Troop 101

A Troop Leader's Guide to Troop Formation
Let’s Get Started!

Girl Scout volunteers are essential to our mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Thank you for committing to this role and making an impact in the lives of girls. We are all here for you!

This Troop 101 workbook gives you the advice you need to get your troop up and running. If you’re starting a new troop, there are four things to get in place first: a group of girls, a troop meeting schedule, a group of supportive adults, and a bank account. Here's the advice you need to get up and running quickly.

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Customer Care can help with any question!

Phone: 888-747-6945
Email: info@gsnwgl.org

Customer Care Hours
Monday - Friday 8:30-5:00

Summer Hours
(Summer hours are effective following Memorial Day through Labor Day)
Monday - Thursday 8:00-5:00, Friday 8:30-12:00

Support staff and volunteers want to see you succeed and have fun!

My Membership Engagement staff contact is:

Membership Engagement staff are local and on the ground, ready to assist you with inviting girls to join Girl Scouts, local activity planning, and troop management advice.

My Member Support staff contact is:

Member Support staff are office-based troop support, ready to assist you with membership registration, renewal, using MyGS tools, financial reporting, and training.

Service Area Manager or Community Organizer Volunteers:

Service Area Product Program Manager Volunteers:

Other names and roles:
**need-to-know numbers and names**

**gs username is:**

**MyGS username is:**

**MyGS password is:**

**My Troop number is:**

**My Service Area is:**

**single grade level or multi-level troop**

- Daisies (grades K-1)
- Brownies (grades 2-3)
- Juniors (grades 4-5)
- Cadettes (grades 6-8)
- Seniors (grades 9-10)
- Ambassadors (grades 11-12)

**name and contact info:**

- Troop Leader:
- Assistant Troop Leader:
- Troop Treasurer:
- Troop Helper:
- Troop Fall Product Manager:
- Troop Cookie Manager:

**when are the shops open?**

**Retail Hours:**
- Monday – Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Thursday - open late until 7 p.m.
- *Second Saturday of each month - 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**Retail Summer Hours**
(following Memorial Day through Labor Day)
- Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Thursday - open late until 7 p.m.
- Friday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**Retail Locations:**
- Appleton Shop
  4693 N Lynndale Dr.
  Appleton, WI 54913
- Green Bay Shop
  112 N Adams St. Suite 101
  Green Bay, WI 54301
- Schofield Shop
  3511 Camp Phillips Road
  Schofield, WI 54476

**Shop online anytime!**
girlscoutshop.com/GSNWGL
Inviting Girls

Whether you’re taking on leadership of an existing troop or starting a brand new one, personally inviting girls into your new troop is vital to the success of the group and reaching the ideal troop size of 12-15 girls. Even though you’re just getting started as a troop leader, you can still be a great advocate for Girl Scouts!

- **My Girl network:** girls, parents, and teachers who will want to know about this troop.
- **My work/friends/family network:** people who will help me spread the word about this troop.

School communication channels and connections: (Find and use the ways that local schools communicate to parents, i.e. parent-teacher organizations, school newsletters, and social media pages. As a parent or community member, you may have access to communication channels that GSNWGL staff do not)

- **Upcoming school events or school registration nights to host an interest table:**

Upcoming community events to host an interest table:

- **Date and location ideas for hosting a Girl Scout Parent/Caregiver meeting:**

- **Places to share flyers:** (paper or electronic, school classrooms, after-school programs, community sites serving families)

- **Tip:** Use the Recruiting for Your Troop packet and the Recruiting for Your Troop flyer template with your troop meeting information. Clearly communicate which grade levels the troop will include, for example, Brownies (grades 2-3) and Juniors (grades 4-5).

- Update your Troop Information in MyGS so parents can search by zip code and find the troop.
Building the Case for Girl Scouts

Families today have so many choices of activities for their daughters. Why should they choose Girl Scouts? As a troop leader, please talk with them about the reasons why you are excited to be part of the Girl Scout Movement! We’ve got over 100 years of experience and expertise in developing girl leaders. At Girl Scouts, everything we do is designed with and for girls. Share this flyer to show everyone the benefits of being a Girl Scout. gsnwgl.org/TroopResources.

5 Ways Girl Scouts Build Girl Leaders

Girl Scouts’ mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Since 1912, girls have explored new fields of knowledge, learned valuable skills, and developed strong core values through Girl Scouts. Today Girl Scouts is, as it always has been, the organization best positioned to help girls develop important leadership skills they need to become successful adults.

At Girl Scouts, guided by supportive adults and peers, girls develop their leadership potential through age-appropriate activities that enable them to discover their values, skills, and the world around them; connect with others in a multicultural environment; and take action to make a difference in their world. These activities are designed to be girl-led, cooperative, and hands-on—processes that create high-quality experiences conducive to learning.

- **Strong Sense of Self**
  Girls have confidence in themselves and their abilities, and form positive identities.

- **Positive Values**
  Girls act ethically, honestly, and responsibly, and show concern for others.

- **Challenge Seeking**
  Girls take appropriate risks, try things even if they might fail, and learn from mistakes.

- **Healthy Relationships**
  Girls develop and maintain healthy relationships by communicating their feelings directly and resolving conflicts constructively.

- **Community Problem Solving**
  Girls desire to contribute to the world in purposeful and meaningful ways, learn how to identify problems in the community, and create “action plans” to solve them.
When girls exhibit these attitudes and skills, they become responsible, productive, caring, and engaged citizens. But don’t take our word for it! Studies show that the development of attitudes, behaviors, and skills like confidence, conflict resolution, and problem solving are critical to well-being and rival academic and technical skills in their capacity to predict long-term positive life outcomes.¹

**Youth who develop these five outcomes...**

**Are happier, healthier, and less likely to engage in problem behaviors or be victimized.**
Youth who develop competencies such as perseverance, positive self-esteem, and sociability have lower rates of obesity, depression, and aggression, and show greater life satisfaction and well-being than those who do not develop such attributes/skills.²

**Achieve more academically and feel more engaged in school.**
Youth who participate in programs that promote the attributes and skills linked with our five outcomes show stronger academic performance and school engagement compared to those who do not.³ When students are more self-aware and confident about their learning capabilities, they try harder and persist in the face of challenges.

**Become strong job applicants.**
While employers want new hires to have technical knowledge related to a given job, those skills are not nearly as important as good teamwork, decision-making, and communication skills.⁴ Yet many employers around the world report that job candidates lack these attributes.⁵

**Become successful, well-adjusted adults.**
Kindergarteners who learn how to share, cooperate with others, and be helpful are more likely to have a college degree and a job 20 years later than youth who lack these social skills.⁶ They are also less likely to have substance-abuse problems and run-ins with the law.

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Registering Girls

Join the Girl Scout Movement right away! Be a part of the largest girl-led organization in the world! Our online registration system offers the fastest and most convenient way for girls and adult volunteers to join your troop from gsnwgl.join. Membership fees are $25 per person, plus a $5 Council service fee for girl members. Here’s how registration works.

Families do this:
• Independently join Girl Scouts from our website.
• Provide girl and caregiver contact information
• Use the online search function to find troops by zip code or troop number
• Pay the membership fee

Troop leaders see and do this:
• Update Troop Information in MyGS so caregivers can find your troop online
• Sometimes, help add members to the troop in MyGS
• Watch for email notification that a new member has been added to your troop
• Use the contact info in that email to introduce yourself and let caregivers know about upcoming meetings
• See the girl on the troop roster from MyGS Member Profile on the Troop tab
• Welcome the girl and her caregivers at the next troop meeting

GSNWGL staff support the troop like this:
• Provide customer care to parents and volunteers with questions
• Match and place girls into troops in their area
• Assist troop leaders to keep the online Troop Information up to date
• Match, screen, and place adults into troop volunteer roles
• Promote Girl Scouts in your area and assist you in inviting members to join!

How to update your Troop Information in MyGS

1. Go to gsnwgl.org and log into MyGS Member Profile.
2. Click on the Troop tab to see your troop information, including the troop roster.
3. Scroll down to click on View/Edit Troop Information.
4. Enter the meeting day, frequency, start and end time, program grade level and meeting location name and address.
5. Click “Save.”
6. Member Support staff get notification about your update and post your changes to the catalog.

Online Registration Form Example:
- Girl’s First Name
- Girl’s Last Name
- Zip Code
- Grade as of Fall 2019
- Caregiver First Name
- Caregiver Last Name
Paper registration forms can be helpful when high speed internet is not available or when financial assistance for membership fees is requested.

How to help complete the registration process with a paper form:
Collect the paper registration form and the $30 girl registration fee from caregivers. Checks are payable to Girl Scouts.

Option #1: Troop Leader collects paper forms and registers the girls online in MyGS. Deposit all checks and cash into the troop bank account ASAP. Diligently document and receipt money received. From gsnwgl.org, login to MyGS Member Profile (Troop tab) and add the new members to the troop, using the contact information from the membership forms. Use the troop debit card to pay the membership fee. New members will be immediately visible in your troop roster in MyGS.

Option #2: Troop Leader collects paper forms and mails them to GSNWGL. Mail the forms and the money ASAP to GSNWGL. Notify your Membership Engagement staff with the names of the new members. During our busy seasons, it may take a few weeks before the new members are visible in your troop roster in MyGS.

How to help register with financial assistance:
Financial assistance for membership fees is processed by phone or paper. Explain to families that finances are never a barrier in Girl Scouts. Girls who participate in the free or reduced school lunch program may be eligible for GSNWGL financial assistance. Other extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. The national membership fee of $25 is waived and families pay just the $5 council service fee.

Option #1: Register by phone.
Caregivers call Customer Care directly at 888.747.6945 and pay the $5 council service fee by credit card.

Option #2: Register by paper.
Caregivers complete the registration form and give it to the Troop Leader with the $5 council service fee by cash or check, payable to Girl Scouts. Troop Leaders mail the form and the payment to GSNWGL. Notify your Membership Engagement staff with the names of the new members. After financial assistance is applied, the girl’s name will appear in your troop roster in MyGS.

Mail to:
Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes (GSNWGL)
4693 N Lynndale Dr., Appleton, WI 54913

How to register a new member to my troop
After you collect the paper registration forms and membership fees, deposit the payments into your troop bank account. Then do this:
1. Go to gsnwgl.org and log into MyGS Member Profile.
2. Click on the Troop tab to see your troop information, including the troop roster.
3. Scroll down to “Add a new member to the troop.” Select girl or adult, and then “Go.”
4. Use the paper information form to fill in the registration information.
5. Enter your troop number and select your troop.
6. Carefully choose your registration option (extended year memberships of $40 are a special opportunity for new joiners in the spring and summer.)
7. Use your troop’s debit card to provide payment and complete the registration.
8. Immediately see the new member in your troop roster!
The Troop Meeting Schedule

Where should my Girl Scout troop meet?
Troops meet in public locations - a local school, place of worship, library, or some Girl Scout properties with available space. Choose a low-cost/no-cost option. Ensure the space is safe, secure, and clean. Consider the mobility needs of girls and caregivers who require barrier-free access to the space. Some meeting places may require a signed contract. Girl Scout volunteers should NOT sign contracts in the name of Girl Scouts unless explicit written permission is received from GSNWGL staff. If the location you choose requires a certificate of liability insurance, contact Customer Care to make the request.

When should my Girl Scout troop meet?
Every Girl Scout troop is different, but most troops meet twice a month. Some troops meet right after school and others meet in the evening or on a weekend. Some troops have one meeting and one field trip each month. Build a schedule that matches the age level and activity level of the girls.

How long should my Girl Scout troop meet?
The Volunteer Toolkit has 60-minute meeting plans for Daisies and 90-minute meeting plans for Brownies and Juniors. Older girls at the Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador grade levels usually set their own schedule to work around their busy extracurricular schedules. Factors that might influence your decision include the travel time to and from the meeting, the ages of the girls, available locations, and the selected activity.

What’s included in a typical Girl Scout calendar year?
Troop leaders work with girls to select the year’s activities - it’s a girl-led experience so every troop is different. Use the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) Year Plan to get an idea of what a troop can reasonably accomplish in a year. Choose activities from the four foundations of our program: Outdoors, STEM, Life Skills, and Entrepreneurship and challenge your troop to be a Super Troop when you complete the nine activities in this GSNWGL patch program!

Where do I find out about Council activities, camp dates, and local service area events?
Visit gsnwgl.org/activities for badge programs, special events, camp opportunities, and adult trainings. Use the Advanced Search option to filter events by grade level, location, category, or keyword. New events are added through the year, so check back often. Look at the On Your Own section and discover local organizations happy to host Girl Scout field trips. Keep in touch with your local staff and fellow volunteers to learn about local events.

When the schedule is set, update the Troop Information in MyGS Member Profile (Troop Tab)
You don’t have to do this alone! Invite help from people you admire, who are dependable, and who have time to help, including your closest friends! Get acquainted with the troop helpers, service team members, parents and caregivers, Council staff, and others who are eager to help and support you as a troop leader. Connect with one another by sharing what brought you to Girl Scouts, review your strengths and skills, and talk about how you would like to work together as a team.

If you have trouble finding reliable volunteers to assist you, contact your Membership Engagement staff, community or school organizer, or your Service Area Manager. These people can set you up to observe a troop meeting, match you with a mentor, and help you plan your first meeting. Plan to attend Service Area leader meetings held throughout the year for idea sharing and advice. Don’t forget that our Customer Care team is available right away to assist with all your inquiries! Contact them at info@gsnwgl.org or 888.747.6945.
Your Volunteer Role

What does it mean to be a Girl Scout leader? As a leader, you’ll introduce girls to new experiences and help them unleash their inner G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)™ to take the lead and change the world. Troop leadership can bring many joys, including developing a personal relationship with each girl in the troop, building adult friendships through the sisterhood of Girl Scouts, receiving sincere appreciation and thanks from caregivers, and most importantly, knowing you are shaping the future by working with a girl today. Spending time with girls is definitely the best part of being a troop leader! But leaders also need to keep track of some paperwork, so plan a way to organize and protect the information you will be collecting from families. You’ll have access to some confidential information in their permission forms, health history forms, and financial assistance requests.

Troop Leaders and Assistant Troop Leaders navigate the Troop Leadership Responsibilities together. Don’t worry, you don’t need to know all of this right away! Visit gsnwgl.org/TroopResources to download most of the documents referenced here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Troop Leadership Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Be the troop liaison to the Service Area volunteers and Council staff</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and respond to email and phone calls and read Council newsletters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manage troop finances</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the Managing Troop Finances and the Money-Earning Activity Guidelines. Make sure the troop has a bank account with an up-to-date ACH form on file, two registered, approved volunteers as signers, and a troop finance report turned in each year on the VTK by May 31.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicate with parents/caregivers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reach out regularly. Share schedules and troop finances. Tell stories about what girls did during troop meetings. Invite parents to help with specific tasks often, to keep them engaged and connected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prepare for Girl Safety</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to Volunteer Essentials, Safety Activity Checkpoints, and Safety Guidelines when making plans. Keep health history forms and permission forms with you during outings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guide the Girl Scout Leadership Experience</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read the Leader Go-To Guide, Girl Scouting 101/gsLearn and the Tips for Troop Leaders - as needed - at girlscouts.org. Involve the girls in making choices about the things they do and learn. Teach the Girl Scout Law to help girls identify with Girl Scout values.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Manage your troop data online:
- Member Profile in MyGS tracks membership and renewal status
- Volunteer Toolkit in MyGS holds the troop’s calendar and financial reports, tracks troop attendance, emails parents, and links to safety information resources
Inviting Adults

Your enthusiasm and excitement to give girls a Girl Scout experience will encourage other parents, caregivers, and even your friends to join you in building the troop. A troop needs two adult volunteers, one of whom is female, to get started. Ideally, your troop will have a Troop Leader, an Assistant Troop Leader, a Troop Cookie Manager, and a few Troop Helpers who can regularly help at meetings.

All involved adults must be at least 18 years old and need to register as a member of Girl Scouts and complete a background check prior to working with girls. One-time visitors are exempt from this but should always be supervised by a registered volunteer and never left alone with girls. Share the Safety Guidelines with all families and volunteers to set the expectations of adult behavior around the girls and emphasize that girl safety is of primary importance in Girl Scouts.

Here’s a guide to help plan how many adults need to be present during Girl Scout meetings or events.

**Adult to Girl Ratio Chart:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group Meetings</th>
<th>Events, Travel, and Camping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for every:</strong> One additional volunteer to each additional:</td>
<td><strong>Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:</strong> One additional volunteer to each additional:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Daisies</strong> (grades K-1)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Brownies</strong> (grades 2-3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Juniors</strong> (grades 4-5)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Cadettes</strong> (grades 6-8)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Seniors</strong> (grades 9-10)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Ambassadors</strong> (grades 11-12)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1-15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What can additional volunteers do? A lot!

It will help you to delegate tasks to other parents and caregivers. Most of them are looking for a specific task to get involved in a way that works for them.

- Secure the meeting location
- Drive girls to field trips or special events
- Find an adult to talk to the girls about the badge skill they are working on
- Chaperone trips and outings
- Manage some of the troop records (attendance, permission slips, finances)
- Shop for badges or troop supplies
- Send snacks to troop meetings
Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of girls, and we demonstrate that by agreeing to follow these standards at all times.

1. **Follow the Safety Activity Checkpoints** - Instructions for staying safe while participating in activities are detailed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints. Read the checkpoints, follow them, and share them with other volunteers, parents, and girls (as grade-level appropriate) before engaging in activities with girls.

2. **Arrange for proper adult supervision of girls** - Your group must have at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers present at all times, plus additional adult volunteers as necessary, depending on the size of the group and the ages and abilities of girls. Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old (or the age of majority defined by the state, if it is older than 18) and must be screened by your council before volunteering. One lead volunteer in every group must be female.

3. **Get parent/guardian permission** - When an activity takes place that is outside the normal time and place, advise each parent/guardian of the details of the activity and obtain permission for girls to participate.

4. **Report abuse** - Sexual advances, improper touching, and sexual activity of any kind with girl members are forbidden. Physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of girls is also forbidden. Follow your council's guidelines for reporting concerns about abuse or neglect that may be occurring inside or outside of Girl Scouting.

5. **Be prepared for emergencies** - Work with girls and other adults to establish and practice procedures for emergencies related to weather, fire, lost girls/adults, and site security. Always keep handy a well-stocked first-aid kit, girl health histories, and contact information for girls' families.

6. **Travel safely** - When transporting girls to planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities that are outside the normal time and place, every driver must be an approved adult volunteer and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone is in a legal seat and wears her seat belt at all times, and adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.

7. **Ensure safe overnight outings** - Prepare girls to be away from home by involving them in planning, so they know what to expect. Avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women. During family or parent-daughter overnights, one family unit may sleep in the same sleeping quarters in program areas. When parents are staffing events, daughters should remain in quarters with other girls rather than in staff areas.

8. **Role-model the right behavior** - Never use illegal drugs. Don't consume alcohol, smoke, or use foul language in the presence of girls. Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls unless given special permission by your council for group marksmanship activities.

9. **Create an emotionally safe space** - Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Protect the emotional safety of girls by creating a team agreement and coaching girls to honor it. Agreements typically encourage behaviors like respecting a diversity of feelings and opinions; resolving conflicts constructively; and avoiding physical and verbal bullying, clique behavior, and discrimination.

10. **Ensure that no girl is treated differently** - Girl Scouts welcome all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays, and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

11. **Promote online safety** - Instruct girls never to put their full names or contact information online, engage in virtual conversation with strangers, or arrange in-person meetings with online contacts. On group Web sites, publish girls' first names only and never divulge their contact information. Teach girls the **Girl Scout Online Safety Pledge** and have them commit to it.

12. **Keep girls safe during money-earning** - Girl Scout cookies and other council-sponsored product sales are an integral part of the program. During Girl Scout product sales, you are responsible for the safety of girls, money, and products. In addition, a wide variety of organizations, causes, and fundraisers may appeal to Girl Scouts to be their labor force. When representing Girl Scouts, girls cannot participate in money-earning activities that represent partisan politics or that are not Girl Scout-approved product sales and efforts.
Parent Helper List

*Troop Leader:___________________________________________________________
*Assistant Troop Leader:____________________________________________________
*Troop Treasurer:__________________________________________________________
*Troop Helper - Overnight Chaperone:__________________________________________
*Troop Helper - Driver:_______________________________________________________
*Troop Helper - Fall Product Program or Cookie Program help:________________________
*Troop Helper - Troop meeting help:___________________________________________
*Troop Cookie Manager:_______________________________________________________
*Troop Fall Product Manager:__________________________________________________

First Aider: an adult with a current certification in Adult & Pediatric CPR/First Aid/AED, who is required for some field trips and activities, as listed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints.
___________________________________________________________

Other suggestions for parent help include the following or create your own!

Coordinate transportation:____________________________________________________
Communicate with parents/caregivers:___________________________________________
Coordinate snacks:____________________________________________________________
Plan parties or ceremonies:____________________________________________________
Shop for supplies:____________________________________________________________
Take pictures:_______________________________________________________________
Off-site babysitting: (assist volunteers with their children who are not in the troop)
___________________________________________________________

Girl Scouts has four foundational program areas.

Who has OUTDOOR skills and hobbies?

Who has STEM skills and hobbies?

Who has ENTREPRENEURSHIP skills and hobbies?

Who has LIFE SKILLS and hobbies?

*These roles require an adult membership and background check to ensure the safety of all girls and the troop’s resources.
The specific instructions and forms you need to open your troop bank account are in the Managing Troop Finances handout, available at gsnwgl.org/TroopResources, along with other helpful tools to help manage troop funds.

- **Choose a bank.**
  Your local Girl Scout staff will make recommendations of banks who work well with Girl Scouts. Get a debit card and maybe checks. Search for no-fee banking.

- **Get two signers on the account.**
  Identify two unrelated, trusted adults to have joint access to the account. They must be registered Girl Scout members with a completed background check. Typically, one of them is the Troop Leader and the other is the Troop Cookie Manager, the Assistant Troop Leader, or the Troop Helper in a Treasurer role.

- **Complete the ACH form and mail it to GSNWGL.**
  Troop accounts are jointly owned by your troop and GSNWGL. You must submit your account information to keep on file at the Council office. Anytime the account information changes (you move to a different bank or a new volunteer is added or removed as a signer), you must submit an updated ACH form with a voided check or bank letter. (Don’t email this form; email is not a secure way to send account data.)

- **Monitor the troop account balance often.**
  When girls dream big, they earn big money. Be aware of the possibility of theft, fraud, or misuse of funds, so be transparent about troop finances. Use debit cards. Avoid using cash, if possible, and keep all receipts when you do. Make deposits promptly.

- **Use the troop account as a Girl Scout program tool!**
  Prepare to involve girls in goal setting and budgeting - no matter their age! Review the month’s expenses and revenues at troop meetings. Try earning a financial literacy badge. Girls choose the activities they want to do - whether it’s paying admission to a nearby zoo or purchasing camping equipment for a trip – with the funds they’ve earned and saved.

- **Maintain the Troop Financial Recordkeeping Sheet**
  Start using this annual balance sheet right away. Keep good records on how the funds were used and submit an annual troop financial report on the VTK by May 31. Staff will email you this resource.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name of Business</th>
<th>Location/Purpose</th>
<th>Expense Category</th>
<th>Income/Deposits Categories</th>
<th>Income Totals</th>
<th>Troop #:</th>
<th>Receipt or Deposit Slip on File</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/31/19</td>
<td>Beginning Balance</td>
<td>ending balance from last year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/18/19</td>
<td>NEW Zoo</td>
<td>Green Bay, admission for 6 girls, 2 adults</td>
<td>Trips &amp; Council Events</td>
<td>$ (56.00)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/30/19</td>
<td>Associated Bank</td>
<td>Deposit from troop bake sale</td>
<td>Money Earning Activities</td>
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Talking Finances with Families

One of the first questions families ask is “how much does it cost to be a Girl Scout?”
Because we are a volunteer-driven organization, thanks to amazing volunteers like you, our annual membership fees are reasonable. Girl membership is $30 and adult membership is $25.

Uniforms are a fun and important way for the girls to feel part of something special, just like a sports team or music ensemble uniform.
Badges and patches on a Girl Scout uniform demonstrate what girls have learned and experienced in Girl Scouts! Suggested uniform pieces cost approximately $40 per girl.

Most new troops either ask for donations of basic materials or they collect troop dues to purchase them.
For example, you could collect dues of $2 per meeting or $30 for the year. You’ll soon earn a profit from the Fall Product Program or the Cookie Program to help offset future costs of badges, patches, programs event fees, and supplies.

Remember, in Girl Scouts, troop funds are shared by the whole troop and not designated for individual girls.

Financial Aid
We want to help every girl participate in Girl Scouts! Families who are eligible for the free or reduced school lunch program may qualify for GSNWGL financial assistance. Other financial circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. All financial assistance requests must be initiated by parents first.

gsnw.gl/uniformrequest - Uniforms include a Girl Scout sash (tunic for Daisies), American flag patch, and the GSNWGL council ID patch. Troop Leaders submit this form.

gsnw.gl/duesrequest - If your troop collects dues, only new members qualify for financial assistance troop dues. It is understood that Cookie Program profits will help to cover troop expenses the following year. Troop Leaders submit this form.

gsnw.gl/eventrequest - GSNWGL hosts a variety of council programs and events. This cannot be applied to Member Perks or Council travel. Troop Leaders or parents may submit this form or call Customer Care at 888.747.6945.

We want every girl to go to camp! Parents call Customer Care at 888.747.6945 to make this request.
Parent/Caregiver Meeting

Now you’re ready to pull it all together in the Parent/Caregiver Meeting! Our research shows that troops who hold parent meetings have a high level of satisfaction with their Girl Scout experience! The following outline is also available in the VTK Intro Meetings, along with other helpful tips and tools. Investigate the VTK Resource tab and download the things you want to share with families. Follow this outline for a fantastic start to your troop year! You’re going to be great!

Tip: See The Secret Ingredient of Successful Girl Scout Troops: Family Connections in the Volunteer Tool Kit for more tips on family engagement.

Agenda

Meeting Length: 60-90 minutes

While you’re welcome to put your own unique spin on this meeting, following this format will ensure the most relevant information is communicated clearly and that everyone’s on the same page. For more information and preparation tools, check out the “Intro Meeting” plan in the Volunteer Toolkit.

Welcome and Introductions (10 mins)

- Leader introductions (share why you volunteer your time with Girl Scouts) and go over dates/times/frequency and locations of upcoming meetings
- Have caregivers introduce themselves and share expectations for this year of Girl Scouting

Discover the Girl Scout Difference (15-20 mins)

- Explain our mission as well as the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Discuss how our girl-led, hands-on, collaborative program helps girls take risks, dream bigger, and gain important skills—all while having fun and making friends
- Share overview of your Year Plan—including which badges, journeys, special trips, and outdoor adventures the troop may participate in
Family as Part of the Formula (10 mins)
- Explain how you'll be engaging parents in their girls' Girl Scout lives by keeping them in the loop on what the girls are doing and learning during each meeting
- Encourage them to let their daughters "be the expert" at home, explaining or teaching a new skill she's learned to the rest of the family—the Family Tip Sheet will help them do it
- Let them know there will be special events throughout the year for families to share with their girl and celebrate all they're achieving with the troop

Get them Hooked on Helping (10 mins)
- Using the Make Her Experience Memorable guide from the Volunteer Tool Kit, point out that spending just a little time to help can make a big impact
- Secure adults to help with organizing and managing the calendar for troop snacks, the carpool schedule, and the troop phone tree or social media page—all activities that can take as little as 15 minutes per week
- Encourage caregivers to consider other leadership opportunities listed—emphasize they're not just welcome to lend a hand, they're wanted

Money Matters (10 mins)
- Outline costs to parents and caregivers (sash or vest and other supplies needed for the year)
- Explain dues expectations, and how they'll be used to support the troop
- If participating in the Girl Scout Cookie or the Fall Product Program, explain how money raised benefits the troop, and briefly go over the five critical skills girls will develop in the process

Wrap It Up (10-15 mins)
- Make sure everyone has your phone and email, knows the troop number, and has all the information about the next troop meeting (date, time, location and any supplies the girls will need to bring)
- Determine the primary communication method the troop will use (text, email, phone, social media, other)
- Collect forms then leave time for questions, concerns, and simply to get to know people better
- Friendship Circle, with girls. (You may choose to have the parent meeting occur at the same time as the girls' troop meeting, to maximize everyone's time. If you do this, it is helpful to have the two meetings in different rooms, especially for Daisy troops! Come together for the closing Friendship Circle.)

After the Meeting (all year)
Follow up with a thank you, then keep the conversation going all year via email, in-person chats, and/or social media, whatever way you have decided to consistently communicate with families. Updating caregivers on troop activities helps them feel more invested and gives them a chance to build on their girl's experience at home.
Invite girls and caregivers to form a circle, cross arms right over left, and then join hands. First, ask for a girl volunteer to start the Squeeze. If needed, use the Quiet Sign to get everyone settled.

**You explain and say**

- Think of a silent wish that you would like to pass along.
- Once you get the wish and the squeeze passed to you, you'll use your right hand to squeeze the hand of the friend next to you. Watch the squeeze travel all around the circle.
- The last person to have her hand squeezed will say, "Goodbye, Girl Scouts."
- Ready to start?

Ask the girl who volunteered to start the Friendship Squeeze to begin. After the squeeze has gone all the way around the circle, the girl volunteer says, "Goodbye, Girl Scouts!"

- Now everyone raise your joined hands and twist clockwise out of the circle so that everyone is untwisted and facing away from the circle.
- Remember to keep your Girl Scout Promise and Girl Scout Law where you can see them and practice at home.
- The next meeting is ________________________________.
- See you next time, Girl Scouts!