

New Troop Leader Guide

Quick-reference guide for new troop leaders.



girl scouts 
of utah

Welcome



We're excited you've decided to become a Girl Scout Volunteer! Girls and adult volunteers are the heart of our organization, and we thank you for your commitment as a Girl Scouts of Utah volunteer. You are making a lasting difference in many girls' lives—one meeting, one event, one day at a time! We're so glad you're here.

This guide will help you get started with your new Girl Scout troop.

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LOCAL & PERSONAL REFERENCE

Girl Scouts of Utah Council - GSU 674

The council (Girl Scouts of Utah, GSU) includes both volunteer and professional staff who provide support to service units and volunteers. Girl Scouts of Utah is divided into geographic areas called service units. Your service unit consists of girls and adults from your neighborhood and surrounding schools and is led by volunteers. Service units organize local meetings and events to help support their volunteers.

Service Unit Team

The Girl Scouts of Utah Council is divided up into service units based on geographic location. Within each of these are volunteers who take on leadership positions in order to support and represent the troops, volunteers, and girls in their service unit. For a deeper dive into service unit support and volunteer roles: gsutah.org/volunteer-roles

Council Code: 674

My Service Unit:
Service Unit #:
My Troop:
Service Unit Meeting Information:

Council Offices & Shops

Salt Lake City Office

445 East 4500 South, Suite 125
Salt Lake City, UT 84107
Office: 801-265-8472
Shop: 801-716-5141

American Fork Office

215 N Center St
American Fork, UT 84003
Membership: (801) 716-5109
Shop: (801) 716-5107

Ogden Office

3544 Lincoln Ave, Suite A
Ogden, UT 84401
Phone: (801) 265-8472

Girl Scouts of Utah Media Representation

Give attention to injured person(s). Call police or emergency number first, then call GSU's emergency number. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their designee will make all official statements. Only the CEO or designee should speak with media at any time.

Girl Scouts of Utah Emergency Phone Number

(801) 483-3413
State your name and identify yourself as a Girl Scout volunteer. Tell operator if this is a serious accident or a fatality. Someone will call you back.

Governing Structure

Troops

Adult leader-supervised groups of girls who participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Girl Scout Service Units

Adult leaders who support the work of troops within a given territory.

Girl Scouts of Utah (GSU)

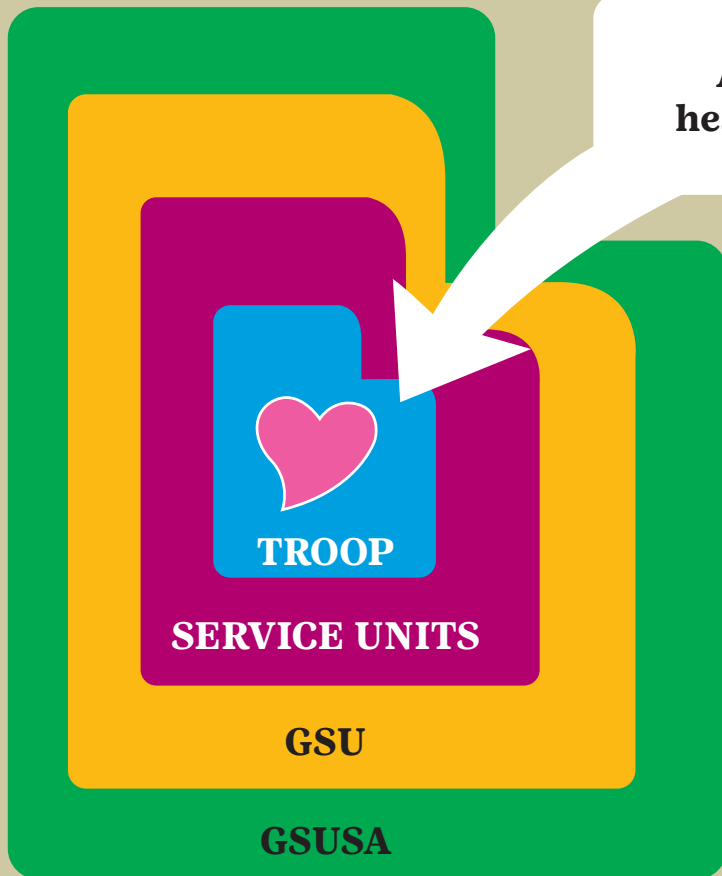
Independent 501(c)3 nonprofit chartered by GSUSA operating under the direction of a local board of directors and overseeing all service units and troops within a given territory.

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 City.



Adult leaders are the heart of our organization



Girl Scout Foundations

The Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To serve God* and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

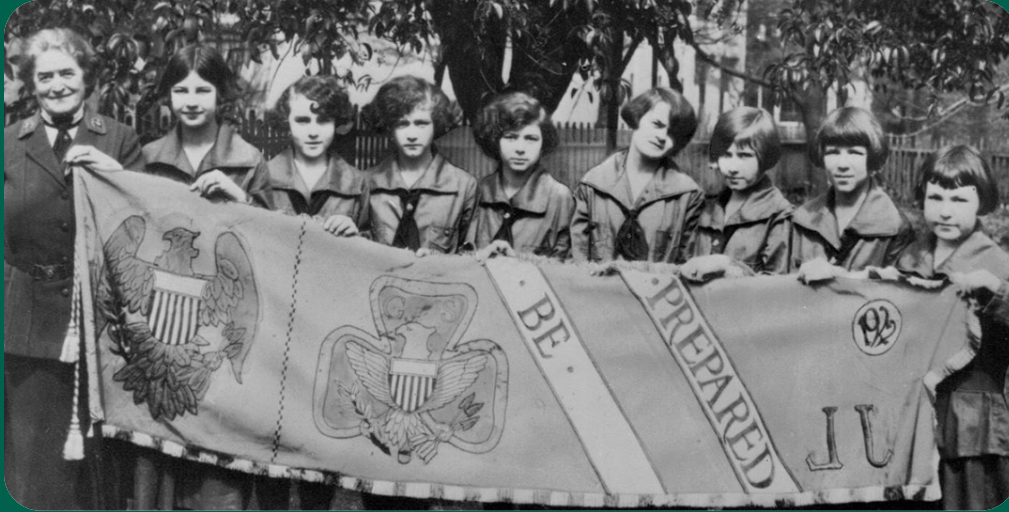
The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,
and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

*Girl Scouts of Utah makes no attempt to define or interpret the word "God" in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their own spiritual beliefs for the word "God."



The Vision of Juliette Gordon Low



Juliette Gordon Low envisioned an organization that would prepare girls to meet their world with courage, confidence, and character.

In 1912, in the midst of the Progressive Era—and at a time when women in the United States couldn't yet vote — this nearly deaf 51-year-old sparked a worldwide movement inspiring girls to embrace, together, their individuality, strength, and intellect.

Juliette, affectionately known as “Daisy” by her family and close friends, gathered 18 girls in her hometown of Savannah, Georgia, to share what she had learned abroad about a new outdoor and educational program for youth, and with this, the Girl Scout Movement was born. Along with Juliette, these first Girl Scouts blazed trails and redefined what was possible for themselves and for girls everywhere.

They played basketball. They hiked, swam, and camped. They learned to read the world around them—for instance, by studying a foreign language and telling time by the stars. They shared a sense of curiosity and a belief that they could do anything.

But most importantly, just like Girl Scouts across the country and around the globe today, they offered a helping hand to those in need and worked together to improve their corner of the world.

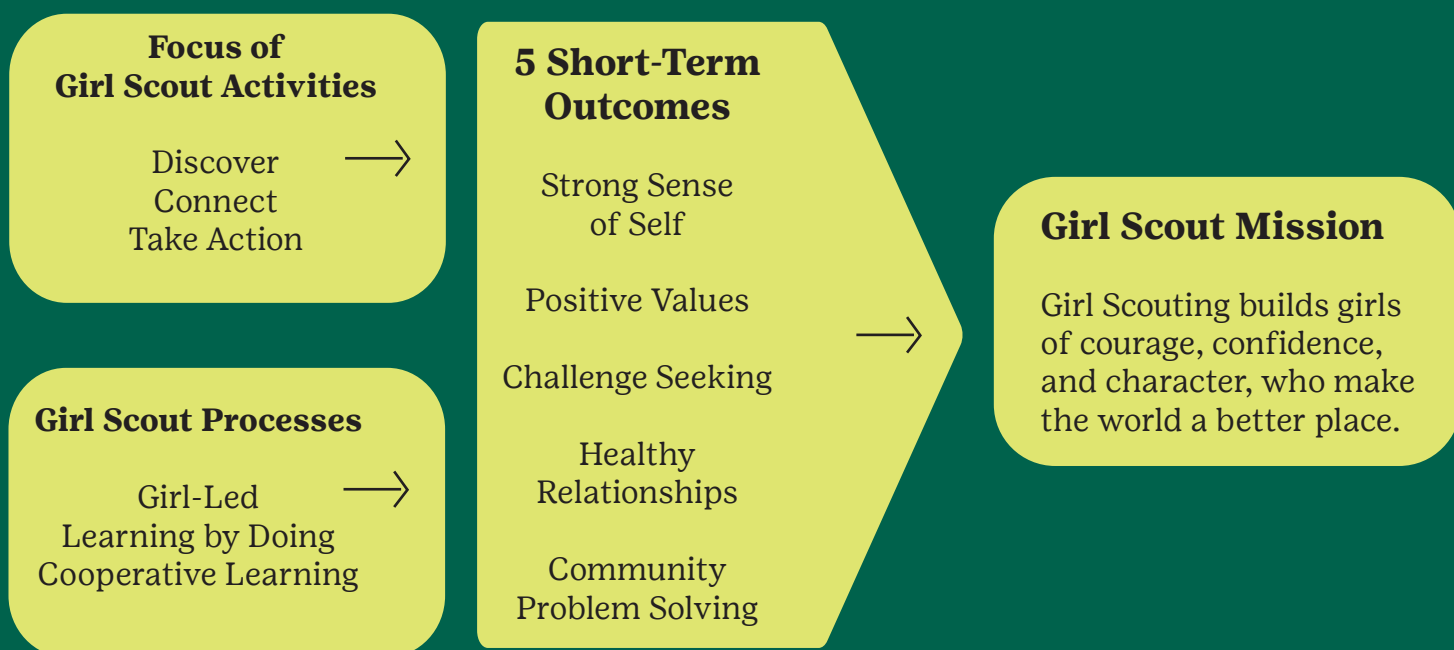
That small gathering of girls Juliette Gordon Low hosted over a century ago has grown into a global movement in which all girls can see themselves reflected—and that today includes 2.5 million Girl Scouts (1.7 million girls and 750,000 adults) in 92 countries and more than 50 million alums, united across distance and decades by lifelong friendships, shared adventures, and the desire to do big things to make the world a better place.

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

Delivering Fun with Purpose

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) encourages girls to discover themselves, connect with others, and take action to make the world a better place. Guided by supportive adults and peers, Girl Scouts engage in age-appropriate activities that are girl-led, cooperative, and hands-on.

Participating in the GSLE helps girls develop important leadership skills they need to become successful adults. Girls who engage in the GSLE are more likely to enjoy and attribute their leadership skills to Girl Scouts. The GSLE delivers “fun with purpose” by helping girls gain valuable life skills and amazing new experiences while having fun and building lifelong friendships!



Girl Scout leadership elements consist of activities, processes, and outcomes. In Girl Scouts, it’s not just what girls do, but also how adults engage them in a girl-adult partnership that ensures all participants have a high-quality experience. Girls should be engaged in discovering themselves and their values, connecting with others in local, state, national, and global communities, and taking action to make the world a better place.

Program Pillars

Girls gain important skills in four areas that form the foundation of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.



Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM)



Life Skills



Outdoors



Entrepreneurship

Inclusion in Girl Scouts

We continuously strive to build a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization that supports the many faces, cultures, and walks of life that proudly make up our vibrant community. It is essential to our mission that every individual's ideas and perspectives are sought out, heard, respected, and valued. Together, we empower girls to make the world a better place.

I want to be inclusive; how do I make sure that happens in my troop?

- Create an environment that values and respects diversity. Foster a belief in your troop that everyone benefits from having a diverse group of girls by helping the girls be aware of and appreciate the commonalities and differences that they can and cannot see.
- Make sure all girls have the opportunity to fully engage in activities and have access to opportunities and information. This may mean helping girls overcome barriers to participation, adjusting activities, or even changing how you communicate.
- Model respectful ways to interact with all people. Girls learn by watching how adults interact with girls and other adults.
- Be mindful of your own bias and assumptions about others by leading with empathy and encourage girls to do the same.
- Be conscious of and avoid using generalized statements about groups or types of people, and don't refer to a person based on a particular characteristic like race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, education, socioeconomic status, or religion.
- Get to know the girls and their families. Remember that all families are different and keep that in mind when planning family events. Girls may have really engaged grandparent/caregivers or other family members who should be included in important ceremonies and occasions. Also, pay attention to special holidays and cultural traditions that may conflict with troop plans or limit a girl's participation.



Girl Scout Traditions

Juliette Gordon Low, the founder of Girl Scouts, understood how special words and signs helped girls feel like they are members of a group. Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all around the world share special signs like a handshake, a squeeze, a motto, and a slogan. These special signs overcome barriers of language and culture as they remind us of the values that we live by.

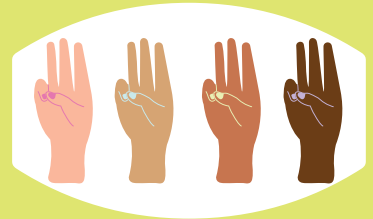
The Girl Scout Sign

The Girl Scout sign is made when reciting the Girl Scout Promise. The sign is formed with the right hand, by using the thumb to hold down the pinky, leaving the three middle fingers extended to represent the three parts of the Promise.



The Girl Scout Handshake

Another form of greeting between Girl Guides and Girl Scouts is the Girl Scout handshake. Girls raise their right hand in the Girl Scout sign and shake using their left hand, denoting friendliness and loyalty.



The Girl Scout Motto

The Girl Scout motto is “Be prepared.” Girl Scouts of yesteryears learned skills for fun but also to cope with emergencies of their times. Today, the motto reminds girls to be prepared to help others in need in their community and around the world.

The Friendship Circle

The Friendship Circle is often formed at the beginning and end of meetings and activities as a beginning or closing ceremony. It can be used for discussions, instructions, announcements, and debriefing.



The Friendship Squeeze

To end meetings and activities with the friendship squeeze, everyone gathers in the friendship circle, and each girl crosses her right arm over her left and holds hands with the person on each side. Once everyone is silent, the leader or a girl starts the friendship squeeze by squeezing the hand of the person next to her. One by one, each girl passes on the squeeze until it travels around the full circle. Some troops also tie in “Girl Scout Out,” by raising their hands above their heads and slowly loosening and letting go of the hands of the persons next to them as they turn around and say “Girl Scout Out.”



Make New Friends

At the end of each Girl Scout Meeting, finish by singing “Make New Friends.” Do this with the Friendship Circle and finish up with the Friendship Squeeze.

Make New Friends

*“Make new friends, but keep the old.
One is silver, the other is gold.”*



*A circle is round, it has no end.
That’s how long, I will be your friend.*

Bridging

Bridging is a way to recognize girls as they move up from one level of Girl Scouts to the next. For example, from Brownies to Juniors.

Investiture & Rededication

Investiture is a ceremony where new Girl Scouts commit to the Girl Scout Mission and to live by the Promise and Law. A Rededication is when a Girl Scout re-commits to Girl Scouts and is often held at the beginning of the Girl Scout Year.

Scout’s Own

Scout’s Own is a ceremony planned by the girls that gives them a chance to reflect on something meaningful. It’s often held around a campfire at the end of a campout.

Girl Scout Uniforms

Girl Scouts at each level have one recommended element (tunic, sash, or vest) for the display of official pins and awards, which should be worn when girls participate in ceremonies or officially represent the Girl Scout Movement. For all girls, the unifying look includes wearing a choice of a tunic, vest, or sash for displaying official pins and awards, combined with their own solid white shirts and khaki pants/skirts. Girl Scouts at the Daisy and Brownie levels will continue to have a full uniform ensemble available. For adult members, the unifying look of the uniform is a Girl Scout official scarf or tie, worn with the official membership pins, combined with their own navy blue business attire.

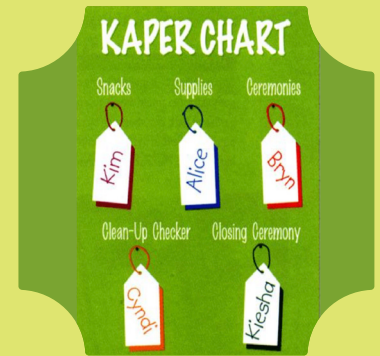
The Girl Scout Slogan

The Girl Scout slogan is “Do a good turn daily.” In the early days of Girl Scouting, girls tied a knot in their neckerchiefs. They could not untie the knot until a good deed was accomplished. Today, the slogan is a reminder of the many ways girls can contribute to the lives of others.



Kaper Charts

A “Kaper Chart” is a Girl Scout tradition for dividing up troop responsibilities among the girls. Each job or chore is called a “Kaper.” A “Kaper Chart” is a list of assignments, similar to a chore list. Examples of “Kapers” are cleaning up or taking out trash. “Kapers” can also be a fun task, like the Girl Scout promise leader, activity helper, snack helper, and friendship squeeze leader. Using a “Kaper” system right from the start helps build leadership and ownership in troop activities to assist with group behavior management.



SWAPS

SWAPS (Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere), the tradition of Girl Scouts exchanging keepsakes, started long ago when Girl Scouts and Girl Guides first gathered for fun, song, and making new friends. SWAPS are the perfect way for Girl Scouts to meet each other and promote friendship. Each one is a memory of a special event or Girl Scout sister.



The Talking Stick

Whoever holds the talking stick has within her hands the sacred power of words. Only she can speak while she holds the stick; the other troop members must remain silent. The talking stick has been used for centuries by many American Indian tribes as a means of just and impartial hearing. Whatever the object, it carries respect for free speech and assures that the speaker has the freedom and power to say anything without fear of reprisal or humiliation.



Quiet Sign

The Quiet Sign is a way to silence a crowd without shouting at anyone. The sign is made by holding up the right hand with all five fingers extended. It refers to the original Fifth Law of Girl Scouting: A Girl Scout is courteous.



Girl Scout Terms

A

Alum—A former Girl Scout girl member.

Ambassador—A Girl Scout in grades 11-12.

B

Badge—Official embroidered insignia earned by completing a certain number of requirements in the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting. These earned awards are placed on the front of the uniform and are distinguished from "participation patches," which are obtained by participating in various events.

Bridging—When girls move from one program grade level to the next; may include an award for the girls completing the bridging award requirements, and likely will include a ceremony.

Bronze Award—The highest award Girl Scout Juniors (4th and 5th grade) can earn. It requires completion of a Journey, a minimum of 20 hours building a team, exploring the community, choosing a Take Action project, planning it, putting the plan in motion, and spreading the word about the project.

Brownie—A Girl Scout in grades 2-3.

Buddy System—Safety practice that groups two or three girls together to keep watch over each other in an activity (for example, swimming, hiking). The system places girls of equal ability in the same group

C

Cadette—A Girl Scout in grades 6-8.

Council—A corporation, chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA, organized for the purpose of developing, managing, and maintaining Girl Scouting within a defined geographic region. Our council is Girl Scouts of Utah, which covers the entire state of Utah and Wendover, NV.

Counselor in Training (CIT)—A Girl Scout who is taking a course called Counselor-in-Training to learn camp counselor skills.

CSA—Abbreviation of Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador.

D

Daisy—A Girl Scout in grades K-1.

Day Camp—A camp program within a 12-hour period that lasts for a minimum of three days.

Destinations—A trip or event beyond girls' own troops and councils. Destinations fall into one of five different categories: international, outdoor, science, people, and getaways. All destinations events provide an opportunity for individual members to broaden their perspectives and give Girl Scouting enhanced visibility.

D

Digital Cookie—The Digital Cookie platform allows girls to customize the way they learn and earn during the Girl Scout Cookie Program, using technology in new and engaging ways, all while earning cool cookie business badges along the way.

F

Flag Ceremony—Honors the American flag as the symbol of our country and all the hopes, dreams, and people it represents.

Founder's Day—Celebrated each year on October 31 in honor of Juliette Gordon Low's birthday.

G

Girl Guide—The original name for Girl Scouts; it is still used in many countries.

Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE)—The engine for everything girls do in Girl Scouting. The experience identifies all the elements that need to be in place for Girl Scouting to achieve its mission; Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. When Discover, Connect, and Take Action activities are combined with the Girl Scout Processes of Girl-Led, Learning by Doing, and Cooperative Learning, girls achieve the desired and expected short-term leadership outcomes, ultimately resulting in Girl Scouting achieving its mission.

Gold Award—The highest award in Girl Scouts. Open to Girl Scouts in high school, Gold Award projects find a sustainable way to solve community problems.

GORP—An acronym with two possible meanings, depending on who you ask! Good Old Raisins & Peanuts, or Granola, Oats, Raisins, & Peanuts. A camp snack favorite!

GSUSA—Girl Scouts of the USA, the corporation that promotes the Girl Scout movement in the U.S.A., which includes the United States and its territories.

GSUSA Gold Award Scholarship—This scholarship program recognizes the outstanding achievement of and provides financial support to one Gold Award Girl Scout per council.

H

Highest Awards—Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards. They are the highest honors a Girl Scout can earn. All three awards give girls the chance to do big things while supporting an issue they care about.

I

Insignia—Every Girl Scout item worn on the uniform (badges, awards, patches, stars, strips, etc.).

Investiture—A special ceremony in which a new member makes her Girl Scout Promise, receives their membership pin, and becomes a member of Girl Scouts.

J

Journeys—Each Journey has a series of activities that get girls working together to solve problems and make the world a better place. Through these activities, girls grow in confidence and leadership. They also earn awards along the way.

Juliette—First name of Girl Scout founder Juliette Gordon Low. Term also used to refer to registered Girl Scouts who are not part of the traditional troop program. These girls still work towards the same badges and activities; they do not belong to a troop. They can join other girls at council-wide events and can participate in all Girl Scouts has to offer. They are also known as individually registered members (IRM).

Junior—A Girl Scout in grades 4-5.

Junior Counselor—A Girl Scout who has already completed both Counselor in Training (CIT) I and II programs and would like to further enhance her leadership skills by learning what it's like to be a camp counselor.

K

Kaper—A temporary job or responsibility, similar to a chore.

L

Lifetime Membership—A one-time fee that enables adults to become a Girl Scout for life. This is granted to any person 18 years of age or older or a high school graduate.

M

Membership Dues—\$25 fee paid annually to Girl Scouts of the USA for registration which goes directly to National Headquarters. One of the requirements for becoming a member of GSUSA.

Membership Pin—Either of two pins: the trefoil with three faces (contemporary style) or trefoil with eagle (traditional style) pin. These pins signify the acceptance of the membership requirements.

Membership Year—October 1 through September 30.

O

On-Time Renewal—The membership renewal period running from August 1 until the end of the membership year, September 30.

P

Patch Program—Patches earned by completing programs unique to individual councils or organizations. The required activities to complete the patch programs are generally found on the council or organization's website.

Petals—Earned awards by Girl Scout Daisies. Girls earn the Promise Center by showing they understand the Girl Scout Promise. Girls earn Petals by showing they understand the 10 parts of the Girl Scout Law.

Program Aide (PA)—Girl who has completed 6th grade, who has taken a specialized training to help troop/group leaders with the activities for their girls. Program Aides also help at day camps.

R

Resident Camp—Overnight camp with sessions generally for at least five days and four nights. The program is operated and staffed by the camp, and the supervision of campers is a camp responsibility. Campers stay overnight, and camp is responsible for campers 24 hours a day.

S

Sash—A type of uniform available to Brownies through Ambassadors. The sash sits on the right shoulder and crosses the body, resting on the left hip.

Senior—A Girl Scout in grades 9-10.

Service Project—A project that helps the community with a specific and short-term need.

Service Team Volunteers—Volunteers who support and mentor troop volunteers in their service unit.

Silver Award—The highest award a Girl Scout Cadette (6th-8th grade) can receive. Earned by completing a Girl Scout Journey and the suggested minimum of 50 hours building a team, exploring the community, picking a Take Action project, developing the project, and spreading the word.

Sit-Up—Lightweight pad or mat the girls make to “sit-upon” when the ground is dirty or damp.

Smart Cookie—A software program used by volunteers and caregivers during the Girl Scout Cookie Program

S’mores—A sandwich made with graham crackers, chocolate, and a roasted marshmallow invented by Girl Scouts.

Spring Renewal—Renewal campaign that takes place between April and June (specific dates change each year) with added incentives like increased cookie earnings for troops and patches for girls who renew their membership before a certain date.

T

Take Action—A project that helps the community by identifying the root cause of the community need, has long-term benefits, and has sustainable community support.

Trefoil—The official emblem of the Girl Scout movement in the United States of America, registered in the United States Patent Office by Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Troop—This group of girls and adults (minimum of 5 girls and 2 adults) who meet on a regular basis to engage in Girl Scout Program activities. Troops are organized according to grade level, which places girls together with others in the same social/developmental stage.

T

Tunic—A type of uniform available to Daisies. It is worn over the shoulders and ties at the waist.

Trefoil—The official emblem of the Girl Scout movement in the United States of America, registered in the United States Patent Office by Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Troop—This group of girls and adults (minimum of 5 girls and 2 adults) who meet on a regular basis to engage in Girl Scout Program activities. Troops are organized according to grade level, which places girls together with others in the same social/developmental stage.

Troop Crest—A Girl Scout tradition that helps leaders easily identify Girl Scouts belonging to different troops while on a hike or other activity. There are currently 16 official troop crests available, and they are displayed on uniforms between the Girl Scout Council Identification Set and the troop numerals.

V

Vest—A type of uniform available to all grade levels.

Volunteer-Led Day Camp (VDC)—Special day camps run exclusively by our incredible volunteers that vary from a few hours to a few days long. Girls enjoy a variety of outdoor activities where they connect with other girls and take action to make a difference in the community.

W

WAGGGS—The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, a global association supporting female-oriented and female-only Guiding and Scouting organizations in 150 countries.

World Thinking Day — Celebrated annually on February 22. Official Girl Scout day where girls traditionally learn about the cultures and traditions of WAGGGS member countries. This day also commemorates the birthdays of Lord and Lady Baden-Powell, the founders of the Scouting Movement worldwide.

W

Youth Protection Training—Required for all volunteers working with youth. Must be completed before any interaction with girls. Youth Protection Training is good for three years.

Getting Started

Forming Your Troop

Congratulations! At this point you have found a co-leader and are inviting girls to be a part of your troop. Want to grow your troop? You can invite a friend to Girl Scouts anytime of the year. Have a party where the girls can invite their friends. Girl Scouts is all about doing things with other girls. Talk to your service unit team or council staff member for more ideas. Troops must have a minimum of 5 girls to remain active, but a healthy Girl Scout troop usually consists of 8-20 girls; this allows for a fun group size even if there are some who are less active or don't participate consistently.

Communication between troop leaders and parents/caregivers is vital to the success of the troop. Having open lines of communication, working together, and making sure roles are assigned will help the troop operate smoothly throughout the year. Remember, teamwork can be difficult, but the result of your hard work makes Girl Scouts an excellent experience for the girls.



Troop Bank Account

All troops should establish a Wells Fargo bank account with two unrelated adult signers for collection of optional troop dues, payment of troop supplies and activities, and the Cookie Program proceeds. Staff will help you through this process.

Financial Responsibility

Any volunteer accepting responsibility for handling group/troop money must:

- Be a GSUSA registered adult.
- Pass a Girl Scout criminal background check.
- Accept accountability for its proper use and safekeeping.
- Not be of the same family (related) or household of any other signers on the account.
- Submit a completed Annual Financial Report to council by June 30 each year.

Please follow the steps below to set up your troop bank account:

1. Have two unrelated signers, who have met the criteria outlined above under “Financial Responsibility.”
2. Fill in the forms and send them in to the GSU Finance Department (finance@gsutah.org), according to the instructions on the form.
 - The forms can be found on the New Troop Leader Support page of our website gsutah.org/new-leader
 - Click on “5. Set Up a Troop Bank Account.”
 - Click on “Download the paperwork.”

Once your applications are turned in to Girl Scouts of Utah, we will review and submit them to Wells Fargo. It typically takes 7-10 business days for the account to be set up, and then a bank debit card will be delivered to both signers in the mail. This is your access to the bank account. Once you have the card, you can go to wellsfargo.com to register for online access, or you can call 1-800-225-5935 for assistance.

Wells Fargo

GSU uses Wells Fargo Banking. The following are benefits of using a Wells Fargo bank account for your troop:

- The council will set up the account for you (see above).
- Your troop receives debit card access and no monthly fees. We’ll set this up for you too.
- If there are any issues relating to the account, GSU’s Finance Department will be able to work it out with the bank directly.
- When a troop disbands, GSU’s Finance Department is able to work with Wells Fargo to close the account.

Note: If you cannot access a Wells Fargo Bank branch, please contact Customer Care at (801) 265-8472 and the council will develop an alternate plan for your troop.

Uniforms

While a uniform is not required to participate as a Girl Scout, dressing the part helps girls and adults connect to each other, focus on their goals, and remember all they've accomplished through their Girl Scout journey. Girl Scout uniforms can be worn during troop meetings, public tours and activities, parades, Girl Scout Bridging ceremonies, cookie walk-about and booths, and to school and work during Girl Scout week!

You can call or visit any Girl Scouts of Utah shop location for help getting exactly what your girls want. You can contact the main Girl Scouts of Utah shop at (801) 716-5141.

Your troop should decide which uniform elements to purchase if the girls decide to look similar. Troops can choose whether the troop leaders will collect money from caregivers to purchase uniforms all at once, or if the caregivers would like to purchase their own items from the shop.

Visit one of our shop locations to purchase uniforms, starter kits and more. Our shop staff are here to help! You can also shop anytime at: www.girlscoutshop.com/UTAH-COUNCIL

Girl Scout Junior Vest



Place your first Journey awards at the bottom of your vest. As you earn additional Journey awards, work your way up. If your Journey awards and badges don't fit on the front of your vest or sash, you can wear them on the back.

Girl Scout Junior Sash



Place your Journey awards above your badges.

Reach out to your Member Support Specialist or in your service unit's Facebook group (if applicable) for tips on putting badges and patches on uniforms.

Troop Meetings

As a troop leadership team, work together to determine meeting day, time, and location. Consider the girls in your troop:

- Do they all attend the same school?
- What is the most central or convenient location for all?
- What is the best time of day for the meeting for both girls, co-leaders, and parent/caregiver support?

The meeting place needs to provide a safe, clean, and secure environment that allows for the participation of all girls. Consider meeting rooms at schools, houses of worship, libraries, community buildings, childcare facilities, and local businesses. For teens, rotating meetings at coffee houses, bookstores, and other places girls enjoy spending time is an option.

Setting Troop Expectations:

- Decide on the day, time, frequency, and meeting location of troop meetings. Create a tentative year calendar of troop meetings and scheduled activities, taking into consideration events the service unit has already planned. Pencil in as much information as possible, including service unit and council events.
- Schedule your parent/caregiver meeting.
- Discuss expectations for group and individual behavior management so it is consistent and positive behavior reinforcement is utilized. It is often helpful if leaders swap responsibility for each other's daughter while at Girl Scouts.
- The troop should also establish troop rules (also known as a Troop Agreement) through discussion with the girls during a troop meeting.
- Learn and agree how to handle conflict appropriately and consistently, while modeling the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- All adults face some time constraints; keep communication open and work together to problem solve.
- Remember, Girl Scouts is flexible.



Now You are Ready to Meet

Organizing your meeting is easy with the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) – your one-stop resource to planning your entire year as a troop leader (login to myGS at gsutah.org). This simple guide will give you the framework for how a typical meeting runs. The VTK will help you fill in the holes with specific activities and timelines. Most important – your meetings should be fun!

There are six parts of a troop meeting:

Start up

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

Opening

Girls decide and lead their meetings opening — most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story or other activity.
(5-10 minutes)

Business

This is the time to let girls plan their upcoming meetings or decide what council events they want to attend as a troop, collect dues, and make announcements.
(5-10 minutes)

Activities

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

Clean up

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

Closing

Just like opening, each troop decides how to close – with a song, a game, or a story.
(5-10 minutes)
As caregivers arrive, provide any important updates or reminders about upcoming meetings and activities.



Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is a customizable digital planning tool for troop leaders and co-leaders to easily manage their troop year-round and deliver easy, fun troop meetings. Accessible via desktop and mobile devices, the VTK saves you time and energy so you can focus on unleashing the leader in every girl and ensuring she has every opportunity to build a lifetime of leadership, success, and adventure.

Girls have more fun when they can shape their own experiences, do hands-on activities, and work together as teams. With the VTK, girls and leaders can explore meeting topics and program activities together and follow the fun as they plan their Girl Scout year.

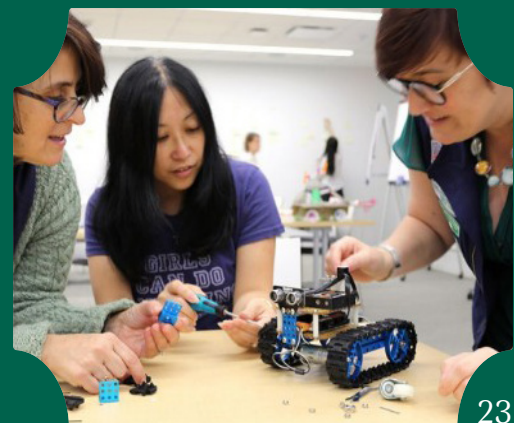
Through the Volunteer Toolkit, troop leaders can:

- Plan the troop's calendar year and meeting schedule.
- Email parents/caregivers with one click.
- View the troop roster, renew girls' membership, and update girls' contact information.
- View meeting plans for Journeys and badges, including suggested tracks for multi-level groups (K-5 and 6-12).
- Customize meeting agendas to fit your unique troop.
- Explore individual meeting plans that show a breakdown of every step, including a list of materials needed, editable time allotments for each activity within a meeting, and printable meeting aids.
- Record girls' attendance at meetings and their badge and Journey achievements.
- Add council or custom events to the troop's calendar.
- Easily locate both national and local council resources, such as Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Parents and caregivers can:

- View the troop's meeting schedule and individual meeting plans to stay up to date on the badges and Journeys they are working on.
- Renew their memberships and update their contact information.
- View their Girl Scout's attendance and achievements.
- See upcoming events the troop is planning or attending.
- Easily locate both national and local council resources.

Get started by visiting gsutah.org and clicking on **myGS** - > **Volunteer Toolkit**





Communicate with parents and caregivers:

Adult support is vital to the experience girls have in the troop setting. The leadership structure and distribution of duties will depend on troop size and can be customized based on the skills, interests, and availability of adults to best meet their needs and the needs of their girls.

- Introduce yourselves by email or phone and invite each family to the parent/caregiver meeting (suggested to do this within first two weeks of becoming an approved volunteer). It's important for families to understand your expectations and be involved in supporting the troop.
- Find troop member contact details on the MY Troop Tab of the Volunteer Toolkit.

We suggest troops pick two forms of communication between parents/caregivers.

Email: Email is a convenient way to communicate. You can send out short or detailed messages. Some troops even put together a troop newsletter to share. Remember, the Volunteer Toolkit can be used to send out mass emails to the troop.

Facebook: Many parents/caregivers are on Facebook and using groups on Facebook is a great way to share updates on your troop happenings. Make sure the group is set up as a private/closed group.

Texting or Texting Apps: Texting or texting apps can be used for short messages, reminders, text alerts and more.

Parent/Caregiver Meetings: Parent/caregiver meetings can be scheduled any time throughout the year. Consider planning parent/caregiver meetings at the end of the girls' meetings. For example, this can be 10-15 minutes at the end of every meeting, at the end of the first meeting of the month, or as needed.

Family Events: Family events are a great way to connect. Have the girls plan at least one event a year, such as a presentation, play, ceremony, host a family picnic, or other activity.

Phone Calls: Phone calls help make personal connections while sharing troop information and foster conversation and clarification. This is also a good time to make a personal and specific ask for support. Please keep in mind not everyone is technologically savvy, and some may not regularly check technology methods. That's why face-to-face meetings and phone calls are also beneficial.

The Parent Meeting

We ask that all troop leaders host a parent meeting at least once per year. This is your first step for parent involvement. It will set the tone for communication, and provide an opportunity for the parents to offer their help and support.

What do I need to discuss?

Intro to Girl Scouts

- The parents should know what Girl Scouts is all about! To give them an idea, use this PSA: <https://vimeo.com/295383000>

The Promise and Law

- Parents should understand what we commit to as Girl Scouts.

About You

- Who you are, what your background is, and why you have taken on the role of Troop Leader.

Dates and Times

- When will your meetings be? Will there be any special trips or activities this year?

Troop Communication

- This is one of the most important pieces of your Parent Meeting. How will you communicate with parents (Facebook, Text Message, Email, etc.)? What kind of response do you expect? Avoid conflict by setting communication expectations from the very beginning!

Costs

- Will the troop collect dues? Will parents be expected to purchase their daughter's membership or will the troop fund this from cookie sales?

Note: Girl Scouts of Utah will provide financial aid to any girl who cannot afford her membership. Finances should not present a barrier to a girl becoming a Girl Scout.

Am I allowed to set requirements for parents?

Troops may decide to set certain requirements for parents. If you choose to do so, please keep the following in mind:

- The economic feasibility for parents
- Sensitivity to parent work schedules
- Strengths, weaknesses, and knowledge base of different parents

Uniforms

- You do not need to require that girls wear uniforms; however, it is preferred. If cost is a barrier, girls may decide to spend their cookie earnings on uniforms. If parents will be responsible for purchasing uniforms, you should tell them what to buy and how much it will cost.

Parent Involvement

- How would you like parents to be involved? Keep in mind that different parents may be able to be involved in different ways.

Safety and Policies

- Parents want to know if their daughter will be safe.
Note: Membership fees cover insurance for each girl when at a Girl Scout event. Make sure policies and requirements are followed, such that the insurance cover remains intact.



Examples of different requirements troops may choose to set:

- Family snack rotation (each week and different family organized snack)
- Troop dues (each girl brings a specified amount of dues)
- Meeting host rotation/Troop Co-op (some troops balance the parent load by rotating who will host and lead each meeting)

Other General Tips for Involving Parents



Set clear expectations early – from the very beginning

Setting your expectations for parent/caregiver involvement and the needs of the troop right from the beginning can help to offset future conflict. For example, let parents know that they need to help out with a certain number of activities a year, what time they need to pick up their girls from activities, and what the troop dues will and will not cover.

Encourage participation

Sometimes simply asking them in person is enough. Encourage participation by communicating that the more parents that are involved, the better the troop will function.

Use their talents/skills

At the beginning of the year, survey the parents to discover their interests, hobbies, and hidden talents. When they return the questionnaire, discuss ways that they can teach or help plan a meeting.

Divide up the responsibilities - Adult Kaper Chart

Provide parents with a list of activities that need to be completed throughout the year (drivers, emergency contact, cooking, photographer, etc.) and ask them to select at least one item to help with during the year. As an added bonus, leave space for them to suggest other items they may want to help with. Make sure that caregivers who help are registered volunteers (Troop Supporters) and have completed their Girl Scout background check.

Cooperative Learning

From the beginning, include parents in planning, setting annual goals, and asking for feedback.

Invite parents

When the girls have planned an activity or event that is close to home, invite the parents to meet at the event. Parents want to see what their girls are up to and will often stay and help.

Stay in contact

Determine a regular method of communication (monthly emails, a troop Facebook page, WhatsApp messenger group, etc.) and stick to it. Get the parents to agree to check/respond to communication in the specified method as part of the Troop and Caregiver Agreement they sign at the caregiver meeting. (Agreement located at the end of this manual.) When sharing upcoming events, be specific on how many volunteers you need and what they would do. (Don't discourage parents by saying "I don't need help" Always encourage their help and participation.)

Celebrate! Appreciate!

Have your girls plan their Bridging Ceremony and send formal invites to the parents. Parents will attend and build friendships as they share in the celebration. Get a sample parent meeting presentation on our website here: gsutah.org/volunteers-online

Ways Adults Can Support the Troop



Each troop needs the help of adults to provide a quality Girl Scout experience. Get involved, and make a difference in the lives of girls! Please complete this form and return it to the troop leaders.

Adult's Name: _____

Girl's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Identify your preferred two forms of communication, marking them in order of preference.

- Phone call Text Email Facebook Message Text Notification App

Share the fun of guiding girls on the Girl Scout adventure! Troop committee members may include parents/caregivers, adult family members, Girl Scout alums, or community members. Consider volunteering from one of the positions below.

Troop Leaders/Co-Leader

Work with a group of girls and mentor them as they make new friends and develop connections that will last a lifetime. Involves coordinating and organizing meeting activities and family engagement, and helping girls plan adventures that will help them discover things about themselves, connect with each other, and take action in their community.

Troop Treasurer/Supporter

Troop Supporters are an essential part of the Girl Scout troop. They assist with selected troop duties, such as activity planning, snacks, money management, driving, and/or other tasks necessary to keep the troop running smoothly throughout the year. Any adult participating in more than two activities/meetings a year with the troop must be registered with a current background check.

Troop Product Manager

This position is crucial for troop success - coordinating the annual Fall Product and Cookie Programs at the troop level. Setting up cookie booths, managing inventory and money, and then watching the girls light up when they earn rewards for their entrepreneurship.

Ways Adults Can Support the Troop

Ways the Family Can Get Involved

- At one or more meetings
- With troop money earning
- Lead a hike
- Provide space for storage, equipment
- Donate supplies
- Help with the Fall Product Program
- Manage the troop budget
- Drive on trips and outings
- Provide a place for outdoor activities
- Be a First Aider (or be willing to take training)
- Help with the Cookie Program
- Send communications/reminders
- Provide a meeting place
- Provide occasional snacks for meetings
- Be a camping adult (or be willing to take training)
- Other: _____

Skill(s) I Can Share With the Girls

- Songs
- Music
- Math
- Fitness
- My Hobby
- Other: _____
- Crafts
- Camping Skills
- Science
- Computer
- My Career
- Sewing
- Nature
- Games
- Animals
- My Culture
- Sports
- Cooking
- Gardening
- Photography
- First Aid
- Drama
- Dance
- Nutrition

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, take a picture of the Volunteer Membership Registration section below before submitting your form.

View volunteer opportunities, apply, and register at gsutah.org/volunteer. Girl Scouts of Utah is committed to providing a safe and quality program for girls in the community. Girls of Utah has resources and a system of support to help adult volunteers select and register in the most appropriate role.

Volunteer Opportunities and Membership Registration

Girl Scouts of Utah is committed to providing a safe and quality program for girls. The council has resources and a system of support to help adult volunteers select and register in the most appropriate role(s). Our membership year runs October 1 - September 30.

Steps to become a troop volunteer:

1. View volunteer opportunities, apply, and register at gsutah.org/volunteer.
2. Select the role(s) that is appropriate for you; for example, Troop Supporter.
3. To help keep girls safe, we require all volunteers to successfully complete their Girl Scout criminal background check (no cost to the volunteer).
4. Commitment to Girl Scout Promise and Law.
5. Agreement to follow volunteer policies and procedures.
6. Completion of any required trainings.

Dividing Responsibilities

Key roles to keep in mind as you start your troop. Some of these tasks can be delegated to the troop committee to help build parent/caregiver support:

- How will you communicate with parents/caregivers? Email, text, social media group, etc.
- Who will handle the troop money?
- How will you work with your own daughters if they are in the troop?
- Who will handle paperwork? (Registrations, health forms, permission slips, etc.)
- Who will lead meetings?
- Can someone share a special skill?

Troop Positions

Troop level volunteers work directly with girls bringing the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to life. These volunteers are the change-makers who make it all possible. They lead the sisterhood that provides comfort and inspiration – giving girls the tools to solve problems and bounce back when faced with challenges. In short, Girl Scout volunteers transform lives. There's nothing like helping girls find their voices and use them to change the world.

Troop Leader/Co-Leader

Work with a group of girls and mentor them as they make new friends and develop connections that will last a lifetime. Involves coordinating and organizing meeting activities, family engagement, and helping girls plan adventures that will help them discover things about themselves, connect with each other, and take action in their community.

Troop Treasurer/Supporter

Troop Supporters are an essential part of the Girl Scout Troop. They assist with selected troop duties, such as activity planning, snacks, money management, driving, or other tasks necessary to keep the troop running smoothly throughout the year. Any adult participating in more than two activities/meetings a year with the troop must be registered with a current background check and complete Youth Protection Training.

Troop Product Manager

This position is crucial for troop success - coordinating the annual fall product and/or cookie sale at the troop level. Setting up cookie booths, managing inventory and money, and then watching the girls light up when they earn rewards for their entrepreneurship.



Engaging Family Support to Create your Troop Committee

Parents/caregivers want what is best for their girl, but can be particular with what they do with their time and money. Keep in mind that time and funds are limited for many. Ask all families for help in creating your troop committee by delegating your troop tasks. Families don't all look the same, so consider the entire family—any caregivers or guardians, adult siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.

Things to consider before you ask for help:

- What is the time commitment?
- Do you expect all parents/caregivers to be registered members?
- Be up front about expectations—for you, the troop, and the families
- Identify individual talents and skills and utilize them
- Don't just focus on moms/women

Making the Ask

The most important thing is to just ask for help! Utilize “Ways Adults Can Support the Troop” Handout found in your Troop Start-Up Guide.

- Try using a sign-up platform such as Sign-up Genius or Rallyhood to help fill slots where support is needed. This helps adults make commitments that fit their schedule.
- Tell them why you think they would be good at a particular task.
- Try asking one-on-one for adult support. It's hard to say no when you are specifically asked. For example: We need someone to help coordinate this...

There are several resources for getting families to engage in the Girl Scout experience:

- VTK Resource Tab: Family Hub
- VTK Parent View: Caregivers can see the year plan, what girls are working on, and access the Resource tab.
- Fall Product and Cookie Program Family Guides
- Weekly newsletters: important updates & information for volunteers and families

Best Practices

- Use the VTK to send follow-up emails with what the girls will be doing in the next meeting and other reminders you need to share.
- Set up the expectations for communications and communicate clearly. Identify communication preferences—FB group, text thread, emails, etc.
- Make a schedule or sign-up sheet and bring it to your parent/caregiver meeting.
- Set boundaries: sometimes it may be best for the girl and their parent/caregiver to not work together. It might be best for the parent/caregiver to help in a different way to provide the girl with the most enriching experience possible.
- Show the value of Girl Scouts.
- Be inclusive. Look beyond the parent/caregiver!
- Set expectations and review the outcomes.
- Remember to celebrate success often. Girl Scouting should be fun for adults, too!
- Check in with your troop committee often on progress and re-evaluate as needed.
- At the end of the year, plan an evaluation meeting to assess progress, successes, and challenges.

Guiding Your Troop

Girl Scout Year at a Glance

Below are key dates and Girl Scout traditions to note as you plan your Girl Scout year. Keep in mind each troop is different since the troop activities should be planned by the girls! The role of the troop leadership team is to make sure girls have the chance to safely become go-getters, risk-takers, innovators, and leaders alongside their sister Girl Scouts.

Fall

- Fall Product Program is a great way to earn startup funds for your troop and build valuable skills.
- Recognition of Excellence – Celebrating our outstanding volunteers and Girl Scouts Highest Award recipients.
- October 31 – Celebrate the birthday of Juliette Gordon Low.

Spring

- Girl Scout Week – Celebrated each March, it includes the Girl Scout birthday when Juliette Gordon Low officially registered the first troop on March 12.
- Girl Scout Sunday and Girl Scout Sabbath Provides an opportunity to attend a place of worship and be recognized as Girl Scouts.
- Court of Awards Ceremony – Celebrate awards with a girl-designed ceremony. Ending the troop year with a gathering is a great way to reengage parent/caregivers and share the girls' successes. Other names for these ceremonies are bridging.
- Renewal – Late spring is a great time to register for the coming year. There are often girl and troop incentives associated with early registration.

Winter

- Participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program; it's a great way to earn money and develop financial and entrepreneurship skills.
- Register for Summer Camp! For more info, visit gsutah.org/camp in January.
- February 22 – Participate in Girl Scout World Thinking Day. Honor our international Girl Scout and Girl Guide sisters by remembering that GSUSA is a part of a global community. Visit girlscouts.org/worldthinkingday.

Summer

- June 30 – Troop Finance Report due.
- Enjoy the Summer! Many troops take the summer off, but that doesn't mean you have to. It's a great time to take a trip or enjoy the outdoors.
- Attend Camp! Girls can attend summer camp as a troop, on their own, or with a friend.
- Start planning for next year! How will you engage your girls? Are their schedules getting busier? How will the troop team make sure girls still have room for Girl Scouting?



Troop Safety

The safety and well-being of girl and adult members is our highest priority. As a volunteer, it is imperative to know and understand the safety policies and procedures in place, where to look, or who to ask for more information when necessary. Listed below are some of the main resources you can use to find safety policies.

Girl Scouts of Utah Emergency Card Information

Please remember that the CEO, Board Chair, and the Chief Marketing & Membership Officer are the only Girl Scouts of Utah council representatives who speak with the media regarding Girl Scout issues. You may download a copy of GSU's Emergency Information Card from the "Forms and Resources" section of our website.

Girl Scouts of Utah Emergency Phone Number

(801) 483-3413

State your name and identify yourself as a Girl Scout volunteer.

Procedure to be followed by the person in charge at the scene:

- Give attention to injured person(s). Secure doctor, ambulance, police, and clergy as appropriate.
- In the event of a fatality, ALWAYS notify police first. Retain a responsible person at the scene, secure the area, and do not remove victim(s) or disturb surroundings until police have assumed authority.
- Call the Girl Scouts of Utah's 24-hour emergency number (801) 483-3413
- When you call line 24-hour emergency number, provide your name, troop number, phone number you are calling from, and your home phone number to the Council Crisis Team Member.
- Tell the Council Crisis Team Member if this is a serious accident or a fatality.
- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will make all official statements as spokesperson of the council. Do not give information on your own.
- Refer all media inquiries to the Director of Brand and Strategy: (260) 255-1949. — Do not discuss the incident, place blame, or accept liability.
- Make no statements to the press!
- Do not surrender parent permission slips or medical release forms to anyone except GSU's CEO.

Safety Activity Checkpoints:

Activity specific safety guidelines for activities including camping, participating in a parade, and even the Fall Product Program participation. These guidelines are available online or through the VTK.

Troop Safety (cont.)

Go to gsutah.org for General Safety Guidelines.

- Keep caregivers informed! Communicate regularly about troop meetings and activities. Use permission slips any time the troop is doing anything out of the ordinary, like activities not being held at the troop's normal meeting location.
- Girls are never alone! Girls should always use the buddy system and be accompanied by two approved adults at all times.
- Adults are never alone with girls! At least one troop leader and either a co-leader, troop supporter, or another troop leader should be present any time girls are together.
- Be prepared! Have a first aid kit, non-emergency number of local law enforcement, and charged cell phone on hand, just in case you need it.
- Know your surroundings! This goes for both the regular meeting place and when venturing out with the troop and applies to both people and places. Assess any risks that might be present and take appropriate action.





Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need (Safety Ratios)

Girl Scouts girl/adult ratios show the minimum number of adults needed to supervise a specific number of girls. These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of girls—for example, if one adult has to respond to an emergency, a second adult is always on hand for the rest of the girls. Adults are registered and approved volunteers.

	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional adult for each additional number of this many girls:	Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional adult for each additional number of this many girls:
Girl Scout Daisies (K–grade 1)	12	6	6	4
Girl Scout Brownies (Grades 2–3)	20	8	12	6
Girl Scout Juniors (Grades 4–5)	25	10	16	8
Girl Scout Cadettes (Grades 6–8)	25	12	20	10
Girl Scout Seniors (Grades 9–10)	30	15	24	12
Girl Scout Ambassadors (Grades 11–12)	30	15	24	12

Examples for using the chart: If you’re meeting with 17 Daisies, you’ll need three adults, at least two of whom are unrelated (in other words, you and someone who is not your sibling, spouse, parent/caregiver, or child), and at least one of whom is female. This is determined as follows: for up to 12 Daisies, you need two adults, and one more adult for each six additional girls. Since you have 17 girls, you need three adults (2+1). If, however, you have 17 Cadettes attending a group meeting, you need only two unrelated adults, at least one of whom is female, since the chart shows that two adults can manage up to 25 Cadettes. In addition to the girl/adult ratios, please remember that adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old, or the age of majority defined by your state if it is older than 18.

Product Program

Girls learn five important life skills through participating in our Fall Product Program and our Cookie Program, but we also know that as a girl progresses through her entrepreneurship experience, those skills are developed in various ways. We certainly recognize not every girl aspires to be an entrepreneur, but the Fall Product Program and the Cookie Program can help girls develop valuable skills which will benefit her in the future, no matter what career path she chooses!

We know that starting a new troop comes with new expenses and the Product Programs are here to help. The Fall Product Program and the Cookie Program give your troop an opportunity to earn money to enjoy new and exciting opportunities and provide sustainable troop finances for each Girl Scout year. Troops who participate in both the Fall Product Program and the Cookie Program earn on average \$1,200 in troop proceeds.



Goal Setting

Girls set Fall Program and Cookie Program goals, and with their troop, create a plan to reach them. This matters because girls need to know how to set and reach goals to succeed in school, on the job, and in life.



Decision Making

Girls decide how to participate, how to market their sale, and what to do with their earnings. As they make many choices (big and small) throughout the program, they will learn important decision-making skills that will help them throughout their lives.



Money Management

Girls develop a budget, take orders, and handle customers' money. This will help them learn money management—from their lunch money to their allowance and future paycheck.



People Skills

Girls learn how to talk (and listen) to their customers. These people skills help them do better with group projects, sports teams, on the playground, and later at work.



Business Ethics

Girls act honestly and responsibly during every step of the Fall Product and Cookie Programs. This matters because employers want to hire ethical employees—and the world needs ethical leaders.



Girl Scout Cookie Program

When your girls sell Girl Scout Cookies, they're doing more than helping their customers stock up on delicious treats (and having lots of fun). They're doing it with a goal in mind—a goal to power new, unique, and amazing experiences for themselves and their troop all year long. Troops made on average \$1,173 in troop funds from the 2021 Girl Scout Cookie Program!

Your troop has three ways that you can participate in this iconic, girl-led program. The girls can sell to people they know through their Cookie Order Card, online with Digital Cookie (a safe way to invite family near and far to purchase cookies), and/or in-person direct sales (door to door and booths at retail locations.) The Cookie Program begins in January and goes through March.



Troop Finances

The best way to earn money for your group is to start with Fall Product Program and the Girl Scout Cookie Program; from there, your troop may decide to earn additional funds on its own. Girl Scout Troops are funded by money earned or collected in:

1. Product Program- Cookie Program and Fall Product Program
2. Troop/Group Money-earning Activities for older girls (Junior-Ambassador)
3. Troop Dues
4. Collaborating with Sponsors and other Organizations

Making Decisions About Managing Money with Girls in the Troop

Members decide the amount of troop dues, after considering troop plans, girls' ages, and income levels of all families. No girl should be denied membership in a troop or have her participation restricted by her inability to pay.

Teaching girls about money management and empowering them to make good financial decisions are part of troop financial management. Since girls are choosing their own Girl Scout journey, they can also make decisions on the resources that support their Girl Scout adventure.

Consider the following as you guide them in managing their troop funds:

— What is the grade level of the troop and how much understanding do they have of money and bank accounts? Girl Scout Daisies will have adults handle their troop finances; Girl Scout Brownies understand that things cost money and will begin to have an understanding of what is needed to achieve their goals.

— What are the goals of the troop?

— What are the girls learning from the way the troop funds are managed? What do they need to learn?

— What if girls join the troop or leave the troop, how will the funds be managed?

If a girl leaves Girl Scouts, the funds remain property of the troop.

— Who Should Manage Troop Funds?

Troop leaders and troop assistants: Only registered and approved volunteers (unrelated and not in the same household) in these two roles can handle or manage troop funds and at least one of the volunteers needs to be a troop leader.

Girls: Involve the girls as much as their grade level and skills/abilities allow. After all, it's their money!

Remember that all funds collected, raised, earned, or otherwise received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Funds are administered by the troop and do not belong to individuals. Troop leaders and troop assistants are responsible for the proper accounting and management of troop funds. Should mismanagement be reported, a troop financial audit may occur and the adults responsible for troop leadership may be held accountable for any lost or stolen funds and overdraft fees.

For a deeper dive into Troop Finance tips and policies, go to:

www.gsutah.org/volunteers/volunteer-essentials.html

Troop Finances *(cont.)*

Troop Dues (Optional)

Many troops decide to collect troop dues to help provide start-up funding for troop activities and supplies. These could range from \$2-\$5 per meeting to \$30-\$40 for the entire school year paid all at one time. It's completely up to each troop to decide what works best for them.

Money-Earning Activities (Optional)

Participation in the Product Programs is optional; however, troops must participate in both to be eligible to conduct additional money-earning activities. The GSU Fall Product Program is the perfect opportunity for troops to kick off the Girl Scout year with a fun team-building activity that also generates essential funds to support troop activities, uniforms, etc. It is directed toward family and friends – those closest to Girl Scouting - and enables troops to earn start-up money by selling nuts, chocolates, and magazine subscriptions. The Cookie Program is an opportunity to build essential life skills, like goal setting, money management, and business ethics. It also enables girls to earn Activity Credits to pay for camp, program fees, or items in the GSU shop! The Fall Product and Cookie Programs are the primary money-earning activities for troops. Check Volunteer Essentials for guidelines on money-earning activities.

Financial Assistance (Optional)

Financial difficulties should not stand in the way of a Girl Scout's participation. Any member needing financial assistance for membership may request it. Members may also request Activity Scholarships for programs and camp. Go to www.gsutah.org and navigate to Forms and Resources to find the Activity Scholarship Application.

Record Keeping

To stay organized, troop leaders should use receipts to help track any incoming funds, outgoing expenses, and Fall Product and Cookie Program activities. Every Girl Scout troop should report out to caregivers about finances at least three times per year. Troop leaders should utilize the VTK to complete and submit their Annual Troop Finance Report by June 30 each year. If troop leadership changes and/or the troop is not continuing, a Troop Finance Report needs to be submitted as soon as possible.

Go to www.gsutah.org, log into myGS, navigate to the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) on the left menu, and then click on the VTK Finance Tab to fill out the troop finance details.

As a troop leader or troop assistant, you're in charge of making sure money is spent wisely, excellent records are kept (keeping copies of all receipts in a binder or folder), and all income and expenses are tracked. Income examples include dues, troop proceeds from Product Program. Expense examples include earned recognitions, troop meeting activities, field trips, events, and troop trips.

All troop money earned and received needs to be appropriately secured and should be deposited into the troop account within three days of receipt and should never be held in a personal checking account.

Record Keeping *(cont.)*

Any time the troop spends or receives money, a receipt should be provided and kept on record.

It is critical that all authorized signers are in communication with each other before spending. This will safeguard against overdrawn accounts and bouncing checks.

Take into consideration delays in posting transactions to the account in the banking system.

All troop expenses should be paid for with a troop check or the troop debit card.

Blank checks should never be pre-signed and debit cards should never be used by anyone other than the person they are issued to and be used only for troop expenses.

Cash withdrawals should only be made if absolutely necessary—i.e., cookie booth change, tips for taxi or hotel services. Anything paid or purchased with cash must be documented with receipt.

Volunteers who have paid out of pocket for troop expenses cannot reimburse themselves. Reimbursement may only come from the other signer on the account when a receipt is provided showing the expense.

Funds acquired for money-earning projects must be reported and accounted for by the troop, while following all council policies and procedures.

Note: Troops should consistently share troop financial information with caregivers and girls and council may request to see financial records at any time.

It is required to keep records (receipts, bank statements, and finance reports) for a minimum of two years. Old records are destroyed (shredded) after two years.

Council has the right to audit troop accounts and request statements/proof of receipts should misuse/mismanagement of funds be suspected or occur. Please know that Girl Scouts of Utah will make a decision based on the best outcome for the girls and this can take up to 4 weeks. This may result in the responsible volunteers being determined ineligible to serve as a volunteer.

Learning Resources

- Educational opportunities for volunteers are scheduled throughout the year to assist in planning activities, conducting meetings, using the Girl Scout national programs, and implementing the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Find trainings on the Activities Calendar, gsLearn, or in the Training Catalog (gsutah.org/training). Contact our Customer Care Team at info@gsutah.org or (801) 265-8472 if you have trouble registering.
- gsLearn: Girl Scouts' official online and on-demand training platform. Confident leaders are prepared leaders, and these online learnings will give you all the info you need to be a great troop leader.
- gsLearn isn't just for volunteers! All members have access to this great tool; log in to myGS to get started.

Troop and Parent/Caregiver Agreement

Troop and Parent/Caregiver Agreement

Our children learn by example. Our volunteers endeavor to follow and teach the Girl Scout Promise and Law. It is expected that families/caregiver will support those values in all Girl Scout activities.

As a parent/caregiver of Girl Scout _____, I agree to:

Girl's Name

- Demonstrate a genuine interest in my girl's participation in Girl Scouts. I will reflect and recognize that Girl Scouting is girl-led, so I will uphold the Girl Scout Promise and Law by being a positive role model and demonstrating support and will respect the opinions and goals of my girl and other girls.
- Support the volunteers who are working with my girl in order to encourage an enjoyable Girl Scout experience for all. I will make every effort to attend any required parent/caregiver meetings and adhere to deadlines.
- Ensure that my girl's behavior supports the Girls' Code of Conduct.
- Submit requested permission slips, dues and/or materials on time, ensure that my girl is prepared for Girl Scout activities, and drop them off and pick them up on time.
- Communicate any concerns that I have directly to the volunteer responsible for the activity, in private (not in the presence of the girls or other parents) and will follow a conflict management process if we are unable to resolve a particular conflict situation.
- Not initiate or participate in gossip or negative statements about Girl Scouting and will refrain from behavior that may undermine the leadership of a Girl Scout activity or the troop/group. Should I have a complaint or problem, I will share a suggested solution.
- Play an active role in my girl's Girl Scout experience. I will follow safety guidelines for all activities and guarantee a high-quality environment for my girl. I will refrain from the use of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol at all Girl Scout events.
- Support my girl's participation in the councils Product Program and adhere to all Product Program policies.
- Support the Girl Scout efforts to provide an environment of acceptance for all girls and their families by asking my girl to treat others with respect regardless of their differences.
- Acknowledge that there are a variety of ways for girls and adults to participate in Girls Scouting. If I or council staff feel that a different participation option would be best for my girl, staff will assist in engaging her in those activities.
-

I understand that my behavior directly impacts my girl's ability to participate in a troop/group or other Girl Scout activities. I will honor this agreement so that my girl can have a high-quality Girl Scout experience.

I acknowledge that COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus that spreads easily in the community. I agree to adhere to Girl Scouts of Utah and state and local guidelines and mandates. I will take all reasonable precautions to limit potential exposure for girls, volunteers, and families, based on Girl Scouts of Utah and state guidelines. I will hold Girl Scouts of Utah harmless and waive all right to legal action, if my daughter contracts COVID through exposure at a Girl Scout event.

Parent/Caregiver Signature

Date

Checklist for New Troop Leaders

Week 1

- Register as a Troop Leader
- Have a completed Background Check.
(You will receive an email from Asurint. You must respond within 24 hours.)
- Find a Co-Leader and invite girls to join your troop (Printable Invite).
- Take Youth Protection Training before meeting with any Girl Scouts.
- Talk to your Membership Support Specialist (MSS) as they will be there to help you this year.
- Register to take Intro to GSU live zoom training

Week 2

- Complete Intro to GSU Training.
- Discover the ins and outs of the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK).
- Set up a bank account by submitting the bank account forms to finance@gсутah.org.
- Meet with your co-leader and plan a parent meeting (Parent Meeting Agenda).
- Find your troop roster on VTK—Email or call all new troop parents to introduce yourself.
- Hold the parent meeting.

Week 3

- Complete your bank account set-up.
- Start taking GSUSA's New Leader Onboarding training on gsLearn.
- Plan & hold your first troop meeting with the Girl Scouts.
- Print and have families fill out the Parent Permission Forms.

Week 4

- Attend a Leader Meeting with your Service Unit.
- Reach out to your MSS and get help planning your year of fun.

If planning an outing or adventure, check our website's travel page to be sure you have adequate training to do your activities safely.

Next Steps In Training

Required within 30-60 Days

- Volunteer Toolkit
Online at gsLearn
- Dollars and Sense; Troop Finances
Online at gsLearn

Required within first six months

- Grade Level Training
Online at gsLearn
- CPR/First Aid
In person available through council or an alternate source.
- Product Program training when applicable.

Additional suggested trainings:

Online at gsLearn:

- Including Girls of All Abilities
- Clique-Proof your Troop: Building Sisterhood & Conflict Management
- Multi-Level Troop Success
- Troop Meetings in Home

Check Activity Calendar:

- Journeys—Live via Zoom