outdoor badge could count for both Outdoors and Badges & Awards.

<p style="text-align: center;">Badges & Awards</p> <p>Ideally, each troop year should aim for four badges, or a journey and two badges!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Try to rotate badges/activities based on the Four Focus Areas</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STEM Outdoors Life Skills Entrepreneurship</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">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 to plan ahead and be prepared for any type of activity.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">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 style="text-align: center;">Product Programs</p> <p>Girl Scouts get the chance to be entrepreneurs through our two product programs. The Product Program helps girls to develop 5 essential skills and how you participate is up to your troop!</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">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](#)
- [GSMIDTN Badge Explorer](#)
- [GSMIDTN Badge Bundles](#)
- GSUSA Badge Requirements & Journeys
- GSUSA & GSMIDTN [Patch Programs](#)

Here are some tips and tricks to plan your ultimate Girl Scout year!

- Choose your dates ahead of time– 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 troop 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 troop, 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! Girl Scouts aren't expecting perfection from you: your time, attention, and guidance are the best part of your leadership.

Learn with your Girl Scouts.

Keeping activities girl-led also means that at some point, the troop 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 your Girl Scouts when you don't know something, and let them know 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 troop is engaged and having fun! This is a typical structure leaders use for a 1-hour meeting:

1. Welcome Activity: 5 minutes

Plan an opening activity for Girl Scouts 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: 5-10 minutes

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 troop.

3. Troop Business: 5 minutes

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

4. Let the fun begin!: 30 minutes

This is your activity for the meeting, work on a badge, journey, or complete other activities during this time. Allow girls time to work independently, or share their ideas with the troop.

5. Clean Up : 5 minutes

Girl Scouts clean up all supplies because Girl Scouts always leave a place cleaner than they found it.

6. Closing : 5-10 minutes

Let your troop decide how they will end each meeting – a song, a game, a Girl Scout tradition. A common way to end is with the Girl Scout Friendship Circle. More information about this is located on page 23.

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 members of 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 individuals 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 Girl Scouts and adults 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
- Fits in four focus areas
- Junior badges are in a circle shape

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.

Check Out Our [Badge Explorer!](#)

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.

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
- Created by GSUSA with requirements for specific topics

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.

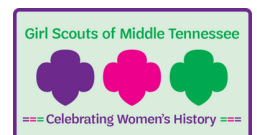
Many fun patches are available for purchase online or in the Cabin. Check out our online shop or email nashvilleshop@gsmidtn.org to check availability. If you need a specialty patch for an event that we do not keep in stock (like roller skating), we can order them for you with no additional cost.

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

A.



B.



C.



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!

Junior Equestrian Programs

We offer a variety of horse programs at Camp Sycamore Hills. During the year, Junior Girl Scouts can participate in ground lessons like Pony Ready or Loving & Grooming. Juniors can even start riding on their own by taking a lesson with their troop, going on a trail ride, or participating in our Equine Patch Workshops!

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. Girl Scout Highest Awards all require the completion of a Take Action project as well. More information about Highest Awards is located on page 31.

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.




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 Junior 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

GSUSA offers badges, patches, and pins that correspond with Girl Scouts learning the 5 skills and their participation in the program. Remember, there are no requirements to participate, and we recommend troop leaders and families communicate about expectations and availability to participate in both programs.

- 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 belong to 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 available to pick-up for the troop to deliver in October to customers.

Why: Troops earn 20% of total sales that will be available for troops to spend in November.

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 two 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.

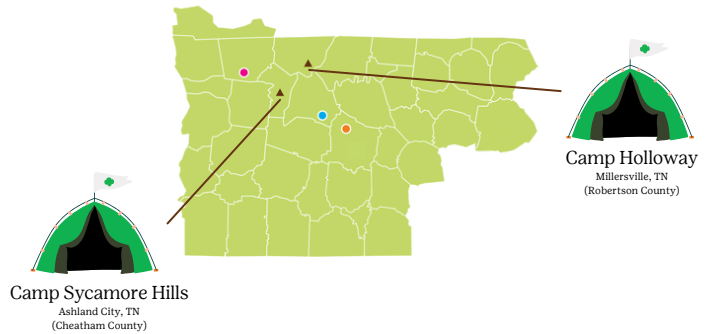
Property Availability Guidelines

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 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!](#)

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

Junior 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
Archery	●	●
Campfire Cooking	●	●
Canvas Creations	●	●
Corcl	●	●
Crate Stacking		●
Creek Explorers	●	●
Flying Squirrels		●
Kayaking		●
Knife Safety	●	●
Knot-so-Fast	●	●
Lego Robotics	●	●
Letterboxing	●	●
Marble Maze	●	●
Marshmallow Shooters	●	●
Mission Egg Possible	●	●
Night Hike	●	●
Obstacle Course	●	●
Ozo Bots	●	●
Rock Climbing	●	●
River Canoeing		●
Screen Printing	●	●
Sling Shots	●	
Slime	●	●
Songs and S'mores	●	●
Spaghetti Tower	●	●
Swimming	●	●
Swing by Choice	●	
Team Adventure	●	●
Tie Dye	●	●
Tree Climbing	●	●
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!](#)

Junior 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 an overnight camp. You do not have to be a registered Girl Scout to attend camp. Both Camp Holloway and Camp Sycamore Hills offer overnight camp. We offer Council run Day Camps at Camp Holloway. 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!

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.



Day Camp patch example

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.



