Welcome to Girl Scouts of Northwestern Great Lakes!

**Steps to Success**

**Weeks One and Two**
- Volunteer to be a Girl Scout Troop Leader!
- Register online and receive your troop number
- Complete your background check online and watch the 3-minute Welcome video
- Log into MyGS for the Successful Leader Learning Series online training
- Ask a friend to help lead your troop with you
- Set up your New Leader Orientation meeting with Council Staff
- Log into MyGS and view the Member Profile and troop roster
- Log into MyGS, open the Volunteer Toolkit and start exploring
- Attend your New Leader Orientation meeting
- Read and review Troop 101
- Pick a day, time, and location for troop meetings
- Read and review Troop 101
- Log into MyGS, open the Member Profile and troop roster
- Invite girls to join your troop
- Schedule and plan a Parent Meeting. Invite parents and girls to attend

**Weeks Three and Four**
- Review Council 101
- Watch for automated email notices of new girls
- Automated emails will begin announcing girls
- Your Membership Engagement Coordinator is available to coach you through the next steps of starting your troop, and invites you to Service Area leader meetings
- Your Member Support Specialist will help you through the registration and background check process
- Your Membership Engagement Coordinator will contact you to schedule your New Leader Orientation meeting
- Membership Engagement Coordinators host your New Leader Orientation and share materials to help you spread the word about your first troop meeting
- Membership Engagement Coordinators set up your New Leader Orientation and share materials to help you spread the word about your first troop meeting
- Membership Engagement Coordinators set up your New Leader Orientation and share materials to help you spread the word about your first troop meeting
- Automated emails will begin announcing girls

**Ongoing**
- Continue to invite and accept new girl members into the troop
- Secure a Troop Cookie Manager volunteer
- Review the Managing Troop Finances packet
- Open your Girl Scout troop bank account
- Return the ACH form to the Council
- Start attending Service Area leader meetings
- Host your first-ever Girl Scout troop meeting!
- Collect Health History forms from girls and registered volunteers
- Return the ACH form to the Council
- Open your Girl Scout troop bank account
- Review the Managing Troop Finances packet
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We're just a call or email away!
Contact us at: 888.747.6945 | info@gsnwgl.org | gsnwgl.org

We are so glad you're here. It's going to be a great year—one that is sure to be filled with big fun and excitement and tons of learning and growing. All the awesome skills and memories you're helping girls learn and build will stay with them for a lifetime. Girl Scout volunteers are such an important part of who we are. Our Council, Girl Scouts of Northwestern Great Lakes (GSNWGL), covers 58 counties in northern Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula and serves over 15,000 girls with the help of nearly 5,000 volunteers—who, like you, want the best for their girls.

Girl Scouting has been THE organization for girls for over 100 years. We know what we're doing and we're here to help you be your best, lead girls with confidence, and feel ready for each unique part of the Girl Scout year.
Girl Scout 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.

Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader

When you think Girl Scouts, you might think cookies, campfires, and friendship bracelets. And sure, those things are all part of this exciting, life-altering journey, but there’s so much more to it! Girl Scouts are big thinkers, groundbreakers, and role models. They design robots, start garage bands, and improve their communities—and yes, they sell the best cookies on the planet. Every day, Girl Scouts unleash the power of G.I.R.L. to make amazing things happen.

DNA of a

Girl Scouts are more likely than non-Girl Scouts to...

Go-getter: Goal setting and grit
Innovator: Problem solving
Risk-taker: Trying new things and decision making
Leader: Leading others with empathy

Go-getter
Be solution-oriented and less likely to be a bystander.
Set ambitious goals and think about the future.

Innovator
Be mentally and emotionally stronger.
Have entrepreneurial spirit or experience.
Be better skilled at team building.

Risk-taker
Not experience gender bias.
Exercise empathy and emotional intelligence.
Practice proficiency in a variety of skills and interests (business, STEM, artistic, social, impact, environment).

Leader
Adocate for herself and others.
Be financially independent (on average 9% more than peers as adults).
Self-identify as a leader (at work, school, with friends, and in the community).

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

Focus of Girl Scout Activities
The Three Keys of Leadership

- Discover
- Connect
- Take Action

Girl Scout Processes

- Girl Led
- Learning by Doing
- Cooperative Learning

Short Term and Intermediate Outcomes

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

Long Term Outcomes (Based on our Mission)

Girls lead with Courage, Confidence, and Character who make the world a better place.

Troop Leaders are Amazing!

If you are feeling a little nervous about leading troop meetings and experiences with your girls— that’s ok! Working directly with girls can be challenging at times, but it is always rewarding and can be a lot of fun. As a Girl Scout Troop Leader you are encouraged to listen to the girls 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 girls aren’t expecting perfection from you; your time, attention and guidance are the best part of your leadership.

▶ Learn with your girls. As you use the girl-led process in the development of your troop’s meetings and experiences, the girls will, at some point, want to earn a badge or complete a project in a subject unfamiliar to you. Be open with the girls 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.

Troop Leaders facilitate the GSLE when they guide troop activities using the three Girl Scout Processes.

▶ Girl-Led: Girls at every age take an active role in figuring out the what, where, when, why, and how of what they do.

▶ Learning by Doing: Girls engage in hands-on learning through an ongoing cycle of action and reflection.

▶ Cooperative Learning: Girls share knowledge and skills and learn to work together on goals that can only be accomplished with the help of others.
Girl Scout Program: Terms You’ll Want to Know

Badges are earned when a girl masters a skill or shows increased knowledge in a particular subject. Badges can be earned at every grade level and should be placed on the front of the tunic, sash, or vest.

Customer Care is a team of helpful GSNWGL staff ready to answer your questions about anything and everything! Contact them at info@gsnwgl.org or 888.747.6945

Grade Level refers to the age group of the girls. There are six grade levels in Girl Scouts: Daisy (K-1), Brownie (2-3), Junior (4-5), Cadette (6-8), Senior (9-10), and Ambassador (11-12).

Highest Awards represent the highest honors a Girl Scout can earn for completing a Take Action project. Juniors earn the Bronze Award as a troop. Cadettes earn the Silver Award as a small group or an individual, and Seniors and Ambassadors earn the Gold Award as an individual.

Journeys are deep dives into specific subjects that span a series of meetings. The Journey guides girls through fun and challenging experiences ending in a Take Action project where girls put their new knowledge and skills to work.

Member Profile – is the place to update your family profile, troop members’ contact information, add members to the troop, and renew members. Troop Leaders and Assistant Troop Leaders have access to both their family account and the troop account, via separate tabs. Access Member Profile from the MyGS tab on our website.

Opportunity Catalog is the online directory of troop opportunities. In the online membership enrollment process, parents can search by zip code for existing troops at their daughter’s school or community.

Fun Patches symbolize participation as a troop or individual in a Girl Scout program or activity. Patches are worn on the back of the tunic, sash or vest.

Renewal means an existing Girl Scout member is renewing her/his membership for the following year. The renewal process begins in April.

Service Area is the local community of Girl Scout volunteers who work together to support the Girl Scout program.

Take Action Project is a Girl Scout way of approaching community service projects. It outlines the process of noticing needs in the community, identifying root causes of problems, brainstorming solutions, creating and implementing a plan, and measuring the impact. The results create sustainable action.

Volunteer – a volunteer is an adult (18 and out of high school) who takes on a specific volunteer role at GSNWGL. All volunteers are registered Girl Scout members and most volunteer roles require a background check. Most volunteers serve in Girl Scout troops, but others help with events, train other volunteers, help with product program sales, or work on Service Area teams or the Board of Directors.

Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is your own personal digital assistant for keeping troop information in one place! Email families, manage the troop calendar, use shopping supply lists, review the pre-planned meeting agendas, program content, and download useful Council resources – all in one place! Access the VTK from the MyGS tab on our website via computer, tablet, or smartphone.

Full Circle Cycle
The Girl Scout Volunteer Experience

FALL VOLUNTEER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES
- Grade level training
- First Aider certification
- Service Area support

FALL PRODUCT SEASON
- Troop start-up funds option

PLAN AHEAD
- Volunteer Toolkit
- Set calendar
- Girl input on activities
- Money Matters

TROOP FORMATION
- Host Parent meeting
- Invite parents to help
- Invite girls to join
- Place to meet, day and time

LEADER ORIENTATION
- Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE)
- Resource introduction
- Roles and responsibilities

COOKIE TIME!
- Troop Cookie Manager Training
- Cookie Rallies for girls
- Budgeting and goal-setting

SPRING VOLUNTEER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES
- Highest Awards training
- Outdoor Education training
- Service Area support

CELEBRATIONS AND CEREMONIES
- Bridging to next grade level
- Girl Scouts of Distinction
- Service Area banquets
- Troop year-end parties
- Adult Awards

SPRING REPORTING
- Finance report
- Membership renewal
- Leader, parent, girl surveys

SUMMER CAMP
- Troop camp
- Day camp
- Resident camp
- Wilderness Adventure camp

Journeys are deep dives into specific subjects that span a series of meetings. The Journey guides girls through fun and challenging experiences ending in a Take Action project where girls put their new knowledge and skills to work.
Governing Structure

- **Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA)**
  - A national organization supporting the work of more than 100 councils across the U.S. for more than 100 years. Headquartered in New York, New York.
- **Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes Council (GSNWGL)**
  - Independent 501(c)3 nonprofit chartered by GSUSA operating under the direction of a local board of directors that oversees all service units and troops within its territory. Properties include five business offices, three shops, and seven camps.
- **Service Units**
  - A community or regional area, managed by volunteers, which supports the day-to-day work of troops within a defined geographic area. The work of service units includes event planning, volunteer networking, troop collaboration, and raising the profile of Girl Scouts in their communities.
- **Troops**
  - Volunteer-supervised groups of girls who participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Troop Roles

- **Troop Leader**: Lead the way! Troop Leaders are memory makers; they lead and guide a group of girls through Girl Scouting. They take the girls’ interests, abilities, and opinions into consideration when planning out their fun. As girls get older, Troop Leaders guide more than lead, but continue to help them grow, learn, and do amazing things!
- **Assistant Troop Leader**: You’ve got the troop leader’s back! Work alongside the troop leader and make memories with the girls, mentoring them as they make new friends, try new things, and explore the world.
- **Fall Product Manager**: Coordinate the annual Fall Product Program at the troop level. Manage the program and money, and then watch the girls light up when they reach their goals, learn something new, and squash the stuffed animal they didn’t buy, but earned!
- **Troop Cookie Manager**: Coordinate the annual Girl Scout Cookie Program at the troop level. Set up cookie booths, manage inventory and money, and witness as girls turn into #CookieBosses—setting goals, making sales, and earning rewards!
- **Troop Helper**: Want to work with girls? These volunteers play a big role in making the troop run smoothly. They’re an extra set of eyes, ears, and hands that allow the troop to safely explore the world around them. Whether they are driving to an adventure, chaperoning a sleepover, or helping glue, cut, and color—Troop Helpers can do it all! Helpers are extra set of eyes, ears, and hands that allow the troop to safely explore the world around them. Whether they are driving to an adventure, chaperoning a sleepover, or helping glue, cut, and color—Troop Helpers can do it all! Helpers

Leadership Opportunities

- **Traditional Troop**
  - Two unrelated adults lead a troop. Other parents volunteer to help as needed.
- **Cooperative Troop**
  - One adult acts as the “Leader” and troop administrator, but parents divide responsibility by interest and/or skill set. Parents rotate leading meetings, organizing activities, and providing snacks and supplies.

Volunteers are the heart of our organization!

Grade Levels & Uniforms

You want to see girls happy, confident, strong and ready to succeed. So do we.

Whether making new friends, riding horses, building robots, traveling, or just having fun, girls will find their place in Girl Scouts. From troop meetings and activities to summer camps and council-wide events, opportunities abound in the Girl Scout experience.

The Girl Scout Uniform

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

**Badges** are official and earned symbols that indicate an increase in knowledge or skill in a particular subject. Badges can be earned at every age level. Badges should be placed on the front of the sash or vest.

**Patches** are emblems signifying participation in a Girl Scout activity. Patches are placed on the back of the sash or vest.

**Tip:** Wondering where to place the insignia on the uniforms? Look in the grade level welcome guides for diagrams. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources or search “uniforms” on girlscouts.org.
New Leader Orientation

Council 101

Girl Scouting 101/ gsLearn

Troop 101

Resources

We’ve loaded our website with resources and videos, so you can quickly find the answers to your questions!

► Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is a digital troop assistant. Access it from MyGS. Use the VTK to help organize your Girl Scout year and quickly plan your troop’s activities, so you can focus on the important part — having fun! Troop Leaders and Assistant Troop Leaders have access to the VTK on a computer, tablet, or smart phone. The VTK works best with the Chrome browser. gsnwgl.org
• Access ready-to-use Journey and petal/badge troop meeting plans
• Download activity guides and shopping lists.
• Communicate troop activities to parents; email them with one click.
• Submit the year-end troop financial report to the Council.
• Record girls’ troop meeting attendance and achievements.
• Add customized troop events and activities.
• View the troop roster; update contact information

► Volunteer Essentials is a guide that includes information about engaging girls, safety requirements, managing finances, and more. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources

► Safety Activity Checkpoints is the first place to look when planning for adventure. Review the alphabetical list of preparation advice and safety requirements for your selected activity. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources

► Safety Guidelines outline our standards for girls’ physical and emotional safety. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources

► Managing Troop Finances is a quick reference guide for setting up bank accounts and managing troop funds. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources

► Grade Level Welcome Guides are age-specific guidance with earned award record sheets. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources

► Activities List and Calendar for council-hosted events and badge-earning workshops. gsnwgl.org/activities

► On Your Own lists community organizations across the council who support Girl Scout programming. Contact them to schedule troop field trips. gsnwgl.org/activities

► Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting is a grade level binder with the Girl Scout handbook and guidance on earning the legacy badges. Girls and Troop Leaders can choose and add many more badge pamphlets to their binders. gsnwgl.org/girlsshop/cv/67/GSNWGL

► Volunteer Updates is the GSNWGL monthly email newsletter for volunteers.

► Service Area Leader Meetings connect you to Girl Scout volunteers in your community.

► Activities Guide highlights Council-organized events and badge-earning opportunities. gsnwgl.org/activities

► Customer Care is ready to answer all your questions by phone or email. 888.747.6945 or info@gsnwgl.org

► Social Media Be sure to like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Instagram.

► Award and Badge Explorer is a way to search online by topic and grade level to find all the earned awards options that girls can pursue. gsnwgl.org/badgefinder

► gsLearn is a new online learning platform. Access it from MyGS. gsnwgl.org

Troop Leader Roles

Grab your best friend to be a Girl Scout volunteer with you and dive into learning about Girl Scouts together! There are five basic areas of troop leadership.

1. Liaison to the service area volunteers and local Council staff
2. Troop Financial management
3. Communication with caregivers
4. Girl safety
5. Guiding the troop’s Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE)

Your Girl Scout community is here to help you at every step of the way with in-person and online trainings, resources, and mentoring to get it all done. It’s so rewarding to introduce girls to new experiences and help them unleash their inner G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)!
Troop Formations

Every troop leader has the opportunity to structure her troop – from inviting parents to help lead meetings, to the number of meetings and activities per month, to what time of day and location to meet.

**When?** Determine the frequency of your meetings and the meeting/activity schedule. Use the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) to help you through this process. Most troops meet twice per month but you can choose a schedule that works best for you.

**Where?** Troops are often organized for girls in the same grade but may also be assigned by grade level (for example, second and third graders in one Brownie troop) or leaders may choose to facilitate multi-level troops with girls of all ages combined into one troop. Choose a meeting space. It should be somewhere safe, clean, and secure that allows all girls to participate. Great meeting spaces ideas include:
- Schools
- Churches
- Libraries
- Community centers

**Who?** Troops are often organized for girls in the same grade but may also be assigned by grade level (for example, second and third graders in one Brownie troop) or leaders may choose to facilitate multi-level troops with girls of all ages combined into one troop.

**How?** Think about how you want to lead. Do you want the two Troop Leaders to run every troop meeting? Consider rotating the responsibilities with different members of your troop.

**How much?** Consider supply costs! Does your troop need to charge monthly or annual dues to help off-set costs? Will you charge families per activity? It’s important to talk to parents about financial expectations up front. Who will help you manage the troop finances?

**What will we do?** Remember, Girl Scouts is designed to be girl-led, so don’t plan out every detail of the year before your first meeting! Wait to talk to the girls and parents about what they would like to get out of Girl Scouts this year. Girl input should guide your leadership in choosing badges, field trips, and activities.

Communicate! Keep everyone in the loop. Make sure parents know when and where your activities will be and how they can help. Then you can all look forward to the fun you’ll have together!

**Tips:** For more guidance in launching your troop, check out Troop 101 on the Volunteer tab of our website! gsnwgl.org/TroopResources

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**Let’s Go!**

**Six Parts of a Girl Scout Meeting**

This simple guide gives you the framework for how a typical troop meeting runs. Filling out your meeting is easy with the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) - it will give you the specific activities and timelines for the six parts of the meeting. Girls come to Girl Scouts to learn how to be leaders, make decisions, and have fun in the activities they choose. That’s really important – your meeting should be fun!

1. **Start-up:** Plan activities for girls as they arrive at the meeting so they have something to do until the meeting begins. It could be as simple as coloring pages, journaling, or talking with each other. (5 minutes)

2. **Opening:** Girls decide and lead their meeting opening. Most begin with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Some troops add a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story or other activity. (5-10 minutes)

3. **Business:** This is the time to let girls plan their upcoming meetings or decide what Council events they want to attend as a troop. Troops can use this time to take attendance, collect forms, or dues, or make announcements. (5-10 minutes)

4. **Activities:** Support your troop as they complete their pre-selected activities to work toward badges and journeys. This portion of the meeting should be heavily girl-led with the troop leader assisting on the side. (30-45 minutes)

5. **Clean up:** Girl Scouts should always leave a place cleaner than they found it! (5 minutes)

6. **Closing:** Just like the opening each troop can decide how to close, with a song, a game, or a story. Many troops close with the Friendship Circle and the Make New Friends song. Consider a 5-minute touch base with parents at the end of the meeting to handle troop business items and provide any important updates or reminders about upcoming meetings and activities. (5 minutes)

**Tips:** Want more suggestions on how to lead the specific age of girls in your troop? Check out the Grade Level welcome guides on the Volunteer tab of our website! gsnwgl.org/TroopResources
Troop Finances

Money management is part of our Girl Scout program. Practice setting goals with the girls to accomplish the exciting things they want to do. Help them understand how to finance them!

▶ Troop Bank Account: All troops must have a checking account, with the name Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes, Troop [insert your troop number]. Each account needs two unrelated, registered, adult signers, and an ACH form on file with the Council. Use a debit card for as many of your transactions as possible for easy expense documentation in your bank statement.

▶ Financial Assistance: Financial difficulties shouldn’t stand in the way of a Girl Scout participation. Call Customer Care to ask about financial assistance for membership, uniforms, and programs.

▶ Troop Dues: Will you collect troop dues as a way to help provide start-up funding for troop activities and supplies? Dues could range from $1-2 for each meeting, to $30-40 for the entire school year paid up front. It’s completely up to each troop to decide what works best for them.

▶ Troop Funds: Funds earned from troop activities, projects, product program sales, and troop dues must be deposited in the troop bank account. Troop funds are not the property of individual girl or adult members. Troop money belongs to the entire troop and decisions on its use and spending are made through the troop’s system of troop government. Individual “accounts” within troop funds are not permitted. The loss of troop/group funds through mismanagement or theft is the troop’s responsibility, but Council assistance will be provided as appropriate.

▶ Money-earning Activities: The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the primary money-earning activity for a troop. If a troop participates in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, they are eligible to participate in a limited number of additional fundraising activities.

▶ Reporting and Receipts: Report out to caregivers and girls about troop finances at least twice a year. Keep a dated ledger of all income and expenses to make the year-end financial reporting fast and easy! Document transactions from May 1 (or whenever your troop got started) through April 30 and submit the year-end financial report in the VTK by May 31.

▶ Tax Exemption: As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, volunteers can utilize our tax exempt status when purchasing supplies and materials.

Tip: For more guidance on troop finances, see the Managing Troop Finances guide. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources

The Girl Scout Cookie Program

When Girl Scouts participate in the cookie program, their troops earn proceeds from each package sold. Troops have the opportunity to decide how their cookie funds are spent, from funding a troop camping trip to funding their Highest Award project(s), the GSNWGL cookie program ensures Girl Scouts are earning while they’re learning! The cookie program runs January - April. gsnwgl.org/cookies

Fall Product Program

The Fall Product Program is a Council-sponsored program that combines educational activities with money earning opportunities for troops. It enables troops to earn startup money by selling magazine subscriptions as well as nuts and candy. The Fall Product program runs September through November. gsnwgl.org/FallProduct

Tip: Avoid burn out! Ask another parent to be the Troop Cookie Manager to manage inventory, distribution, and money collection.
Be a Super Troop!

According to girl and parent feedback, the most successful Girl Scout troops have lots of variety in their Girl Scout experience! Aim to include as many of these activities in your calendar plan for the year. Ask the parents in the troop to pick one activity they can help you organize.

Four badges or other earned awards
One field trip into the community, out of the troop meeting room
One overnight (Brownies and up)
One service project or Take Action project
One outdoor outing
One cookie kick-off event and participation in cookie sales
One parent meeting or one family event
One STEM activity
One Girl Scout tradition (celebrate a Girl Scout holiday, host a ceremony, etc.)

Along the Way

Girl Scouts is girl-led, so our volunteers help girls make decisions about where they go and what they do. Here’s a quick look at some things to include in your Girl Scout year! We can help – see our list of council-hosted events that help girls explore the community while earning badges and Journeys.

Four Foundations
The four program foundations of Girl Scouts meet the needs of today’s girls. Girls discover their unique skills, talents and passions when they explore the areas of STEM, Outdoors, Life Skills, and Entrepreneurship.

Traditions
Sharing traditions reminds girls they are part of a big, powerful sisterhood. From celebration days to special ceremonies, Girl Scout traditions give girls a sense of history and inspire them to be the best they can be.

Trips and Outings
Girl Scouts love to travel – from small troop outings to big trips away from home. When girls visit new people and places in their hometown communities and beyond, they bring home inspiring experiences and memories.

Skill-building Recognitions
Girls earn badges, pins and patches to show themselves – and the world – what they’ve accomplished! Girls complete Take Action projects for causes they care about. Highest Awards are the most prestigious awards, earned by girls who make a positive, lasting impact in their communities.

Council Calendar

For a complete listing of specific dates for Council events, programs, activities, and trainings, please visit gsnwgl.org/activities. Search out independent activity ideas in the “On Your Own” section and ask for girl input on building your calendar year.

October
- October 1 is the first day of the Girl Scout membership year
- October 31 is Founder’s Day, the birthday of Girl Scout founder Juliette Gordon Low
- Volunteer training opportunities
- Fall Product sales for annual troop start-up funds

November
- Submit nominations for Adult Awards recognition
- Organize community engagement opportunities for the holidays, like participation in local parades and service projects

December
- Remind parents that Cookie Dough expires
- Identify a parent volunteer to be the Troop Cookie Manager; have them register as a volunteer
- GSNWGL offices and shops are closed between Christmas Eve and New Year’s Day

January
- Troop Cookie Manager training
- Attend Cookie Rollies, and engage girls in entrepreneurial goal setting to fund their chosen activities
- Girl Scout Cookie Program begins
- Summer Camp Planner is mailed out

February
- February 1 Adult Awards nominations due
- February 22 is World Thinking Day
- Encourage summer camp enrollment (troop camp, day camp, resident camp)

March
- March 1 Highest Awards final project forms due
- March 12 is the birthday of Girl Scouting in the USA and part of Girl Scout Week
- Girl Scout Cookie Program continues with “Keep Goaling” orders and boost sales

April
- April 22 is Girl Scout Leader’s Day and part of Volunteer Appreciation Week
- GSNWGL Annual Meeting
- Complete year-end surveys
- Volunteer training opportunities

May
- May 31 Troop Financial Reports due (May 1 of last year – April 30 of current year)
- Girl Scouts of Distinction award recognition events
- Host your troop’s year-end celebrations and ceremonies
- National Bridging Week

June
- June 30 Early bird membership renewal ends
- Summer camp begins
- Organize community engagement opportunities for the summer, like participation in local parades and service projects or outdoor adventure activities

July/August
- Begin planning for the first meeting and reconnect with troop families. The next Year Plan opens in the Volunteer Toolkit.
- Invite other girls and adults to join Girl Scouts; help with Back-to-Troop information tables at schools and community events
- Update your troop meeting info in the Member Profile troop tab

September
- September 30 is the last day of the membership year; renew membership before this date
- Start your troop meetings for the year
Thank you for volunteering with us!