



Leader's Guide to Success Handbook 2024-2025



Welcome to Girl Scouts!

Our Vision: A New York City in which every girl feels empowered to lead in her community, workplace, and 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.

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.

**Members may substitute for the word God in accordance with their own spiritual beliefs.*



Girl Scout Levels



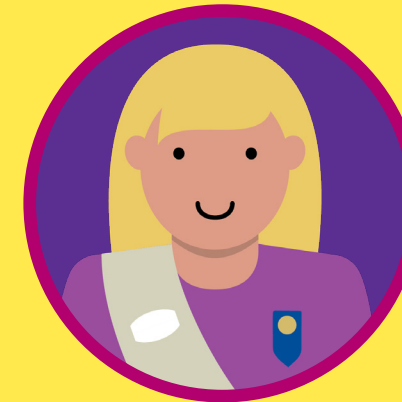
Daisy:
Kindergarten
& 1st grade



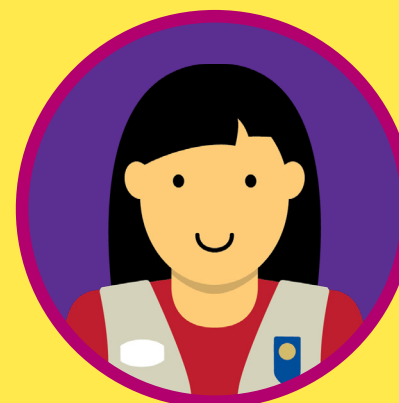
Brownie:
2nd & 3rd grade



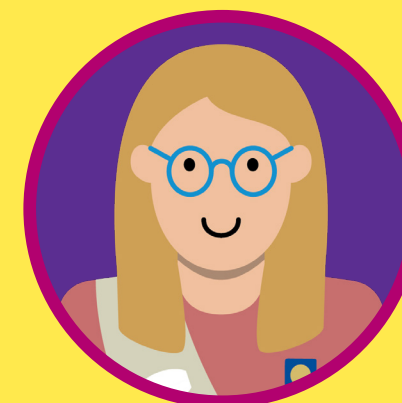
Junior:
4th & 5th grade



Cadette:
6th, 7th, and
8th grade



Senior:
9th & 10th grade



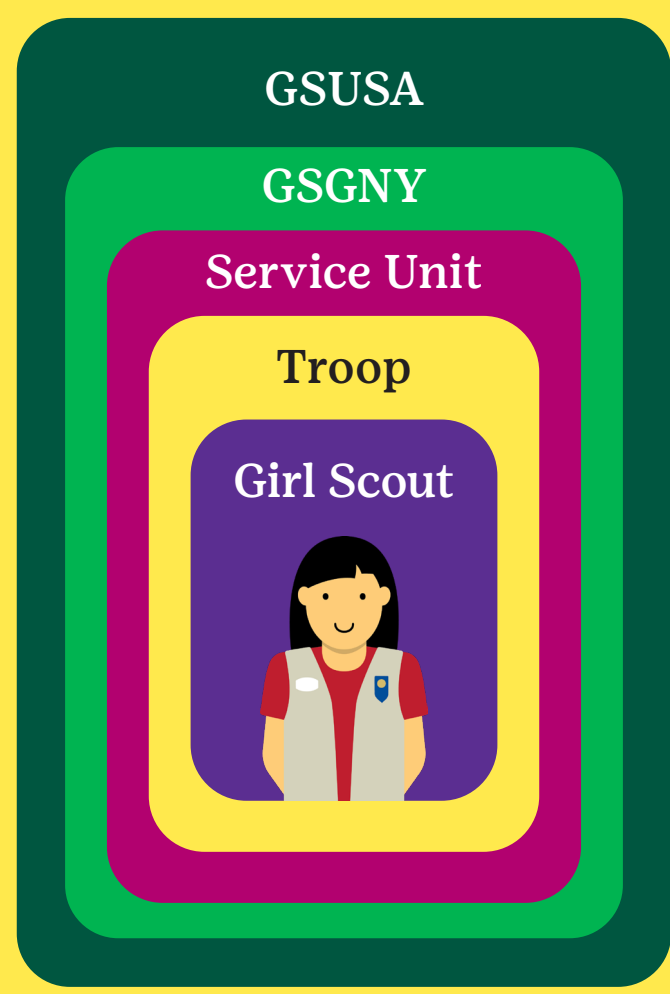
Ambassador:
11th & 12th grade

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Girl Scout Structure & Support

- **Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA)** A national organization supporting the work of 110 councils across the U.S. for more than 100 years.
- **Girl Scouts of Greater New York** An independent 501(c)(3) organization chartered by GSUSA operating under the direction of a local board of directors and overseeing all service units and troops within a given geographical area. The only 100% urban Girl Scout council in the country!
- **Service Units** Comprised of volunteers who support the work of troop volunteers in a given geographical area.
- **Troops** Volunteer-supervised groups of Girl Scouts who participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.



Ways to Volunteer with Girl Scouts of Greater New York

Our vision is a New York City in which every Girl Scout feels empowered to lead in their community, the workplace, and the world —and we can’t achieve that without the support of our dedicated volunteers!

Troop Engagement Roles

Co-Leader: Each troop is led by two co-leaders. As a co-leader, you will lead your Girl Scouts through a fun and engaging year of badges, journeys, special trips, community service, and outdoor adventures.

Troop Support Volunteer: You will play an integral role in supporting your co-leaders and ensuring the success of Girl Scout troop activities. Your specific responsibilities will vary but may include helping to organize a trip or teaching a badge.

Troop Cookie Program Volunteer/Manager: In the seasonal roles of Cookie Program Volunteer and Manager, you will support co-leaders in managing digital orders and initial orders, setting up cookie booths, and distributing boxes.

Short-Term Volunteer Roles

Series Facilitator: Series Facilitators attend schools to teach pre-selected STEM curriculum and activities in 4-week sessions, which last 1-2 hours each.

Program Facilitator: In this role, you will work closely with the Programs Team to lead Girl Scouts through a variety of programs, including Journey Days and badge workshops.

Event Volunteer: Event Volunteers assist at Girl Scout events in a variety of ways, from managing sign-in tables to running activity stations.



New Leader Roadmap

Your path to getting the most out of your first year as a Girl Scouts of Greater New York (GSGNY) troop leader!

A member of council will direct you every step of the way. From guiding you through the onboarding process to introducing you to your Volunteer Experience Specialist, we're here to help!

STEP 2: Start Training

- Sign up for the Leader's Guide to Success training.
- Complete assigned self-guided training sessions in gsLearn.

Step 7: Get the most out of your Girl Scouting experience

- Attend a Service Unit meeting.
- Sign up for council programs and events.
- Visit Camp Kaufmann.

Step 6: Continue Training

- Explore gsLearn courses relevant to your troop
- Complete trainings like CPR, First Aid, and other skills-based trainings that will allow you take Girl Scouts on camping and overnight trips.

STEP 1: Register

- Purchase a membership and create a troop.
- Complete a background check.

Step 3: Plan Your Meetings

- Set your meeting location, time, and frequency.
- Ensure that your co-leader has registered and completed their background check and trainings. *(Note: all troops must be led by two unrelated adults who reside in separate households, and one must be female.)*
- Register youth Girl Scout members.
- Create your year plan in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK).
- Bonus: Sign up for a live VTK training to help you get the most out of this handy planning tool!
- Set up your troop bank account.

Step 5: Connect with Other Volunteers

- Join GSGNY Leaders on BAND – a social media platform where GSGNY volunteers can connect
- Connect with your Service Unit Manager

Step 4: Hold a Caregiver Meeting

- Set expectations.
- Collect dues.
- Connect adult volunteers with troop roles.

Checklist for New Troop Leaders



Registration & Training

- ☐ Register as a Girl Scout co-leader..
- ☐ Complete your background check.
- ☐ Register for and attend the Leader's Guide to Success training.
- ☐ Complete the assigned self-guided trainings in gsLearn
 - ☐ GSUSA Successful Leader Learning Series
 - ☐ GSGNY Leader's Guide to Success Courses

Setting Up Your Troop

- ☐ Identify your co-leaders and share their contact information with council staff.
- ☐ Secure a meeting location that adheres to GSGNY guidelines.
- ☐ Request a bank letter and open your troop's bank account.
- ☐ Update your troop record in myGS with your meeting place, day, and time.
- ☐ Meet with your co-leader(s) to plan your parent/caregiver meeting.
- ☐ Hold your parent/caregiver meeting.
- ☐ Plan and hold your first official troop meeting with your new Girl Scout troop!

Connecting with the Girl Scout Community

- ☐ Join GSGNY Leaders on BAND.
- ☐ Connect with your Volunteer Experience Specialist.
- ☐ Attend a Service Unit meeting.
- ☐ Visit our Events Catalog to sign up for council events and activities.



gsLearn Essential Training Checklist

Getting Started

- GSUSA Successful Leader Learning Series
- GSGNY Leader’s Guide to Success Courses

Grade Level Essentials

- GSUSA Daisy Grade Level Essentials
- GSUSA Brownie Grade Level Essentials
- GSUSA Junior Grade Level Essentials

Troop Administration

- GSUSA Volunteer Toolkit: Troop Leader View
- GSUSA Volunteer Toolkit: Troop Finance View
- GSUSA Brand Ambassador 101 for Volunteers

Delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience

- GSUSA Girl Scouts in the Outdoors
- GSUSA Delivering Inclusive Program

FAQ’s

When and where do we meet?

Girl Scouting is super flexible! Co-leaders choose the location, day, time, and frequency of their troop meetings. You can also have a blended experience—sometimes virtual, sometimes in-person.

How much time will I need to give my troop?

Co-leaders typically spend between 4-8 hours per month planning activities and meeting with their troop, plus 1-2 hours at Service Unit meetings and events.

What is “myGS”?

MyGS is our online member platform. Through myGS, all members can renew their membership, sign up for events, and update their account information. Co-leaders can also assign troop and volunteer roles, access the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK), complete gsLearn courses, and update other troop information.

Do I need to plan everything myself?

No! GSGNY provides troop leaders with a variety of resources to support the planning process. The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is an online platform that allows you to select and plan level-specific troop activities, like badges and journeys. VTK trainings are offered monthly to help you make the most of this digital planning tool!

You will also receive the Leader’s Tribune, our newsletter just for volunteers, twice a month. Here you’ll find program information, training opportunities, and highlights from around our community.

Finally, we encourage all leaders to attend their local Service Unit meetings. This is the best place for you to stay in the know and connect with other volunteers with a wealth of Girl Scout knowledge!

How much does it cost to volunteer?

All volunteers must purchase an annual Girl Scout membership (\$25) and cover their own transportation and apparel costs. Starting on April 1st, the Girl Scout Adult Membership fee from October 2025 to September 2026 will be \$30. The Girl Scout Youth Membership will be \$45. Financial aid is available for membership fees. Troop dues and Girl Scout Cookie sales can help cover the cost of troop supplies, such as badges, craft materials, or any leader training that directly benefits the troop (i.e. CPR/First Aid training certification). Many other volunteer trainings are offered free of charge by Girl Scouts of Greater New York.

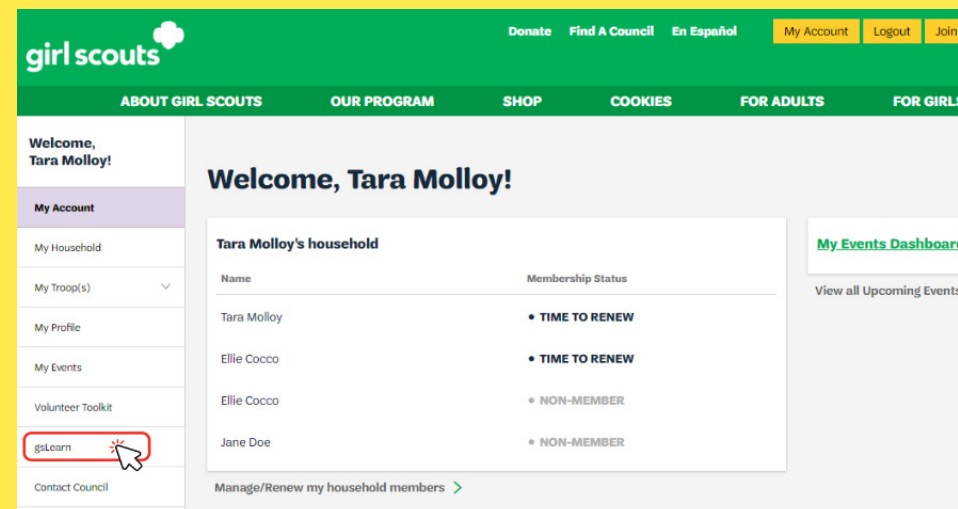
Don’t see your question here?

Our Customer Experience team is here to help. Call us at (212) 645-4000 (Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 5:30pm) or email us any time at customercare@girlscoutsnyc.org.

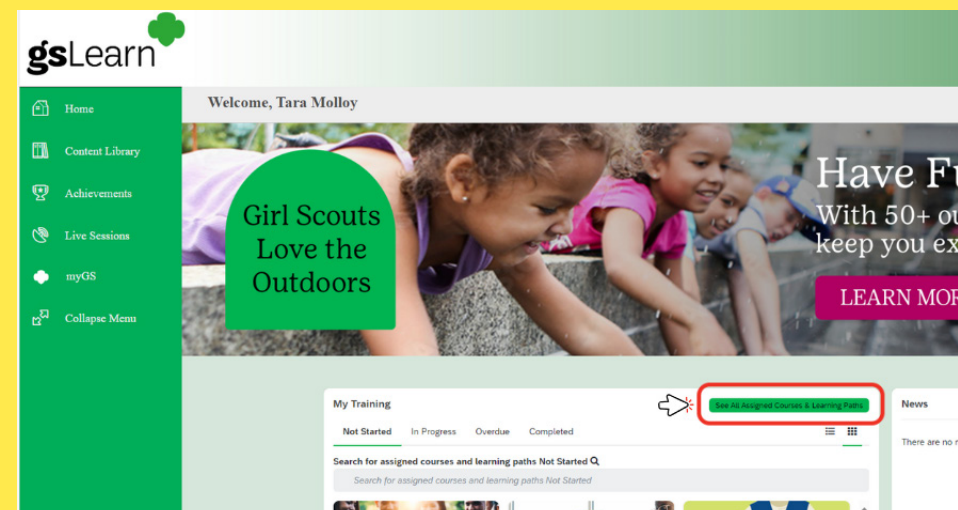
Getting Started

New Leader Trainings: A Quick Guide to gsLearn

To help you feel as prepared as possible in your co-leader role, we offer on-demand trainings via the online platform **gsLearn**. gsLearn can be accessed from the left panel of your myGS account.



Your gsLearn dashboard will look like this:



Click “See All Assigned Courses & Learning Paths” or search for your desired course by name. The **Successful Leader Learning Series** and **GSGNY Leader’s Guide to Success Courses** are particularly helpful and should be completed within one month of becoming a co-leader.

Getting Started

Setting Up Your Troop

There are a few factors to consider as you begin setting up your troop, like who will be volunteering with you and where you'll be meeting. If you need support, please connect with your Volunteer Experience Specialist.

- **Co-Leaders:** Do you have co-leaders in mind? Be sure they register and complete their background checks and trainings so that your troop can get started as soon as possible. For any questions about volunteer registration, please reach out to the Volunteer Experience team
- **Grade level:** Are you opening a grade-specific troop, or will it be a multi-level troop? Use the Volunteer Toolkit to explore badges and meeting plans by grade level.
- **Meeting location:** Will your troop meetings be held in-person, virtually, or a blend of both? If meeting in-person, be sure to choose a location that meets [GSGNY safety guidelines](#). If you plan to meet in your home, please contact your Volunteer Experience Specialist to set up a virtual home inspection.
- **Number of Girl Scouts.** Consider the number of Girl Scouts you will have in your troop, and whether you would be open to accepting other Girl Scouts from the community. Be sure to consider how many volunteers you'll have.
- The adult-to-girl ratio for troop meetings dictates that a minimum of two registered, approved adult volunteers, who must be unrelated, and one of whom must be female, should be present at all troop meetings. For more information on adult-to-youth ratios, see [page 22](#).



Remember—you can update most information about your troop from your account! Refer to **Managing My Troops from My Account** in gsLearn for a demo.

Getting Started

Planning Your First Troop Meetings

Family Meeting

Why hold a family meeting? While Girl Scouts learn the Promise and Law and play games to get to know each other, caregivers can meet each other and discuss shared goals for the year. Here is some areas you'll want to touch on during your family meeting:

- Explain what Girl Scouting can do for their Girl Scout!
- Find ways you can all work as a team to support the troop and fill key troop volunteer positions.
- Agree on what the troop pays for and what families pay for individually.
- Establish how the troop will communicate things like upcoming events or schedule changes.
- Share information about uniforms, books, and other important basics.

First Troop Meeting

The first troop meeting of year is the perfect time to set expectations with Girl Scouts and get ready for a fun-filled year! Here's a checklist for your first troop meeting:

- **Cover the basics.** Review the details about when and where the meeting will occur and ensure families are aware.
- **Get ready.** Use the Volunteer Toolkit to verify your troop roster and email caregivers. This is a great time to ask caregivers to provide you with any outstanding items, such as health history forms, uniform order forms, and troop dues.
- **Know the agenda.** Refer to our [Six Elements of a Great Troop Meeting](#) list on [page 11](#) and the Volunteer Toolkit sample meeting agenda.
- **Review and practice your agenda.** You'll feel calmer during the meeting and be ready to adjust as needed.
- **Prepare for fun!** When the Girl Scouts and families see that you're prepared and ready to have a great time, they'll follow your lead!



Getting Started

Six Elements of a Great Troop Meeting

1. **Ramp up.** Plan activities for Girl Scouts on arrival to the meeting so they have something to do until the meeting begins. *(5-10 minutes)*
2. **Take care of troop business.** Collect dues, make announcements, or plan an upcoming event or trip while families are present. *(5-10 minutes)*
3. **Open the meeting.** Each troop decides how to open its meetings—but most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law. *(5-10 minutes)*
4. **Let the fun begin!** Use the meeting plans found in the Volunteer Toolkit for inspiration! Activities are designed to fit easily into this portion of your meeting. *(30-45 minutes)*
5. **Clean up.** Because a Girl Scout should always leave a place cleaner than they found it! *(5 minutes)*
6. **Close the meeting.** As with the opening, each troop can decide how to close their meetings. Many troops use the friendship circle, but any fun activity works! *(5-10 minutes)*

For more tips on how to run engaging troop meetings, refer to **GSUSA Troop Meetings 101** and **GSUSA Grade Level Essentials** in gsLearn.



Managing Troop Finances

Funding Troop Activities

Troop activities are funded in two main ways: troop dues and the Cookie Program.

- **Troop dues** provide startup funds for troop activities and supplies. Troops may collect a few dollars at each meeting, or a lump sum at the start of the school year. This is something that you can decide with caregivers at the Family Meeting.
- The **Cookie Program** is the primary money-earning activity for a troop. Several virtual and on-demand trainings are provided to help prepare volunteers and families for this exciting season!

Opening A Troop Bank Account

All Girl Scout troops are required to have a troop bank account. If you're starting a new troop, you will need to open a new account. Here are the steps:

1. Complete the Bank Letter Request form.
2. Once your request has been processed, you will receive your bank letter and additional paperwork to bring to the bank.
3. Head to the bank and open your account! **Your troop number should be included in your troop bank account (i.e., Girl Scout Troop #1234) and all banking correspondence should be forwarded to the address of one of the at least two registered and background-cleared signatories on the account.** Please note that these members must be non-related and reside at separate residences.
4. Once you've opened your troop account, submit the completed ACH Debit Authorization and a voided check to cookieach@girlscoutsnyc.org. This will allow your troop to participate in the Cookie Program!



Misappropriation of Funds

Misappropriation of Girl Scout funds is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate dismissal. It can lead to prosecution or collections.

Examples of misappropriation of Girl Scout funds include, but are not limited to:

- Using funds for personal use or non-Girl Scout-related purposes
- Spending funds without group approval or in such a way that does not benefit the whole group
- Co-mingling Girl Scout funds with personal funds
- Self-reimbursement
- Theft/embezzlement

GSGNY reserves the right to immediately suspend a volunteer if GSGNY has reason to suspect misappropriation of Girl Scout funds. Evidence of misappropriation will result in immediate removal of the volunteer responsible. Removal is final and binding; a removed volunteer is not eligible for re-appointment.

Once the volunteer responsible is removed from their volunteer role, they must remove their name and authorization as a signer from all Girl Scout bank accounts within 10 business days. *This generally involves both account signers going to the bank together.*

The individual is required to pay back misappropriated funds in full to GSGNY within 10 business days.

Actions, decisions, and records relating to misuse of funds and steps taken are confidential. Information pertaining to a case will be reviewed only by relevant GSGNY staff.

Tips & Tricks for Managing Troop Finances

Here are some other tips for opening a troop bank account and managing finances:

- Be sure to find a bank with free checking and low fees.
 - Ensure your account has the capability to complete ACH transfers and comes with a debit card that you can use during trips and activities.
 - The use of digital wallet apps (Venmo, Zelle, etc.) is permitted through your authorized Girl Scout troop bank account. All digital wallet activity should be able to be tracked through a bank statement.
 - During the Cookie Program, however, Girl Scouts should only take payment for cookies through the Digital Cookie App.
 - All troops are required to submit an Annual Troop Finance Report (ATFR) by June
- 30th, so be sure to stay organized and save itemized receipts.
 - Sign in to the Volunteer Toolkit to easily manage your troop finances online and submit your ATFR.
 - If your troop would like to participate in a money-earning activity outside of the Cookie Program, please fill out the Troop Money-Earning Activity Application.
 - Troops may accept donations of up to \$249; anything over this amount must be processed through the Advancement Department.
 - If your troop disbands, be sure to complete an AFTR and close your bank account to avoid accruing fees.

Programming

Pillars, Processes, and the Girl Scout Leadership Experience

These four pillars make up the foundation of what we do in Girl Scouts:

1. **STEM:** Computer science, engineering, robotics, coding, cybersecurity, and more.
2. **Outdoors:** Adventure and skill-building from the backyard to the backcountry, including camping experiences for all levels.
3. **Life Skills:** Civic engagement, healthy living, global citizenship, communication skills, and more.
4. **Entrepreneurship:** The Girl Scout Cookie Program—the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world—teaches goal-setting, decision-making, money management, and business ethics.

These three processes are how we put our programming into action:

- **Girl Scout-Led:** Girl Scouts actively participate in creating their experience by making choices and knowing their voice matters. For more information on this topic, please refer to the [Girl-Led Progression Guide](#).
- **Learning by Doing:** Girl Scouts engage with topics through active participation and hands-on activities. Concepts are reinforced through reflection.
- **Cooperative Learning:** Girl Scouts learn to share knowledge and skills in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation while working toward a goal.



Programming

Badges, Journeys, and Fun Patches

As a troop leader, you will lead activities that introduce Girl Scouts to themes across 4 pillars: STEM, Outdoors, Life Skills, and Entrepreneurship. **Badges** are awards that Girl Scouts earn by completing skill-building activities. It typically takes 2-4 hours to complete most badge steps. Once earned, badges are worn on the front of the Girl Scout uniform.



Through **Journeys**, Girl Scouts identify a problem they want to explore and brainstorm creative solutions that will make a difference. Then they created and implement a plan to put their solution into action. Like badges, Journey awards are worn on the front of the Girl Scout uniform.



Patches, or “fun patches,” are just that—for fun! Some patches have a curriculum; others are given out for special events or activities. Think of them as a scrapbook of your Girl Scout experience! Patches are worn on the back of the Girl Scout uniform.



Programming

Earning a Badge

- To earn a badge, Girl Scouts follow 5 core steps that typically build progressively. In the Volunteer Toolkit, you’ll find a resource guide to accompany each badge, with activity options for each step.
- As you think about activities that would fulfill the badge requirements, talk with your troop and choose activities that suit their ability, level, and interests. Be sure to keep the process Girl Scout-led and modify the steps as needed.
- If you’re thinking through an activity and it doesn’t seem feasible, choose something else! Remember, you have the flexibility to adapt activities while maintaining the integrity of the badge.

Eco Learner Badge

Nature gives us many gifts! In this badge, Daisies learn some ways to give back by protecting nature.

- Be prepared to protect nature when you go outdoors.
- Keep living things safe when you walk in nature.
- Learn how to protect nature from trash.

When a Girl Scout has earned this badge, they’ll have learned 3 ways to protect the environment when they go outdoors.



Scribe Badge

In this badge, Juniors will discover how they can encourage, entertain, and excite people with their writing.

- Write a poem.
- Create a short story.
- Use words to share who they are.
- Write an article.

When a Girl Scout has earned this badge, they’ll have learned how to write both fiction and nonfiction.

Advocacy, Community Service, & Take Action Projects

Advocacy: Girl Scouts of Greater New York is committed to being a voice for the issues that are important to girls in our communities. In partnership with the Girl Scouts of the USA, we engage with local leaders to build support for the Girl Scout Movement, promote leadership opportunities, and help all girls build the skills and confidence they need to advocate for themselves and others.

Community service projects make the world a better place, right now. From short-term community service projects, like hosting a toy drive for children living in temporary housing, to recurring projects, like a monthly volunteer shift at a soup kitchen, this work fills an immediate needs in the community and is a great way for Girl Scouts to give back.

Take Action projects—also called service learning—take community service to the next level. These projects allow Girl Scouts to identify areas where they’d like to help their community and engage more deeply by addressing the root causes of an issue.

Highest Awards

Each year, more than 50,000 Girl Scouts earn their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award, investing more than one million hours into making the world a better place. The Highest Awards are a progression of projects and journeys that build tangible, real-world skills that give Girl Scouts an edge both personally and professionally.

- **Bronze Award:** Juniors team up with other Girl Scouts to make a difference in their neighborhood.
- **Silver Award:** Cadettes research an issue, create a plan to address it, and take action to improve their community.
- **Gold Award:** Seniors and Ambassadors partner with local leaders to solve problems in their communities and beyond, discovering the power to effect measurable, lasting change.

If you have any questions about the Highest Awards, please email highestawards@girlscoutsnyc.org.



Trip & Activity Planning

Where can we go?

Most trips taken by Girl Scout troops are short, one-day trips within the 5 boroughs. Some troops opt to venture outside New York City, going on overnight trips or to Camp Kaufmann. For trips longer than 3 nights or international travel, council approval is required.

What additional training do I need before taking a trip with my troop?

One Day Trip within NYC	Day Trips and Overnights outside of NYC	Two or more nights
<div><input type="checkbox"/> GSGNY Leader’s Guide to Success training</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> GSUSA Foundations 1-4 via <i>gsLearn</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Safety Activity Checkpoints</div> <div></div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> GSGNY Leader’s Guide to Success training</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> GSUSA Foundations 1-4 via <i>gsLearn</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Safety Activity Checkpoints</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> CPR/First Aid</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Overnight Adventures: Sleep Out</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> *Overnight Adventures: Camp Out</div> <div></div>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> GSGNY Leader’s Guide to Success training</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> GSUSA Foundations 1-4 via <i>gsLearn</i></div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Safety Activity Checkpoints</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> CPR/First Aid</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Overnight Adventures: Sleep Out</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> *Overnight Adventures: Camp Out <i>*if making a campfire</i></div> <div></div>

Who do I need to notify?

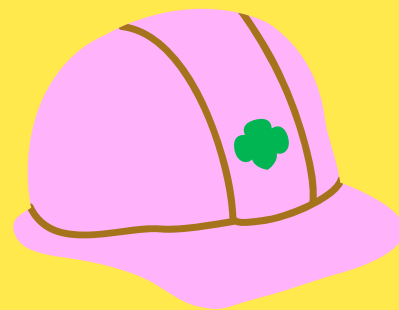
One Day Trip within NYC	Day Trips and Overnights outside of NYC	Two or more nights
<div></div> <div>Girl Scout parents and caregivers</div> <div>↓</div> <div>Required:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Caregiver Permission Form</div> <div>No trip application is needed unless it’s a high risk activity* or additional insurance is required.</div> <div><i>*Refer to the Safety Activity Checkpoints for a list of activities requiring council approval.</i></div>	<div>Girl Scout parents and caregivers</div> <div>↓</div> <div>Required:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Caregiver Permission Form</div> <div>Girl Scouts of Greater New York</div> <div>↓</div> <div>Required:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Troop Trip and Insurance Application</div>	<div>Girl Scout parents and caregivers</div> <div>↓</div> <div>Required:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Caregiver Permission Form</div> <div>Girl Scouts of Greater New York</div> <div>↓</div> <div>Required:</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Troop Trip and Insurance Application</div> <div></div>

Trip & Activity Planning

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Whether your troop is visiting a local science museum, Camp Kaufmann, or Savannah, GA (the birthplace of Girl Scouts!), you will need to review the **Safety Activity Checkpoints**. Here are some tips:

- Read through the introduction, which covers important safety information that applies to all activities.
- Review activities that are not permitted with Girl Scouts.
- Read through the sections specifically related to activities that you plan to do with your troop. If you do not see your activity listed in the SAC, or have questions about what's allowed, please reach out to your Volunteer Experience Specialist.
- After you've reviewed the Safety Activity Checkpoints, be sure to share them with Troop Support Volunteers, caregivers, and Girl Scouts.



Keeping Girl Scouts Safe

General Safety Guidelines

- Keep caregivers informed. Communicate regularly about troop meetings and activities and be sure to use permission slips any time the troop is doing anything outside of regular troop meetings.
- Girl Scouts should never be left alone and should always use the buddy system.
- Adults should never be alone with Girl Scouts. There must be a minimum of two registered adult volunteers always present, one of whom must be female.
- Be prepared with a first aid kit, non-emergency number for local law enforcement, and a charged cell phone.
- Be aware of your surroundings, whether in your regular meeting space or venturing out with your troop. Assess any risks and take appropriate action.

Emergency Procedure

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 priority. Provide care for the injured person and obtain medical assistance, then immediately report the emergency to GSGNY staff. Call our office at 212.645.4000 during business hours, or the emergency line at 212.206.2467 after business hours.

Each troop should have an adult certified in CPR/First Aid to ensure troop safety. Make sure a general first aid kit is available at your meeting place and is brought on trips and activities. If a kit is not available at your meeting place, use troop funds to purchase one.

Always keep the names and numbers of our council office, parents/caregivers, and emergency services such as law enforcement, fire department, and hospital.

Safety Resources

The safety and well-being of Girl Scouts and adult members is our highest priority. As a volunteer, it is imperative to know and understand the safety policies and procedures in place, and where to look for information when necessary. Here are the main safety resources:

- **Volunteer Essentials:** A guide to all policies and procedures, including safety.
- **Safety Activity Checkpoints:** Activity-specific guidelines for everything from camping to participating in a parade. These guidelines are available on our website and in the Volunteer Toolkit.
- Girl Scouts of Greater New York website: Check out **girlscoutsnyc.org** for more information.

Keeping Girls Safe

Importance of Membership

- All adults supervising Girl Scouts are required to have a Girl Scout membership and an eligible background check on file.
- The background check is covered by council and must be repeated every 3 years.
- Additional insurance is required when any non-member is present during any Girl Scout activity. This includes troop meetings, activities, and trips.
- Every youth who participates with your troop must be registered before joining activities.



Girl Scout membership provides liability insurance for members, which protects volunteers and Girl Scouts during Girl Scout programs, meetings, activities, and events.

Keeping Girl Scouts Safe

Adult Supervision

Adult-to-Youth Ratios for Troop Meetings

The adult-to-youth ratio for troop meetings means a minimum of two registered, approved adult volunteers who are unrelated, including one female, must be present at troop meetings for up to this number of Girl Scouts:

- 12 Girl Scout Daisies
- 20 Girl Scout Brownies
- 25 Girl Scout Juniors
- 25 Girl Scout Cadettes
- 30 Girl Scout Seniors
- 30 Girl Scout Ambassadors
- 12 Multi-level Girl Scouts

With one extra registered, approved adult volunteer for every additional:

- 1-6 Girl Scout Daisies
- 1-8 Girl Scout Brownies
- 1-10 Girl Scout Juniors
- 1-12 Girl Scout Cadettes
- 1-15 Girl Scout Seniors
- 1-15 Girl Scout Ambassadors



Adult-to-Youth Ratios for Outings, Activities, Camping, and Travel

The adult-to-youth ratio for outings, activities, camping, and travel means a minimum of two registered, approved adult volunteers who are unrelated, including one female, must be present at troop meetings for up to this number of Girl Scouts:

- 6 Girl Scout Daisies
- 12 Girl Scout Brownies
- 16 Girl Scout Juniors
- 20 Girl Scout Cadettes
- 24 Girl Scout Seniors
- 24 Girl Scout Ambassadors

With one extra registered, approved adult volunteer for every additional:

- 1-4 Girl Scout Daisies
- 1-6 Girl Scout Brownies
- 1-8 Girl Scout Juniors
- 1-10 Girl Scout Cadettes
- 1-12 Girl Scout Seniors
- 1-12 Girl Scout Ambassadors

Keeping Girl Scouts Safe

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Girl Scouts of Greater New York is committed to offering a safe and inclusive space for all children and their families. We want all Girl Scouts to feel welcome participating in Girl Scout programs. What does that mean in practice?

DEIB in Action

- Welcome personal sharing about people’s cultural traditions, languages, and diverse family structures. Make this kind of sharing a consistent, reliable part of your time together.
- Learn the most valuable ways to support individual children and adults with disabilities and learning differences. Ask caregivers, “What can I do to support your child so they feel successful in our troop?”
- Create access, and don’t assume what someone needs. Asking is the most respectful way to find out what someone needs.
- Provide a wide variety of activities for Girl Scouts. Notice when children do not relate to an activity and get curious about why. Find ways to connect with and relate to the children in your care.

To learn more about creating safe and inclusive space in your Girl Scout troop, check out these courses on gsLearn:

- Child & Adolescent Mental Health
- GSUSA Mental Wellness 101
- GSUSA Creating Your Inclusive Troop
- GSUSA Delivering Inclusive Program



Keeping Girl Scouts Safe

Accessibility & Inclusion

Girl Scouts of Greater New York strives to educate and empower all Girl Scouts and volunteers to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community.

Key Support for Inclusive Conversation

- **Plan Inclusively:** Involve Girl Scouts in the planning, design, and implementation of an activity. The Girl Scout Experience should represent and encourage girl-led activities that are accessible and adaptable to all Girl Scouts.
- **Consider Physical & Technological Barriers:** Be mindful of physical barriers that restrict participation such as blocked pathways, stairs, dim lighting, etc. Be sure to consider apps, websites, and technology accessibility and formatting when meeting virtually.
- **Make Accommodations:** Ensure reasonable accommodations to support participation such as a large-print activity instructions, smaller or larger activity supplies, verbal instructions, additional time for tasks, etc.
- **Encourage Open Communication:** Speak to provide understanding; listen to find understanding. Speak directly to the Girl Scout (if appropriate) to learn how best to support them through an activity or task. Provide feedback, ask questions, and check in along the way.
- **Consider Social & Attitudinal Barriers:** Support normative social behavior and experiences. Be mindful that your fear, assumptions, or expectations of a Girl Scout with a disability does not create additional social and attitudinal barriers.

What You Can Do

- Encourage the membership and inclusion of Girl Scouts with disabilities in all troops.
- Encourage and welcome adult members with disabilities into volunteer and troop leadership roles.
- Model appropriate and skillful interactions with girl and adult members with disabilities.
- Examine your thoughts and attitudes to foster a safe and supportive environment.

Essential Volunteer Resources

How do I ensure that Girl Scouts are safe during our meeting and activities?

- Refer to: [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)

Is there a general reference guide for volunteers about Girl Scout policies?

- Refer to: [Volunteer Essentials](#), Forms and Documents

Where can I find more onboarding and program support?

- **gsLearn:** From the Successful Leader Learning Series to Creating Your Inclusive Troop, you'll find hundreds of helpful on-demand training modules on this platform.
- **Volunteer Toolkit (VTK):** The Volunteer Toolkit is the virtual planning assistant that will help power a fun-filled—and organized!—Girl Scout year. You can:
 - Explore meeting topics and program activities
 - Print step-by-step activity guides
 - Edit troop roster and update contact information
 - Contact caregivers
 - Track and share financial information
- **Service Unit Managers:** Service units hold monthly meetings, and they're a great opportunity to ask questions and learn from volunteers just like you. They may also hold training sessions ahead of Cookie Season or host other events for Girl Scout troops in your community.
- **Award & Badge Explorer:** The Award & Badge Explorer provides a comprehensive guide to all of the badges and Journey awards that Girl Scouts can earn, which are searchable by grade level and topic. You'll find downloadable badge requirements that you can share with your troop and a link to purchase badges from the Girl Scout store.



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