girl scouts

KEEP GIRL SCOUTS GOING:

A GUIDE FOR TROOP PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

Supporting Girl Scout experiences at home can be empowering for both you and your girl! Here's how to help her shine outside of her regular troop setting.

POWERING HER GIRL SCOUT EXPERIENCE FROM HOME

All across the country, we're navigating through uncharted waters. And though things may look and feel very different right now, what hasn't changed is that Girl Scouts is still the place where your girl can find comfort, community, and optimism that will help her power through these difficult times. We're here to support your girl and your family and we're not going anywhere.

Maintaining your girl's connection to Girl Scouts can bring her a sense of normalcy and security when much of her world seems uncertain right now. And taking this time to explore Girl Scout activities at home with your girl can also give your entire family the chance to learn and grow together. Your health and well-being are essential to your girl's health and well-being and we want all of you to shine your brightest.

We know that you, as her parent or caregiver, may be adjusting to changes, too—you might be working from home or taking care of family members right now—and with this guide, you can quickly navigate through the essentials of the Girl Scout program and the digital resources available to you.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, YOUR GIRL SCOUT CAN STILL:

- Choose the Girl Scout activities that spark her interest and inspire her to try new things.
- Stay focused on the awards she wants to earn.
- Experience a well-rounded continuation of her Girl Scout year.
- Grow the leadership skills that will power her success, now and always.

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GIRL SCOUT MISSION

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

GIRL SCOUT PROMISE

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

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

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 SCOUT FAMILY PROMISE

On my honor, I will try:
To support my Girl Scout and her troop,
To help girls lead at all times,
And to always keep it fun!

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START GIRL SCOUTING AT HOME!

With your guidance, encouragement, and support, your girl will keep growing Girl Scout strong during these challenging times. As we practice social distancing, your girl won't attend traditional troop meetings or events; instead, her troop leader may arrange online meetings or check in by phone with the girls. No matter how her troop connects, we encourage you to help your girl maintain and deepen those bonds with her Girl Scout sisters as they all continue their troop activities from home.

Wondering where to start? These five steps will empower you to support your Girl Scout as she continues her journey at home:

1. **Talk to your girl about what excites her**. Encourage her to think big! What inspires her? What does she enjoy most? Remember, there are no wrong answers to this question. What's most important is that girls feel heard by the adults in their life.
2. **Get to know the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and Program**. You've likely caught a glimpse of the fun, hands-on things your girl has experienced during the troop year so far, but what really drives those activities? Pages 8 and 9 of this guide give you a peek into what makes Girl Scouting an empowering, fun adventure for girls.
3. **Get the support you need.** You're never alone in your Girl Scout experience! On pages 6 and 7, you'll find a list of the resources to help your girl make the most of her Girl Scout time at home.
4. **Keep activities girl-led.** What makes Girl Scouting really unique? Everything we do is girl-led and it plays a major role in building your girl's confidence and leadership skills. Check out page 10 to see how you can foster a girl-led environment at home.
5. **Keep connected to the troop.** Did you know that both you and your girl benefit from staying connected with her troop? The relationships between your family and fellow troop families can be a source of strength for everyone at this time. And as you oversee activities at home for your girl, partnering up with other girls and troop adults can bring new, fun ideas into the mix and take the pressure off as families juggle new responsibilities at home.

Keep these five steps in mind as you:

- Explore the Girl Scout Leadership Journeys with your girl and *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* for her grade level.
- Check out badge and award requirements or find activity tips to make earning the awards even more fun!
- Partner with your girl to brainstorm what she will work on and how she'll earn her own badges and Journeys.

GIRL SCOUT SUPPORT TEAM

Remember how we said you're not alone in this? We meant it! It takes a village to raise up the next generation of female leaders and here's who you can turn to for help in supporting your girl's experience at home:

HER GIRL SCOUT TROOP LEADER

Your girl's troop leader is your girl's guide, mentor, and cheerleader all in one! Troop leaders are volunteers and may also be navigating the same challenges at home while pushing the troop forward. You'll want to check in with your girl's troop leader on which troop activities and communications will continue.

During this time, your troop leader may:

- Share information from your Girl Scout council and your local Girl Scout community about virtual activities and programs, trainings, and other opportunities available to your girl while she is at home.
- Set up times to touch base and answer any questions you might have.
- Organize virtual troop meetings and suggest badges and Journeys your girl can easily complete from home.
- Offer advice on how to keep activities girl-led and promote a well-rounded Girl Scout experience.

COUNCIL STAFF SUPPORT

If you have questions, your local council has answers! These are challenging times, and your girl's troop leader might not always have the answers you need or be able to provide the same level of support as they might throughout the troop year. You can always reach out to your council whenever you need help.

You can expect council staff to:

- Share program and activity opportunities that girls can complete on their own.
- Keep your troop leader informed of virtual opportunities for the troop to participate in as a group.
- Answer questions about the Girl Scout Program, logging into the myGS member portal and other technical issues, or how to renew your membership.

Did you know?
Girl Scouts has a long history of responding to and supporting national emergencies. After World War II, Girl Scouts wrote a "check" to the president for over 15 million hours of collective national service.

RESOURCES

YOUR LOCAL GIRL SCOUT COUNCIL

Check your local Girl Scout council's website for interactive digital opportunities and experiences to share with your girl at home and don't forget to check your inbox for their latest updates.

GIRL SCOUT FAMILY CONNECTION

Bring the magic of Girl Scouting home! This fun, go-to guide offers tons of tips on how the whole family can make the most of her Girl Scout year, all while making memories and strengthening your bond! If you haven't already received a copy from your council, download it at girlscouts.org/family.

(Available in English and Spanish)

RAISING AWESOME GIRLS

This parenting resource on the Girl Scout website has straightforward, realistic, and proven advice for parents on anything you might deal with when raising girls, including how to lead challenging conversations with her about current events.

Explore the library at girlscouts.org/raising-girls. Available in Spanish at girlscouts.org/para-su-familia.

GIRL SCOUTS AT HOME

This resource gives you in the ins and outs of bringing the exploration, fun, and learning of Girl Scouting to your family, even when circumstances keep the girls from meeting up in person. You'll find self-guided activities along with tips on how you can keep Girl Scouts going strong at home. Discover the possibilities at girlscouts.org/athome.

AWARD AND BADGE EXPLORER

Is your girl a budding scientist? A CEO in training? Or maybe she's on a mission to save the planet? Visit the Girl Scout Award and Badge Explorer at girlscouts.org/badgeexplorer to help your girl find ways to build her skills, take action in her community, and discover new passions.

BRONZE, SILVER, AND GOLD AWARD GUIDES

The Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards—for Juniors, Cadettes, and Seniors/Ambassadors, respectively—give girls the chance to make a lasting impact on the issues they're passionate about. These guides provide a step-by-step overview of the award requirements and process and will help you fully support your girl as she changes the world. All three guides are available at girlscouts.org/highestawards.

THE GIRL'S GUIDE TO GIRL SCOUTING

What does it mean to be a go-getting Girl Scout? These grade level-specific binders will help you break it down for your girl—from beloved Girl Scout traditions to making a positive impact in her community. It's part handbook, part badge book, and 100 percent fun! If your Girl Scout doesn't already have one, you can purchase this handbook from your local council or at girlscoutshop.com.

VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT

The Volunteer Toolkit is a digital planning tool that allows leaders to develop plans for troop meetings and events throughout the year. Using the Volunteer Toolkit, troop families can view what the troop leader has planned, learn more about troop experiences, and tap into additional resources. You can find the Volunteer Toolkit by visiting your council's website, clicking on the myGS tab, and signing into your myGS account.

As you work with your girl to map out which badges she's excited to earn, you can use the Volunteer Toolkit to explore badge activity ideas. If you would like access to the full library of badge and Journey plans, talk with your troop leader and then contact your local council.

THE GIRL SCOUT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

What makes Girl Scouts truly unique? Everything is designed for, and is tested by, girls! Our program centers around our research-backed Girl Scout Leadership Experience—that is, what girls do and how they do it. Activities are girl-led, which gives girls opportunities to explore leadership roles, and they learn by doing in a judgment-free space.

IN GIRL SCOUTS, GIRLS WILL:

Discover: Every activity girls tackle in Girl Scouts helps them discover who they are, what excites them, and what their talents are.

Connect: Girls collaborate with others—their Girl Scout sisters, leaders, or community—and expand their horizons. This helps them care about and inspire others locally and globally.

Take Action: As girls deepen their relationship with the world around them, they'll be eager to take action to make the world a better place.

So, what does this mean for your girl? Through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, your girl will develop a strong sense of self, demonstrate positive values, seek challenges, solve significant problems in her community, and establish healthy relationships. These aren't just good qualities—they're leadership skills that will last a lifetime!

THE GIRL SCOUT PROGRAM

No matter what excites your girl, she'll find engaging and fun activites in the four areas that make up the core of the Girl Scout program.

STEM: Computer science, engineering, robotics, outdoor STEM, and more

Outdoors: Adventure and skill building, from the backyard to the back country, including camping experiences for all ages

Life Skills: Civic Engagement, healthy living, global citizenship, communication skill – to name a few

Entrepreneurship: The Girl Scout Cookie Program – the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world – teaches goal setting, decision making, money management, business ethics, and people skills

Whether she completed Girl Scout Leadership Journeys, earns badges, unleashes her inner entrepreneur through the Girl Scout Cookie Program, packs for her first hike, changes the world through Take Action projects, or any combination of these activities, at Girl Scouts, your girl has countless ways to explore our four program areas and hone the skills she'll need to power a lifetime of success – whatever that looks like for her.

GIRL SCOUT PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

No matter where your girl lives, a universal Girl Scout experience connects her to her Girl Scout sisters around the country. And there are so many ways to make sure your girl gets the full Girl Scout experience in a way that excites and inspires her!

PROGRAM TOPIC AREA	EXAMPLES OF WHAT GIRLS DO
Girl Scout Ways and Life Skills	**Take part in favorite Girl Scout traditions, like songs and ceremonies** **Develop good communication skills and build stronger relationships with family and friends** **Discover how citizens can advocate for change**
Entrepreneurship	**Run their own cookie business** **Create and manage a budget** **Learn how to build strong customer relationships**
STEM	**Create digital art** **Learn to protect themselves online** **Design and develop a video game**
Outdoor	**Explore the outdoor world around her** **Learn about local wildlife** **Advocate to protect the environment**

Check out the full list of badges and Journeys on the Girl Scout Award and Badge Explorer.

BRINGING THE GIRL SCOUT EXPERIENCE TO YOUR HOME

Just as she did with her troop, your girl will continue to build her confidence and let her imagination soar through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Now that she is spending her time at home, you'll play a major role in helping her unleash the leader she was born to be. Here's how!

KEEP IT GIRL-LED

When girls step up and take ownership of their decisions, they grow into confident leaders who can make informed decisions and are empowered to speak their minds – valuable skills they'll carry throughout their lives! And though it's natural to want to step in and help your girl, remember that giving her space to make her own decisions – and mistake – is how she'll tap into her most confident self.

Being girl-led looks different across grade levels, of course, and your Daisy, Brownie, or Junior will need a little support as she learns to take the lead. TO create a girl-led space for her, you might:

- Brainstorm what she wants to achieve or explore during this time.
- Ask guided questions to help her reach decisions.
- Ask her the steps she might take to achieve one of her goals.
- Encourage her to learn a new skill and teach it to you.
- Help her reflect on an activity she's finished: What did she enjoy most? What could she have done differently? What will she do next time?

As your Cadette Senior or Ambassador takes on more responsibilities and hones her skills, you might encourage her to:

- Set realistic goals for herself and develop plans to achieve them.
- Organize a service project or event from start to finish, bringing on community support where needed.
- Use the Volunteer Toolkit to check award requirements and keep track of the awards and badges she's earned.
- Teach a newly learned skill to a younger Girl Scout or connect with a local troop virtually to help younger Girl Scouts earn a badge.

AIM FOR FUN, NOT PERFECTION

Was she disappointed with the way a project or activity turned out? Encourage her to roll with the changes and try again! By showing your girl that you're not discouraged by failure, you demonstrate perseverance, a key leadership attribute. Remember that your girl isn't expecting perfection from you: your time, attention, and guidance are the most important part of your Girl Scout experience!

LEARN WITH YOUR GIRL

You don't need to work in a STEM field to help your girl build a robot or be a professional artist to lead your girl in a craft. You can still fully support your girl as she pursues activities that might feel unfamiliar to you. Be open when you don't know something and become her partner in learning more; you'll show her firsthand that learning is a lifelong process and she can overcome any challenges that come her way.

Remember that the expectation that you should know everything is unrealistic, so don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it! Ask your girl's troop leader for their best tips or if they have relevant virtual activities planned around a particular topic. They can also direct you to council-wide opportunities that may be offered online or other digital resources that support your girl's interests.

Consider looking to members of your community to remotely connect with your girl to teach her a new skill. Most people are happy to share their knowledge with an inquisitive audience and you'll open your girl's eyes to career paths she may not have considered.

KEEP GIRL SCOUTS GOING:

ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Her Girl Scout experience doesn't need to be perfect—it just needs you! And chances are, you're already doing one of the most important things you can do for your Girl Scout—showing her that you support her and are excited to explore her world alongside her. These resources will help you understand where she is in her Girl Scout experience and where she wants to go, either on her own and, whenever possible, with her troop.

ABOUT MY GIRL SCOUT—Quick Reference

HAS YOUR GIRL SCOUT:

- Learned the Girl Scout Promise
- Learned the Girl Scout Law
- Completed a Journey
- Worked on a Girl Scout Way or Life Skill badge or activity
- Worked on an Entrepreneurship badge or activity
- Worked on a STEM badge or activity
- Worked on an Outdoor badge or activity
- Connected with her Troop Leader
- Connected with her troop
- Connected with troop members individually

Years my girl has been a Girl Scout: _____

My girl's Girl Scout program level:
Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior, Ambassador (circle one)

My Girl Scout is interests:
_____
_____
_____

My Girl Scout's goals for the rest of the year:
_____
_____
_____

Troop Leader Contact Information:
_____
_____

Council Contact Information:
_____
_____

BADGES AND AWARDS AT HOME

How to Keep Exploring During Social-Distancing Situations

Kick off your girl's adventures from home by delving into the Girl Scout Award and Badge Explorer (girlscouts.org/badgeexplorer) or *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* for her grade level and letting her decide what she'd like to do next. Check with your council about additional resources they may offer.

If she plans to complete badges or awards independently, here's what you'll need to do:

1. Ask your girl what she'd like to try or learn next—whether that's something new to her or an area she's already passionate about—and find the badge or award that best fits her interest.
2. Check with her troop leader ***before beginning the work*** to make sure the troop hasn't already planned to work on her chosen badge or award as a group.
3. Review the badge resources and figure out together what your girl needs to do to earn the badge. If you're feeling stuck or have questions, just ask your girl's troop leader!
4. Once your girl completes an activity, note the date on the Activity Record, sign it, and let the troop leader know about your Girl Scout's awesome work! Hold onto the Activity Record; the troop leader may need to see it when the troop meets in person.
5. Ask the troop leader how your girl can share her accomplishment. Girls who have completed badge work on their own should be able to explain the badge, talk about the activities that were completed, and answer questions from the troop.

Keep in mind that:

- Independent badge and award work are optional; they're only one way that girls may want to participate in Girl Scouts. Keep things girl-led and let your girl decide!
- Don't pressure your girl to complete a badge or award if she isn't enjoying the activities. She might want to do one or two activities in a badge and then move on to another one. With everything happening in her world right now, she might not feel as focused as usual and that's OK! Follow her cues during this time.
- Badges are supposed to be fun, not work, and they aren't a measure of success in Girl Scouting. Let your girl know that having more badges than someone else doesn't mean that person had "done better in Girl Scouts" and that her pace is the right pace.
- Badges earned at home are done on the honor system—and if she's learned the Girl Scout Promise and Law, she knows that being honest and fair is what being a Girl Scout is all about! You can back up this important lesson at home by encouraging her to complete all the required activities before marking her badge or award complete.

BADGES AND AWARDS AT HOME

ACTIVITY RECORD

Girl Scout Name _____

Girl Scout Badge _____

PART 1: BADGE OR AWARD COMPLETION

- Girls complete one activity from each step of the badge or award and fill out the sections below.
- The number of steps needed in order to complete a badge or award may vary.

Step #1 _____ Parent/Caregiver's Initials: _____
Dates activity was begun and finished: _____ /_____
This is what I did:

Step #2 _____ Parent/Caregiver's Initials: _____
Dates activity was begun and finished: _____ /_____
This is what I did:

Step #3 _____ Parent/Caregiver's Initials: _____
Dates activity was begun and finished: _____ /_____
This is what I did:

Step #4 _____ Parent/Caregiver's Initials: _____
Dates activity was begun and finished: _____ /_____
This is what I did:

Step #5 _____ Parent/Caregiver's Initials: _____
Dates activity was begun and finished: _____ /_____
This is what I did:

BADGES AND AWARDS AT HOME
ACTIVITY RECORD

PART 2: REFLECTION

My favorite activity was, and why:

This badge/award taught me about:

The activities for this badge/award fit under these part(s) of the Girl Scout Law:

PART 3: ON YOUR HONOR

Girl Scout: I have finished the requirements for this badge.

Girl Scout Signature: _____ / Date: _____

Supervising Adult: Girl Scout has finished the requirements for this badge.

Supervising Adult Signature: _____ / Date: _____

Troop Leader: Girl Scout has finished the requirements for this badge.

Troop Leader Signature: _____ / Date: _____

Badge received by Girl Scout on this date: _____