



# New Girl Scout Troop Leader's Guide to Success

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

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OUR NEW FEARLESS LEADER

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### **The 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.

*\*Members may substitute the word "God" in accordance with their spiritual beliefs.*

### **Our Mission**

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

### **The 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,  
use resources wisely,  
make the world a better place, and be a  
sister\* to every Girl Scout.*

*\*Members may substitute the word sister with sibling in accordance with their own gender identity.*

# Welcome to Girl Scouts

## **We're so excited for you to join the Girl Scout movement.**

Thank you for becoming a Girl Scout leader!

Girl Scouts helps empower our members to stand up and make a difference. By cultivating leadership skills, we prepare them to overcome challenges and advocate for their ideas now and in the future. With an emphasis on self-discovery, character building, and community

impact, Girl Scouts helps our members become a powerful force for good in the world.

No matter where or how you volunteer, you'll make a difference in Girl Scouts' lives. *This go-to guide will walk you through your options, resources, and support to make sure you have a successful year with Girl Scouts!*

You're now a part of our team. We can't wait to see the impact you'll make this year!

## Let's Get Started

### **Managing Your Member Experience Online**

After your background check process is completed and you're approved as a volunteer, you'll receive an email confirmation prompting you to log into myGS, your Girl Scout member community, for the first time. myGS allows you to manage your member experience online. It can also be accessed from the link in the header of any page at [www.GirlScoutsWW.org](http://www.GirlScoutsWW.org).

On the Troop tab in your myGS, you can see any Girl Scouts and adults who have signed up for your troop. You can also update your troop information including meeting days, times, location, and frequency. The Participation Catalog allows you as the troop leader to display available openings in your troop for Girl Scouts and/or volunteers. You may add your troop to this listing by completing the [Update Your Troop Information form](#) online. If your troop is open in the catalog, the best way to ensure you are seeing new members join your troop is by actively checking your roster in myGS.

### **Your Troop Leader Journey**

When you're set up for success, you'll be empowered to set up your troop for success! To help you become the best leader you can be, we offer in-person workshops, online training courses, and other great resources. Get started by visiting gsLearn to complete the New Leader's Learning Path online.

You will also receive an email or phone call from a staff member or volunteer to schedule your official Welcome Chat. This is a chance to get your questions answered and an introduction to new leader resources and information. Virtual group Welcome Chats are offered regularly.

## Congrats—you're a troop leader!

Complete your New Leader's Learning Path in gsLearn.

Review the Health Guidelines.

Attend a Welcome Chat.

Open a troop bank account.

First troop meeting!

# Organizational Structure

## World Association of Girl Guides & Girl Scouts (W.A.G.G.G.S.)

A 146-member international organization whose mission is “to inspire Girl Scouts and young women to reach their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world.”

## Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA)

A national organization supporting the work of more than 100 councils across the US for more than 100 years. Headquartered in New York, NY.

## Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts are the heart of our organization! Our council serves over 15,000 members across 17 counties in Western Washington, with multiple offices, stores and camps!

## Girl Scouts of Western Washington (GSWW)

Our regional council, an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit chartered by GSUSA, operating under a local board of directors, and overseeing all service units and troops within a geographic area.

## Troops

Volunteer-supervised groups of Girl Scouts who participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

## Service Unit (SU)

A community of volunteers and Girl Scouts in a geographic area usually defined by a cluster of zip codes. A SU is an essential support system that has the information you need to feel confident as a Girl Scout volunteer.

## At your nearest Girl Scout office:

Visit a Girl Scout Store.

Contact us to learn more about our [equipment depot](#).





# Council Contacts

Girl Scouts of Western Washington staff are an amazing group of dedicated individuals here to help you with your participation in Girl Scouts! Below is a basic overview of some of the key staff support for your leadership journey.



## Customer Care

**1(800) 541-9852 | [customercare@girlscoutsww.org](mailto:customercare@girlscoutsww.org)**

For anything, our amazing customer care team is here to assist you! And if they don't have the answer, they will put you in touch with the right person. This is a great number to give your troop families, too!



## Volunteer Support Managers (VSM)

\_\_\_\_\_ [@girlscoutsww.org](mailto:_____@girlscoutsww.org)

VSMs are who you call for all things troop. VSMs support and manage the troop and service unit volunteers. They oversee the implementation of quality programming as well as ensure growth and retention.



## Community Development Managers (CDM)

The CDM team helps you connect with your community and build relationships between your schools, troops, and neighborhoods. Come say hello at any of our virtual or in person events this year! The best way to reach our community development team is by calling or emailing customer care!



## Placement Specialists

Placement specialists are your go-to staff members for questions about making changes to your troop or membership.



## Office Supervisors

Office supervisors can check out equipment and library resources for each area office. They can also help you reserve space in the office for meetings and events, when available and allowed due to state mandates.



## Volunteer Banking


**[volunteerbanking@girlscoutsww.org](mailto:volunteerbanking@girlscoutsww.org)**

Have questions about your troop banking account? Need help with your Annual Troop Finance Report? Contact Volunteer Banking for help!



## Stay Connected

    @GirlScoutsWW

 @Girl Scouts of Western Washington

## Area Facebook Pages

[fb.com/groups/NorthRegionGSWW](https://fb.com/groups/NorthRegionGSWW)

[fb.com/groups/SouthRegionGSWW](https://fb.com/groups/SouthRegionGSWW)

[fb.com/groups/PeninsulaGSWW](https://fb.com/groups/PeninsulaGSWW)

[fb.com/groups/KingCountyGSWW](https://fb.com/groups/KingCountyGSWW)

## Leader Facebook Pages

[fb.com/groups/DaisyBrownieLeadersGSWW](https://fb.com/groups/DaisyBrownieLeadersGSWW)

[fb.com/groups/JuniorAmbassadorLeadersGSWW](https://fb.com/groups/JuniorAmbassadorLeadersGSWW)

# Meet Your Service Unit Team

Girl Scouts of Western Washington has 80 service units (SUs). Think of service units as local Girl Scout communities. Service units are made up of many dedicated volunteers working to build the Girl Scout experience in their immediate area. Service unit team members, volunteers, and troop representatives meet regularly (usually once a month) to share ideas, receive training, and talk about important announcements.

Use your resources wisely! As a new leader, your service unit is a valuable network of leaders and volunteers who have a wealth of experience and ideas that you can draw upon. Mark your calendars and make sure your troop is represented at your SU meetings! Plan on at least one representative attending all SU meetings.

**SU Meeting Info**

Day:

Time:

Location:



**Your Service Unit Number:**

**Your Service Unit Area:**

**SU Facebook Page:**

**SU Online or Social Media:**

Title	Contact Info	Notes
<b>SU Manager:</b> Guides the service unit by facilitating SU meetings, supports new and existing troop leaders, and serves as key communication conduit between council and SU leaders, volunteers, and members.	Name: Contact Info:	
<b>SU Product Manager (Fall):</b> Your go-to support for the Fall Product Program. They will provide training, answer questions, and help guide your troop through the sale.	Name: Contact Info:	
<b>SU Product Manager (Cookies):</b> Your SU cookie team helps coordinate the Girl Scout Cookie Program at your local level. They offer mandatory trainings, guidance, oversight, and general support for troop product managers and leaders.	Name: Contact Info:	
<b>Other SU Volunteers:</b>	Name: Contact Info:	

# Girl Scout Leadership Experience

The Girl Scout program centers around our research-backed Girl Scout Leadership Experience—that is, what Girl Scouts do and how they do it. Activities are Girl Scout-led, which gives Girl Scouts opportunities to explore leadership roles and “learn by doing” in a cooperative learning environment.

**The best part? You and your Girl Scouts can choose your own adventure and customize your Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Here are some of the things your Girl Scouts can do.**

## Discover

Find out who they are, what they care about, and what their talents are.

## Connect

Collaborate with other people, locally and globally, to make a difference in the world.

## Take Action

Do something to make the world a better place.

## Highest Awards

**Bronze. Silver. Gold. These represent the highest honors a Girl Scout can earn.**

All three awards give Girl Scouts the chance to do big things while working on an issue they care about. Whether they want to plant a community garden and inspire others to eat healthy for their Bronze, advocate for animal rights for their Silver, or build a career network that encourages Girl Scouts to become scientists and engineers for their Gold, they'll inspire others—and you!

## Journeys

Girl Scouts identify a problem, come up with a creative solution, create a team plan to make the solution a reality, put a plan into action, then talk about what they have learned. As Girl Scouts go on Journeys, they'll earn awards to put on their uniforms.

The Volunteer Toolkit and Journey books are your resources for the requirements to earning these awards.

## Badges

**What has your Girl Scout always wanted to do?**

Make their own movie, go geocaching, plant a garden? Great news! They can learn to do all these things and more while earning Girl Scout badges. Badges are worn on the front of the vest or sash.

The Volunteer Toolkit is a great resource for learning the requirements to earning badges.

## Patches

Think of patches like collecting memories in Girl Scouts.

They're often a part of the fun activities you can do in Girl Scouts without the requirements of badges. Patches are always worn on the back of the vest or sash.

# Choose Your Own Adventures!

Girl Scouts is not a one-size fits all program. We have opportunities that fit the interests and time commitments for all styles of troops. Here are some of the other offerings your troop may want to explore!

Troop camping, Service Unit Encamporee, Core Camp, or individual [Girl Scout camping](#)—Girl Scouts of Western Washington has seven camp properties to explore.

Making the world a better place, one project at a time! [Learn more.](#)

Every Girl Scout deserves a chance to see the world! Girl Scouts offers a variety of ways for our members to do just that—including troop travel, volunteer-led trips, [Girl Scout Destinations](#), and special EF Tours. [Learn more](#)



**EVENTS & FIELD TRIPS**

**CAMP**

**OUTDOOR ADVENTURES**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

**TRADITIONS & CEREMONIES**

**TRAVEL**

Exploring is part of the fun! Check out the [Girl Scouts of Western Washington events](#), which gives you and your Girl Scouts a lot of ideas and options to get out and go places (or even do things virtually!). Join the regional Facebook page to see even more opportunities!

Outdoor activities are an important part of Girl Scouting. Check out these [resources](#) to help get you started.

[Traditions and Ceremonies](#) give Girl Scouts a sense of history and connection to the Girl Scout. Whether you end meetings with the friendship circle, make SWAPS to trade at an event, or have a bridging ceremony from one level to the next, your troop will want to consider incorporating traditions for added meaning and fun.

## PRODUCT PROGRAM

Participating in the Fall Product Program (Sept/Oct) or in the Girl Scout Cookie Program (Jan/Feb/March) can help your troop fund all this fun! Troops receive a portion of each item sold, and Girl Scouts earn their own incentives while learning financial literacy, self-confidence, and business skills!



# Girl Scout Levels & Uniforms

**Girl Scout Daisies (K-1)** can go on trips, learn about nature and science, explore the arts and their communities, and so much more. Daisies can also earn learning petals and receive participation patches.

**Girl Scout Cadettes (6-8)** chart their own course and let their curiosity and imagination lead the way. They learn about the power of being a good friend, gain confidence mentoring younger Girl Scouts, and can earn the Silver Award for outstanding community impact.

**Girl Scout Brownies (2-3)** work together, earn badges, and explore their community. Friendship, fun, and new adventures begin at the Brownie meeting and move out to the community and wider world. While earning badges, they build skills, learn hobbies, and have fun!

**Girl Scout Seniors (9-10)** are ready to take the world by storm, and Girl Scouts gives them millions of ways to do it. Their experiences help shape their world, while giving them a safe space to be themselves and explore their interests. Seniors can earn their Gold Award, which recognizes significant and sustainable leadership efforts.

**Girl Scout Juniors (4-5)** are big-idea thinkers. They're explorers at camp, product designers when they earn their Innovation and Storytelling badges, and activists when they earn their Bronze Award. Every day, they wake up ready to play a new role.

**Girl Scout Ambassadors (11-12)** know that small acts create big change. While they get ready for life beyond high school, Girl Scouts helps them take flight through leadership opportunities and more. They can also earn the Gold Award (which looks great on college applications)!

Uniforms can be an important part of the Girl Scout experience, connecting members to Girl Scout traditions, displaying their accomplishments, and creating memories to last a lifetime. While uniforms are not required, they can be a source of pride and sense of belonging. 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 guardians and purchase sashes, vests, and insignia from a council shop, or ask guardians to purchase items on their own. [Financial assistance](#) for uniform components is available for Girl Scouts who qualify.

Our staff are here to help! Visit one of our shop locations to purchase uniforms, starter kits, and more. Or shop on our [online store](#).



A detailed booklet with images of where things go and everything a Girl Scout can earn at every level.



Find our [store hours and addresses](#). Call your nearest store for free shipping on the first Friday of the month!



Log into the Volunteer Toolkit and find badge explorers, uniform placement and much more on the Resource tab!

# Ways to Troop

Girl Scouts and families can experience the Girl Scout Program in a number of ways: as Individually Registered Members (IRMs), as part of a troop, attending camp, via council programming, and beyond. However a member participates, they are always a Girl Scout first.

As a volunteer, there are many ways you can customize your troop's experience. Below are just a few of the ways you can adjust your troop to fit you and your Girl Scouts!

## You pick your focus!

### Trailblazers

Troops that are interested in high adventure outdoor activities such as orienteering, survival camping, trail hiking, and more!

### Special Focus Troops

Girl Scout troops with a set primary focus that drives a lot of troop activities and program.

### Travel Group

A troop specifically designed to travel and earn money to fund adventures.

## You pick your format!

### Virtual Troop

Meeting in an online platform, virtual troops gather Girl Scouts online to engage, explore and Girl Scout together.

### In-person Troop

Meet together in-person to participate in Girl Scout activities together!

### Hybrid Troop

Combine the benefits of in-person and virtual meetings to create a flexible troop experience for your families!

## You pick your structure!

### Co-Leaders

The co-leader structure is set up where two (or more) unrelated adults act as the primary leads for the troop, asking for support where needed.

### Co-op Troops

A cooperative or co-op troop is a great way to share leadership responsibility so as to avoid overburdening a single leader. In a co-op troop, all troop families work together to share the responsibilities of the troop leader.

# Anatomy of a Troop

To be Girl Scout-led means that every troop is different—driven by the interests, passions, and curiosity of the Girl Scouts who comprise each troop. Using the Girl Scout Program as a foundation, it is up to you and your Girl Scouts to build the troop experience together!

Regardless of your troop design, each troop requires three key things.

## 1. Find two volunteers to fill troop leadership roles.

- Must be unrelated (no sibling, spouse, or parent/child without additional leader)
- Are at least 18 years old. Volunteers must be 21 or older to drive Girl Scouts
- At least one who is female
  - **Mythbuster**—males CAN lead/volunteer, too!
- Are current Girl Scout members
- Have completed a background check
- Finished the New Leader's Learning Path in gsLearn found under myGS on [www.GirlScoutsWW.org](http://www.GirlScoutsWW.org)

<b>My Checklist</b>	√ New Leader's Learning Path
√ Registered	√ CPR First Aid
√ Background check	

<b>Co-Leader</b>	Phone #:
Name:	
Email:	

## 2. Register three Girl Scouts minimum to qualify as a troop.

Girl scouts must be in kindergarten through twelfth grade and registered for the current Girl Scout year. Need more Girl Scouts?

- Put your troop in the Participation Catalog. New families can find your troop when registering and join right away!
- Work with your service unit. Check in with your service unit to see if other leaders have Girl Scouts looking for a troop or have ideas for recruiting new members.
- Work with a community development manager to identify recruitment strategies that work for you.

## 3. Open a troop bank account.

With a troop bank account, you can collect dues and earn money to fund your troop fun!

To open an account:

- Decide what bank will work for you. Girl Scouts of Western Washington works with Key Bank, but other options are available.

• **Troop accounts CANNOT be at Bank of America or most Credit Unions.**

- Two registered volunteer account signers must submit the [Troop/Group Checking Account Signer Application Form](#) to [volunteerbanking@girlscoutsww.org](mailto:volunteerbanking@girlscoutsww.org).

★ Volunteer banking will verify the troop has officially formed and email an authorization letter to all signers. *Together, take that letter to the bank and open your account!*

- Learn more about troop finances on page 23!

# Your Leader Vision

Take some time to think about what you bring to your leadership role and what you might need in a co-leader.

My strengths are:

My co-leader's strengths are:

I need a co-leader who:

My co-leader needs:

Why did I join?

My co-leader joined because:

# Guiding Your Troop Experience

Things to ask your troop leadership team.

√ **When and how often will we meet and for how long?**

√ **Where will we meet? Online, in-person, or hybrid?**

Review the Site Safety Checklist and the Health Guidelines. Ideas include:

- Virtual/Online
- Parks
- Schools (when allowed)
- Places of worship
- Community centers

√ **Will our troop be a single grade level or facilitated as a multi-level troop?**

If multi-level, how will we make sure they each get an age-appropriate experience?

√ **How big do we want our troop to be?**

Review “Keeping Girl Scouts Safe” for the meeting and field trip ratios required, along with the Site Safety Checklist.

√ **What help will we need from parents?**

√ **How are we going to work with the Girl Scouts to decide on activities that they want to do?**

√ **How and how often are we going to communicate with parents/guardians?**

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 activities. Ideas include:

- Private/Secret Facebook group
- Texting apps—Band, Remind Me
- Troop newsletters
- Email templates from the VTK

√ **How will we fund the fun? 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?**

**Troop #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SU #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level of Girl Scouts:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Girl Scouts:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How often we meet (circle one)**

Weekly   Bi-weekly   Other

**Meeting Time(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Troop Start Date** (the Girl Scout year runs Oct. 1–Sept. 30 with troops forming all year round)

**Meeting Location (circle one)**

Virtual   In-person   Hybrid

*If virtual - which platform (circle one)?*

Zoom   Teams   Google Hangout

**Proposed Troop Dues** \_\_\_\_\_

**Troop Product Program Participation (circle all that apply)**

Cookies Program   Fall Product

**Troop Helper Name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents:** Stay at meetings / Drop off

**Siblings at Meetings:** Yes / No

**Troop Communication Ideas:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Your Volunteer Troop Team

## On my honor... we will do this together!

Before you hold your first troop meeting with your Girl Scouts, consider the support and resources you'll need throughout the year. Parents, friends, family, and other members of the community can provide time, experience, and ideas to a troop, so get them involved from the very beginning as part of your volunteer troop support team.

All of these adults must be members with current background checks on file. They commit to these volunteer roles based on the amount of time they have to give and their interest in specific areas of the team. To add troop volunteer positions in the Participation Catalog, let customer care know. Interested volunteers should be guided to the Join or Volunteer buttons at [www.GirlScoutsWW.org](http://www.GirlScoutsWW.org).



Troop volunteers play a big role in making your troop run smoothly and in supporting the troop's plans. They're an extra set of eyes, ears, and hands whose skill sets are leveraged to help the troop safely explore the world around them. Your troop support team could include volunteer roles such as a troop cookie manager, troop fall product program manager, and a troop treasurer.

Some troop volunteers are not able to volunteer on a regular basis but are ready to help out when you need an extra set of hands to manage an activity station, provide a snack, lead songs, or keep the activity on track and fun. Often families start in this role if they aren't sure they can commit to a committee or leader role. Once they see how fun it is, they may sign up for more!

## Leadership Responsibilities

Remember your troop families can help you fulfill these roles!

- Liaison with service unit volunteers and council staff
- Troop financial management
- Communication with families
- Troop safety and policy
- Guiding the troop's Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE)
- Create an inclusive environment supporting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Communicate with troop leadership
- Support the troop with Girl Scout activities as needed
- Provide the relevant permission and information needed
- Ensure current membership for their Girl Scout
- Provide transportation to and from meetings
- Complete and submit additional Health History forms as needed

All Girl Scouts live by the Girl Scout Law!

# Family Connections

## **The secret ingredient of successful Girl Scout troops!**

Obviously, you want your troop to have fun, be inspired, take risks, and learn about themselves and the world this year—that’s why you’re a Girl Scout troop leader! The thing is, parents and caregivers want the same thing for their Girl Scouts, but getting families to pitch in and play an active role in the troop, while also enhancing the experience for their own child, can be tricky for many volunteers. It doesn’t have to be this way! After your troop’s initial parent/caregiver meeting, here’s how you can best keep parents and caregivers on board.

## **Make the Ask(s)**

The main reason people don’t take action is because they were never asked to in the first place. That’s why hearing “one out of three Girl Scout parents say no one had communicated expectations around involvement with their Girl Scout’s troop” is so troubling. Parents and caregivers may have many talents, but they’re certainly not mind readers! Don’t be nervous about getting turned down. Sure, a few parents and caregivers might be unable to lend a hand, but the helpers you do get will be worth their weight in gold. And just because someone wasn’t available a month or two ago doesn’t mean they won’t be free to help now. Loop back, follow up, ask again!

## **Make Sense of “Why”**

Explain that not only does the whole troop benefit with extra help from parents and caregivers, but Girl Scouts also feel a special sense of pride in seeing an adult they care about step up and take a leadership role. Getting involved can strengthen the caregiver/Girl Scout bond and is a meaningful way to show a child they are a priority in their caregivers’ lives.

## **Make it Quick and Easy**

Everybody’s got a full plate these days, so instead of starting these conversations with a list of tasks or responsibilities they could take on (which can be intimidating!) Ask caregivers how much time each week they might be able to dedicate to the troop, then go from there. For instance, if an individual has 15 minutes each week to spare, they could organize and manage the calendar for troop snacks and carpools. If a grandparent has one to two hours, they could assist with leading the troop through a specific badge on a topic they’re already comfortable with. For more ways parents and other caregivers can help out when faced with a tricky schedule, check out the Family Resources tab in the Volunteer Toolkit.

## **Make Family Part of the Formula**

While Girl Scout programming is always focused on the Girl Scouts themselves, it’s important and helpful to open up a few events to their families and loved ones throughout the year. Inviting a whole crew to celebrate accomplishments in Girl Scouting—whether at a holiday open house, a bridging ceremony, or a fun “reverse meeting” where Girl Scouts take the role of leaders and guide the adults, including caregivers, through an activity—will help families better understand the value of Girl Scouts and be more likely to invest their time and talents with the troop. That said, there’s no need to wait for one of these special events to engage caregivers in Girl Scout adventures. Keep communication lines open throughout the year—whether it’s through your troop’s social media page, personal emails, or in-person chats—to keep caregivers in the loop on what the Girl Scouts are doing and learning during each meeting, and encourage them to let their Girl Scout “be the expert” at home, such as explaining or teaching a new learned skill to the rest of the family.

# First Meeting: Family and Caregivers

## Kicking the year off right by engaging parents and caregivers!

Girl Scouting provides the best opportunities for its members when families step up and play an active part in the troop. Without meaningful support from parents and caregivers, it's difficult for a troop to be all it can be.

So, what is a family meeting? It's the first meeting you hold to start each troop year, whether you are a new or returning troop. It's valuable for all troops.

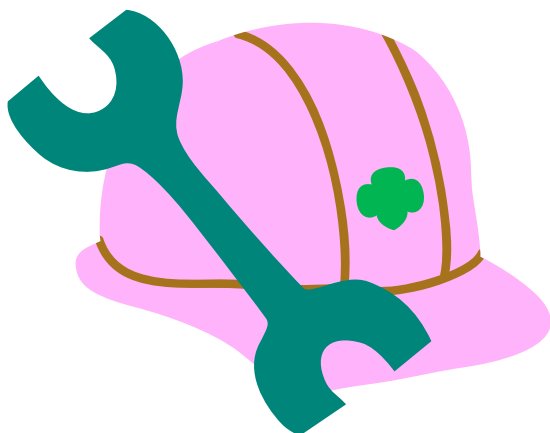
100% of troops with satisfied parents and troop leaders reported they hold family meetings.

## Why hold a parent and caregiver meeting? Because it helps.

- Families understand what Girl Scouting can do for their Girl Scout.
- Families and leaders identify ways they will work as a team to support the troop.
- Families and leaders agree on what the troop pays for and what families pay for individually.
- Fill key troop positions—you never know which adult will make an awesome assistant leader, troop cookie manager, etc.
- Caregivers know how the troop will communicate things like upcoming events, schedule changes, etc.
- Caregivers learn about uniforms, books, and other basics.

Kicking off each year with a family meeting sets the troop up for success. Outlining clear expectations, building a team, and engaging parents and caregivers in the Girl Scout experience is a great way to start off on the right foot. When families are involved, leaders have support, and the troop has a plan, Girl Scouts benefit!

## The best news? We've made it easy for you with some great tools and resources.



- New Leader's Learning Path sample [Family Agenda](#)
- Customize [Sample Troop Expectations](#) for your troop and review at your meeting
- Detailed Family Meeting outline in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK)
- Caregiver Forms: [Troop Meeting Day Checklist](#)

# Let's Go: Your First Troop Meeting

The first troop meeting is always exciting! It is where you will see the adventure of being a Girl Scout troop leader start to unfold. Remember to have fun! As you help your Girl Scouts on their journey to discover, connect and take action in the world around them, those experiences will be a part of your Girl Scout journey, too. Enjoy it!

## Here are some tips, tricks, and ideas to kick off your first troop experience!

The first meeting is a great chance to:

- Get to know your Girl Scouts!
- Introduce the troop to Girl Scout traditions.
- Brainstorm all of the exciting things the troop wants to do this year.
- Introduce the whole troop volunteer team to the Girl Scouts and their parents/caregivers.

If you are feeling a little nervous about leading troop meetings and experiences with your Girl Scouts, that's OK! As a Girl Scout troop leader, you are encouraged to listen to your Girl Scouts with an open mind and lead them with your heart.

Many adults feel that, when working with kids, they have to be the expert and have everything perfect. But this is not the case in Girl Scouts. When preparing for your first (or any) troop meeting, keep these things in mind:

- **It doesn't need to be perfect.** There are lots of resources with information and guidance to help you facilitate great troop meetings and experiences, but you are encouraged to be creative. And, if you forget a part of the troop meeting or the field trip doesn't go the way you planned or you run out of time, that's OK! The 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!** As you use the Girl Scout-led process in the development of your troop's meetings and experiences, your Girl Scouts will, at some point, want to earn a badge or complete a project in a subject unfamiliar to you. Be open with your troop when you don't know something, but don't use that as a reason to keep them from exploring the topic or doing the project. Instead, become their partner in figuring out how to learn more. When they see you learning alongside them, their confidence in their current knowledge and skills as well as their ability to learn will rise. It will also help them to understand that learning is a lifelong process. Find an expert—parent or partner!
- **As long as your Girl Scouts are left smiling, you did everything right!**

### First Meeting Preparation Checklist

Cover the basics. Review details about when and where the meeting will take place. Make sure all the families have that information. You might visit the meeting location before-hand or, if meeting virtually, do a tech test run.

Get ready. Use the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) to verify your troop roster and email your parents. This is a great time to remind parents for any forms needed at the meeting.

Expect to have fun! When you are prepared and ready to have a great time, the troop will follow your lead.



# Six Elements of a Great Troop Meeting

**The most important thing is to make your meetings fun! Here's one possible meeting structure.**

## 1. Start Up

Plan activities for the troop as Girl Scouts arrive at the meeting so they have something to do until the meeting begins. It could be as simple as coloring pages, a game, a question to answer, or a drawing activity.

## 2. Opening

Each troop decides how to open their meeting—most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story, or other activity designed by the Girl Scouts. (5-10 minutes)

## 3. Activities

Use the meeting plans found in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK). Activities are already designed to fit easily into this part of your meeting as you help your troop earn badges and complete Journeys. (30-45 minutes)

## 4. Clean Up

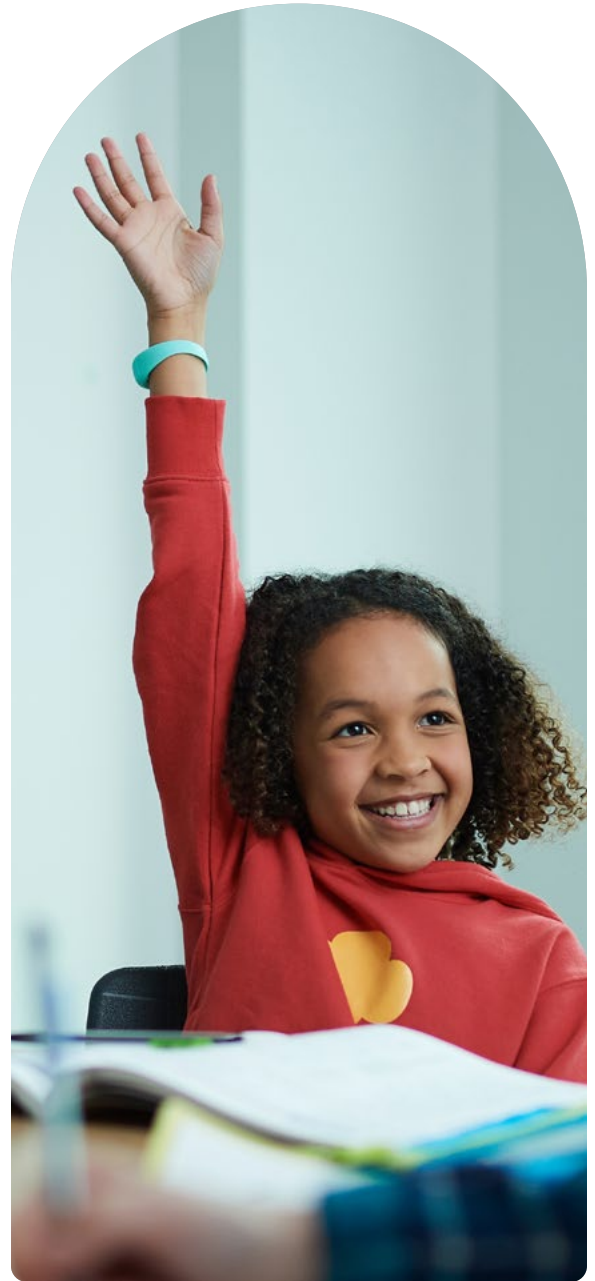
Girl Scouts should always leave a place better than they found it! (5 minutes)

## 5. Closing

Just like the opening, each troop can decide how to close—with a song, a game, or a story. (5-10 minutes)

## 6. Business

Collect dues and make announcements, or plan an upcoming event or trip while parents/caregivers are present. This gives you a chance to keep families informed. (5 minutes)



## Find Volunteer Resources & Ideas

Dollar  
Stores

Leader  
BFF Club!



Online  
Volunteer  
Toolkit  
(VTK)



# Key Resources

## The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK)

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is your official source for delivering easy, fun troop meetings year-round! This fully customizable digital planning tool provides you with Girl Scout program content, award requirements, and other resources so you can keep your Girl Scout year running smoothly. Accessible on any computer, tablet, or mobile device, the VTK lets troop leaders:

- Explore meeting topics and program activities with their troop
  - Print step-by-step activity guides and shopping lists
  - Manage Girl Scout attendance and track achievements
  - Update contact information
  - Add local events
  - Share troop meeting activities with parents/guardians
  - Email parents/guardians with a single click
- And so much more! Access the VTK by logging into your myGS.

## Virtual and Other Online Resources

Find national resources from GSUSA OR local resources:

- [Virtual Program Opportunities](#)
- [Troop Leader Blueprint](#)

Other great virtual resources

- Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas—[Virtual Troop Meeting Playbook](#)
- Virtual Girl Scout Activities—search Facebook for this private group to join for resources across the country.

Girl Scouts of River Valleys

- [Volunteers.girlscoutsrv.org](http://Volunteers.girlscoutsrv.org)—Troop leader planning guides at each level.

## Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoints

With key information, policies, and procedures that support the safe and consistent delivery of Girl Scout programming to members across the council, [Volunteer Essentials](#) is just that—essential. By agreeing to be a Girl Scout volunteer, you agree to follow the items outlined in this resource. Volunteer Essentials is updated annually, so be sure to review it every September/October for any changes.

[Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) is the go-to guide with everything you need to prepare for and keep your Girl Scouts safe during a range of activities outside of the normal Girl Scout troop meeting.

# 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.

## Understanding How Many Volunteers You Need

Girl Scouts’ volunteer-to-Girl Scout ratios show the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of Girl Scouts. These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of Girl Scouts. Please note that whenever possible, the adult to youth ratio should be maintained. However, when navigating emergency health and safety situations, this ratio can be temporarily waived.

Your group must have at least two unrelated, background checked volunteers present at all times (except in emergency situations). You must also have additional volunteers as necessary, depending on the size of the group and the ages and abilities. Any adult who is supervising the troop must be a registered volunteer with a complete background check. Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old. One troop leader in every group must always be female. Please refer to the ratio chart below and note that multilevel troops adhere to the ratio for their lowest level.

Volunteer-to-Girl Scout Ratio Chart	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of Girl Scouts	Add one volunteer for every increase within this range of additional Girl Scouts	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of Girl Scouts	Add one volunteer for every increase within this range of additional Girl Scouts
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8
Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6-8)	25	1-12	20	1-10
Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9-10) & Ambassadors (grades 11-12)	30	1-15	24	1-12

# Keeping Girl Scouts Safe

## Planning Safe Activities

Before planning activities, please check our [Health Guidelines](#) to ensure you understand the council-required safety protocols for our current environment. When preparing for specific activities with your troop, start by reading the [Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for that particular activity. You can find these on the resources tab of the Volunteer Toolkit. 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 also note if a First Aider is required.

If Safety Activity Checkpoints do not exist for an activity you and your Girl Scouts are interested in, contact customer care at [customercare@girlscoutswv.org](mailto:customercare@girlscoutswv.org) or 1(800) 541-9852 before making any definite plans with your troop. Some activities do require forms and council approval.

## What to Do in An Emergency

Although we all hope the worst never happens, you should know and follow our council's procedures for emergency situations. At the scene of the incident, safety is your first priority. Provide care for the injured person and/or obtain medical assistance. For serious incidents, immediately report the emergency to council at 1(800) 303-9963. You will also want to complete an [Incident Report Form](#).

Make sure a general First-Aid kit is available at your meeting place and accompanies the troop on any activity. You may need to provide the kit if one is not already available at your meeting location. You must always have on hand the required health forms, the names and telephone numbers of our council office, parents/guardians and emergency services such as the police, fire department, or hospital. Distribute [Emergency Procedure Cards](#) to all troop drivers and adult members.



# Troop Finances

## Here are your keys to troop banking!



Oversight is important! A troop bank account must have two account signers listed. Signers must:

- Be a registered Girl Scout member
- Pass an online criminal background check
- Be a troop helper, troop treasurer, or troop leader/assistant leader
- Complete the Opening or Changing a Bank Account course located in the New Leader's Learning Path in gsLearn
- Sign the [Troop Checking Account form](#)

Troop money is Girl Scout money—youth members and family should be involved in the decision making on how funds should be spent.

Quick Tip: start your troop off right with creating an agreement on how you will handle troop funds should someone leave the troop.



Troop finances should be open and transparent for all Girl Scouts and families to see. Think about how you want to provide finance information to your troop.

### **Troop signers are accountable...**

#### **...to the troop:**

- To help them plan and prepare
- To help them carry out their plans
- To help keep their funds safe

#### **...to the parents/caregivers:**

- To keep them informed on your plans
- To keep detailed records and receipts
- To share the financial state of the troop on a regular basis
- To provide receipts when money is exchanged

#### **...to the council:**

- To know and follow council guidelines and policies and stay updated on changes
- To provide the Annual Troop Finance Report on time
- To keep detailed records and receipts
- To contact staff promptly if help is needed



# Troop Finances

## Opening a Troop Bank Account

Have both account signers complete the [Troop Checking Account form](#) and submit to [volunteerbanking@girlscoutsw.org](mailto:volunteerbanking@girlscoutsw.org).

## Funding the Fun!

Troops have some big ideas about what they want to do in Girl Scouts. Here are some ideas on how you can fund the Girl Scout fun!

*Troop Dues:* Troops can decide to collect troop dues as a way to help provide start-up funds for troop activities and supplies each year. These could range from \$1-2 per meeting to \$30-40 for the entire school year. It is up to each troop to decide what works best for your troop. Financial assistance is available.

*Money-Earning Activities:* Fall Product and the Cookie Program are the primary money-earning activities for a troop. Troops who participate in either of these programs can do additional money-earning activities to help fund troop fun. Visit our website for [Money-Earning Guidelines](#).

## Managing Your Troop's Funds

Keeping track of troop receipts and expenses can be easy with these tips:

1. Use a receipt book!
2. Watch for bank fees. [Key Bank's Fee Schedule](#) can be found online.
3. Use the [Detailed Cash Record](#) (Excel file download)
4. Complete an [Annual Troop Finance Report](#). Due by June 30, this report uses your May bank statement to report out your income and expenses for the year.





# The Girl Scout Cookie Program



## Why participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program?

Girl Scouts learn by doing! The Girl Scout Cookie Program is an entrepreneurial program where Girl Scouts learn about running a business, marketing and sales strategies, and so much more! When Girl Scouts sell cookies they build up a lifetime of skills and confidence. They develop five key skills that are essential to leadership, to success, and to life:

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

## Cookie Season

The Girl Scout Cookie season typically runs from the middle of January through the middle of March. The sale has multiple phases (specific dates for these phases will be shared during cookie trainings):

- Promise order taking with paper order card (with the adjusted timeline change to January)
- Digital Cookie sales (January through mid March)
- Door-to-door selling (mid February through early March)
- Booth sales in front of community businesses (March)

## Cookie Resources

We want you to have access to the resources you need to be successful. Check out all the amazing resources that make it easy for your Girl Scouts to become their very own cookie bosses!

- [GSWW Resources](#)
- [GSUSA Resources](#)

**You can also participate in our Fall Product Program!**  
The Fall Product Program includes the sale of nuts, candies, and magazine subscriptions. It can be a fun, fast way of helping your Girl Scouts get a taste of what it means to be an entrepreneur!

- Girl Scouts take orders in person (as health directives allow) and through their online storefront in late September through early October
- In 2022, troops earned proceeds at 15% of each item sold!
- All Girl Scouts that participate in the program can earn exciting rewards, including fun patches!

# Financial Assistance

## Who's Eligible?

Our qualification guidelines are the same as the federal school lunch program. If your family qualifies for free or reduced price school lunch, you will meet the financial assistance (FA) eligibility. If your application is denied based on your family's income level, you will be given an option to inform us of any extenuating circumstances that your family is going through and your case will be quickly reviewed.

## What Grants are Available?



**NEW in 2023:** Girl Scouts may use one of the three allotted grant requests per membership year (October 1 through September 30) as an event grant for up to \$300 toward a volunteer-led community or day camp AND still be eligible to use a camp grant of up to \$805 for a staff-led overnight camp. Adults are eligible for up to 3 grants per year.

*Membership Dues Grant:* This \$25 grant covers the cost of membership for this year and/or to renew for next year. Does not count toward the 3 grants per year.

*Troop Dues Grant:* Available to Girl Scouts. This \$40 grant is deposited directly into the troop's bank account. These funds are geared to cover expenses that take place during troop meetings such as crafts, snacks, outings, earned badges, etc.

*Girl Scout Supply Voucher Grant:* Available to Girl Scouts. This is good for up to \$30 in the Girl Scout Store and can be applied toward the purchase of eligible uniform parts and books.

*Event/Workshop Grant:* Available to Girl Scouts and adults. Check out our [event calendar](#) for qualifying activities, council events, third party events, and even some service unit events!

*Camp Grant:* This grant is available to Girl Scouts and adults who have active Girl Scout memberships. This grant can be applied toward ONE camp session per year. Eligible camps include Girl Scouts of Western Washington day and overnight camps as well as community day, twilight, and overnight camps. Applicant must first qualify for the FA program by submitting the FA Application and also be registered for camp prior to the close of the camp registration deadline. Any deposit, if required, is not included in the grant amount. Grant funds will be directly applied to the camper's outstanding balance. The applicant will be notified once the grant is approved.

*Troop Supply Voucher Grant:* If at least three Girl Scouts on a troop roster have qualified for financial assistance, the troop is eligible for a troop supply voucher. This is good for up to \$30 in the Girl Scout Store for Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting, Girl Scout Journey books, Journey books with how-to guides, skill building badge activity sets, pin tabs, official membership pins, and the world Trefoil pin.

# Financial Assistance

## Do Grants Run Out?

Due to financial impacts of COVID-19, we have made updates that may impact the availability of grants:

- Financial assistance has moved to a “first-come, first-served” disbursement plan .
- Each grant award has been allocated a funding cap; once the cap is reached, the grant will be “turned off” and further grant requests will be denied.
- Funds will receive a monthly health check throughout the year with brief quarterly member updates via GSWW’s email newsletter. When appropriate, a pre-closure announcement will be included.

## How to Apply?

Visit our [webpage](#) to learn more and access the [Financial Assistance Application](#) For questions, contact the customer care team at 1(800) 541-9852 or email [financialassistance@girlscoutsww.org](mailto:financialassistance@girlscoutsww.org).



# Girl Scouts for Everyone

**At Girl Scouts of Western Washington, our community continues to be strong and our vision is clear.**

We invest in our community through Girl Scouts. Our community represents every race, ethnicity, income level, sexual orientation, ability, and religion; reflects a spectrum of gender identity; and connects across geographic locations. By focusing our attention on community members who are furthest from racial, economic, and social justice, Girl Scouts can be an instrument of change, promoting equitable outcomes for all. We wholly commit to taking anti-racist action

to grow as an anti-racist and anti-oppressive organization so that, through Girl Scouts, our members are affirmed as they strive to make our community and world better.

Inclusion is an approach and an attitude, rather than a set of guidelines. Inclusion is about belonging, about all Girl Scouts being offered equitable opportunities, about respect and dignity, and about honoring uniqueness of and differences among us all.

- Welcome every Girl Scout and focus on building community. Girl Scouts of Western Washington staff are available to assist and support volunteer leaders with training and other resources related to diversity and inclusion.
- Emphasize cooperation instead of competition.
- Provide a safe and socially comfortable environment for Girl Scouts.
- Honor the intrinsic value of each person's life.
- Teach respect for, understanding of, and dignity toward all Girl Scouts and their families.
- Actively reach out to Girl Scouts and families who have been excluded or marginalized.
- Foster a sense of belonging to your community as a respected and valued peer.

For more support and information: check out our 688 Diversity and Inclusion course in gsLearn or visit the [Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion page](#) on our website!

Download our [LGBTQ+ FAQ](#) and learn about our commitment to [diversity, equity, inclusion, racial justice, and belonging](#)



# Girl Scouts for Everyone

## Diversity Beans Troop Activity (all ages)

*Materials Needed:* One packet of Diversity Beans ([www.icelebratediversity.com](http://www.icelebratediversity.com)) or mixed jelly belly varieties where similar looking beans may taste different, like Bean Boozled. If doing virtually, be sure to send each Girl Scout their own package of beans!

*Purpose:* The purpose of the diversity beans activity is to encourage a discussion about stereotypes and diversity. They are intended to help people stop stereotyping based on appearance. The beans come in six different colors and different flavors for a total of 36 different combinations. The trick is that you can bite into an orange diversity bean and in addition to it being orange flavored, it could also be cherry, lemon, lime, vanilla, or licorice. They provide a reminder that diversity means not judging people based on appearance or background.



### Instructions:

- Set up the chairs for the group members in a circle.
- Pass around the jar of jelly beans and ask each group member to take one to two and not eat them.
- Go around the circle and ask why each person chose the jelly beans that they chose.
- Ask for people to identify what their least favorite jelly bean flavor is.
- Ask everyone to eat their jelly bean.
- Ask people to raise their hand if they tasted the flavor they expected.
- Ask people to raise their hand if they tasted a different flavor than they expected.
- Ask people if they liked what they tasted better than what they expected.
- Ask everyone who had a red jelly bean to raise their hand and then discuss what they tasted, continue for each color (yellow, green, orange, black, and white)
- Discuss how this is related to diversity.



# Productive Conflict & Managing Behavior

It is not uncommon for Girl Scouts or troops to have disagreements or a behavior issue from time to time. The best way to address these topics is to be proactive right from the start! When you take a little bit of time at the beginning of the year to set the tone and expectations for all leaders, Girl Scouts, and families in your troop, your year will run that much more smoothly. And, when an issue does arise, everyone will be on the same page about how to correct the situation. Here are a few tools you can use now, to help manage conflict down the road. Find more information and copies of the forms at [GirlScoutsWW.org](http://GirlScoutsWW.org).



[Troop Handbook](#)



[Group Agreement Ideas \(Pinterest\)](#)



[Girl Scout Behavior Norms](#)

# Productive Conflict & Managing Behavior

## **Step back and slow down.**

- Most of us repeat unhelpful behaviors in conflicts because we are unaware of what we are doing.
- We can only change habits through awareness.
- Plan what you want to say to avoid saying something that will escalate a conflict.

## **Be clear about your intentions and goals for the conversation.**

- If your most important goal is to win, blame, or change the other party, the conflict will probably escalate, no matter what skills you use.
- If your intention is to blame or change others, you don't learn how to prevent the problem from repeating itself.
- Only begin a conversation about a conflict in order to learn something new, express your views and feelings, or to problem-solve.

## **Listen first to understand; ask questions to explore the other person's story.**

- If others feel listened to, they are more likely to understand you.
- Leverage for change comes from understanding, not from convincing them you are right.
- It is rare for people to feel truly listened to and still experience the conflict as negative.
- Be aware of your internal barriers to really listening, such as thinking you are right and strong feelings about the subject matter.

## **Express strong feelings without blame.**

- Strong feelings make it impossible for us to really listen.
- Use "I statements" to express what you're feeling.

- Be sure to state a feeling (as opposed to a judging statement) after saying I feel.
- Be sure to carefully describe the other party's behavior without adding evaluations to it.

## **Be aware of how your own self image might make you more defensive.**

- Avoid an all or nothing, black and white view of yourself—in this way you will become open to feedback.

## **Explore what is most important to the other person by listening and asking questions out of curiosity.**

- People do not usually enter a conflict by stating what is most important to them.
- You can only problem solve if you know what the other person really wants.
- People usually enter a conflict with only one solution.

## **Let go of the myths about conflict.**

- Conflict is not a contest—don't make it one.
- Conflict is not always negative.

## **Remember the four principal approaches to conflict.**

- Acknowledge the conflict.
- If you resist, they will push you even harder.
- To acknowledge does not mean to agree.
- Be willing to change.
- When initiating a conversation about a conflict.
- Ask the other party if they are willing to have a conversation.
- Tell them the topic and the importance of the conversation to you to maintain a good relationship.
- Allow them to save face.
- Be open to learning new information.

# Creating a Year Plan Snapshot

The Girl Scout year runs October 1 through September 30. No matter when your troop is forming, there are a lot of Girl Scout adventures to be had and memories to make. The Volunteer Toolkit will allow you to build a troop plan that you can share out with your families. However, this snapshot can help you visualize the months ahead. Each troop is different since the plans, activities, outings, (and more) are planned by the troop!

**What are your Girl Scouts excited to explore and learn about?**

Your troop year can be as simple or as complex as you want to make it. Remember, this is your adventure. You set the pace, we will be here to provide you the support and resources you need along the way!

**Are there field trips or Girl Scout events that your troop is excited to do this year?**

**Some important troop dates!**

**What else might your troop want to try this year?**

**Some important Girl Scout dates!**

October 31: Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday

February 22: World Thinking Day

Week of March 12: Girl Scout Week

March 12: Girl Scouts' Birthday

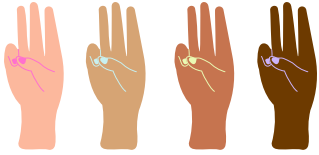
April 22: Girl Scout Leader's Day

August 10: National S'mores Day

September 9/10: Girl Scouts Loves State Parks

# Glossary

<b>Birthplace</b>	The childhood home of Juliette Gordon Low in Savannah, Georgia.
<b>Badges</b>	Girl scouts earn badges in a variety of skill areas to help them grow into well-rounded adults. Badges are official awards worn on the front of the sash or vest.
<b>Bridging</b>	Girl scouts graduate from one grade level to another (Daisy to Brownie, Brownie to Junior etc.) in a bridging ceremony. When Girl Scouts complete the steps outlined in the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting, they earn a rainbow bridging award.
<b>Buddy System</b>	Girl Scouts always use this safety practice of pairing by twos (a "truddy" is pairing of threes). This system is often useful on field trips and outings.
<b>Camps</b>	Day Camp: go to and return home each day Overnight Camp: sleep away at camp Twilight Camp: like day camp, but held in evening hours Community Camps: camps run by Girl Scout volunteers
<b>Court of Awards</b>	A ceremony to present badges and earned recognitions at any grade level typically held at the end of the school year.
<b>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Racial Justice, and Belonging (DEIRJB)</b>	Diversity and equity are core values of Girl Scouts of Western Washington. We aim to empower every Girl Scout-Girl Scouts of every race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, ability, gender identity, religion, or geographic location—to make the world a better place.
<b>Founder's Day</b>	Juliette Gordon Low's birthday—October 31.
<b>Friendship Circle</b>	Girl Scouts, both Girl Scouts and adults, stand in a circle holding hands, right arm over left arm, which stands for the unbroken chain of friendship with Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world.
<b>Friendship Squeeze</b>	Within a friendship circle, one person gently squeezes the hand of the next person and the squeeze is silently passed around the circle.
<b>Fly Up</b>	When Brownies bridge to Juniors, it's called "flying up." This is how they earn their Brownie wings. Girl Scouts who fly up from Brownies can wear their wings on their vest/sash at every future program grade level.
<b>Girl Scout-Led</b>	An idea that Girl Scouts of every grade level take an active role in determining what, where, when, why and how they'll structure activities. Adults provide guidance, ensuring that planning, organization, and set-up are age-appropriate. Evaluation of all activities is done jointly with Girl Scouts and is integral to a high-quality Girl Scout experience.
<b>Girl Guides</b>	The name of Girl Scouts outside of the United States and the original name for Girl Scouts until 1913.
<b>Girl Scout Handshake</b>	Formal way of greeting other Girl Scouts by shaking with the left hand, while giving the Girl Scout sign with the right hand.
<b>Girl Scout Leadership (GSLE)</b>	The Girl Scout program. The GSLE includes three keys to leadership: Girl Scouts discover themselves and others; connect with others; and take action to make the world a better place. Activities are Girl Scout-led, which gives Girl Scouts the opportunity to learn by doing in a cooperative learning environment.

<b>Girl Scout Sabbath</b>	The Saturday in Girl Scout Week. See Girl Scout Week.
<b>Girl Scout Sign</b> 	Official Girl Scout greeting. The right hand is raised shoulder high with the three middle fingers extended and the thumb crossing over the palm to hold down the little finger.
<b>Girl Scout Sunday</b>	The Sunday in Girl Scout week.
<b>Girl Scout Week</b>	Annual celebration during the week of March 12 (the Girl Scout Birthday) to celebrate the beginning of Girl Scouts in the USA.
<b>Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. (GSUSA)</b>	National organization of Girl Scouts headquartered in New York, NY. Membership dues are paid to GSUSA. Their website is <a href="http://www.girlscouts.org">www.girlscouts.org</a> .
<b>Highest Awards (Bronze, Silver, Gold)</b>	The highest awards that a Junior (Bronze), Cadette (Silver), and Senior/ Ambassador (Gold) can earn by completing a specific Take Action Project.
<b>Insignia</b>	Girl Scout official emblem, buttons, badges, pins, and other official forms of recognition which may be worn on the uniform by registered members.
<b>Investiture</b>	A special ceremony in which a new member accepts the Girl Scout Promise and Law and receives the membership pin.
<b>Journeys</b>	The key program component to the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Journeys teach today's Girl Scouts what it takes to be a leader. There are seven Journey series for each program level where Girl Scouts learn the three keys to leadership: discover, connect and take action.
<b>Juliette Gordon Low</b>	October 31, 1860-January 17, 1927. The founder of Girl Scout movement in the United States. Also known as Daisy.
<b>Kaper Chart</b>	A chart that divides jobs within the troop/group. The chart typically rotates or can easily be changed so that everyone experiences each job and has the opportunity for leadership.
<b>Membership Dues</b>	An annual fee to Girl Scouts of the USA for registration which goes directly to national headquarters. Currently \$25.
<b>Participation Catalog</b>	An online tool that helps new members find opportunities to join a troop or volunteer with Girl Scouts. Troops are encouraged to opt-in for new members to join.
<b>Patches/Fun Patch</b>	Unofficial recognitions for participation in a troop/group or council-wide event that are worn on the back of the sash/vest.
<b>Program Aide</b>	Older Girl Scouts (Cadette-Ambassadors) focused on deepening leadership skills and building up older Girl Scouts to be mentors of younger Girl Scouts.
<b>Quiet Sign</b>	Girl Scout signal for silence in a group situation. The person in charge raises their right hand and Girl Scouts fall silent as they raise their right hand also.
<b>Rededication</b>	When a Girl Scout renews their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
<b>Service Project</b>	A project that is done for the community and addresses an immediate, short-term need in the community, such as volunteering.



<b>Service Unit</b>	Geographic unit of troops/groups within a region led by experienced volunteers who support leaders and troops.
<b>Service Unit Manager (SUM)</b>	An experienced volunteer who manages the local service unit.
<b>Sit Upon</b>	A lightweight pad to sit upon when the ground is damp.
<b>Slogan and Motto</b>	The Girl Scout slogan is “do a good turn daily.” The Girl Scout motto is “be prepared.”
<b>S.W.A.P.S.</b>	Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere. A traditional Girl Scout keepsake. The keepsakes should tell something about the giver or giver group. The SWAPS could also represent the giver community, country, or state.
<b>Take Action Project</b>	A project that is done WITH the community, addresses the root cause of a community issue, and has long-term impact.
<b>Trefoil</b>	International symbol of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting. The trefoil represents the three parts of the Girl Scout promise.
<b>Troop Dues</b>	A small amount of money Girl Scouts bring to meetings or to kick off the year to help cover the cost of basic troop supplies. Each troop decides whether or not to charge dues and sets the amount.
<b>World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (W.A.G.G.G.S.)</b>	Worldwide organization of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts with over 146 member countries to which GSUSA belongs. W.A.G.G.G.S. Headquarters is in London, England.
<b>World Trefoil Pin</b>	The official insignia showing membership in W.A.G.G.G.S.
<b>World Thinking Day (WTD)</b>	Celebrated since 1926, World Thinking Day is a day of international friendship, speaking out on issues that affect Girl Scouts, and fundraising for 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world. Girl scouts traditionally learn about the cultures and traditions of W.A.G.G.G.S. member countries.

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