



Volunteer's Guide to the Silver Torch Award*

A great way to practice leadership—plus, it opens the path to earn the Silver Award

Find tips and ideas to help guide Girl Scouts through this award program.

Facilitator Overview: This guide will help you support Cadette Girl Scouts in earning the Silver Torch award. You may be supporting just one Girl Scout, a few, or a larger group—adjust your delivery and language accordingly.

Much of the work of this award will take place outside of your direct supervision. You will:

- Help Girl Scouts identify and join a team (such as an advisory board, a student council, a sports team, or anything else that interests them), if they're not already on one. If they're already on a team, there's no need to join a new one.
- Help Girl Scouts define a timeframe (the "term") for their award work. Some teams may be together just a few weeks (for instance, a volunteer group organizing an event), while others may last longer (for instance, a sports team might last a season; a club might last a semester or year). ANY team, whether the duration is short or long, is valid for this award.

In the case of long-term teams, you'll help Girl Scouts set an award timeframe that seems appropriate. (It can be adjusted later to allow more time, if needed.)

- Help set up the award framework and make sure Girl Scouts have the information and tools they need. This may include:
 - Facilitating an initial review of each step alongside the **Silver Torch Plan** so Girl Scouts have an idea of what to expect; asking whether Girl Scouts have any questions or need clarification
 - Reminding Girl Scouts to go back and review the **Silver Torch Plan** for helpful guidance and prompts prior to each step, while emphasizing that you're always available for guidance.
 - Asking Girl Scouts to identify how they'll stretch (by trying new things? taking on a new role?) through this award. Where do they feel confident? Where do they feel uncomfortable? Are there any areas where they feel they need or would like help?

- Checking in according to an agreed-upon schedule to see how things are going and provide any needed support (develop this schedule in collaboration with Girl Scouts)
- Guiding Girl Scouts to reflect on their experience, their personal growth, and their thoughts on teamwork and leadership once all steps are complete

Prioritize making yourself available throughout the Silver Torch process to mentor and advise. Some Girl Scouts will be able to manage most of the award steps independently, but others may need more support. Meet Girl Scouts where they are and provide assistance as needed, but encourage them to take the lead whenever possible.

Note: To Do items in this award are required; **Activity Options** are suggestions. Girl Scouts may make substitutions for activity options, if desired.

Below, you'll find high-level summaries of each step's purpose, followed by ways for the facilitator to support each activity. (See the Girl Scout-facing award overview for activity details.) This guidance is not meant to be comprehensive—you may find that other help is needed—but it addresses some of the most common issues you may encounter. Use these suggestions as needed to help Girl Scouts understand and prepare for their role, every step of the way.

Step 1: Explore your strengths

Girl Scouts will reflect on how they'd like to grow in both their leadership and teamwork abilities, as well as set a personal goal to work on during their term. They should do this thought work before their term starts.

To Do (and how you might help):

1. **Reflect on what made you want to join this team.** Encourage participating Girl Scouts to discuss and compare notes if several are working on the award, or to talk to you one-on-one if not.

*Detailed choice activities, meeting tools, and additional resources and materials can be found within the Volunteer Toolkit on my.girlscouts.org.

2. **Set a personal goal.** Remind Girl Scouts that they'll be setting group goals later, but this moment is about their *personal goals*. As Girl Scouts complete this activity, remember that your role is to support them, not to evaluate them or provide feedback. Let them share authentically and vulnerably. **ALL goals are valid, no matter how big or small.** Keep it girl-led and applaud Girl Scouts' efforts without directing or judging their choices.

Step 2: Set a group goal

Girl Scouts will work with their group to set a goal and make a plan to bring the group's goal to life.

To Do (and how you might help):

1. **Get the scoop.** Help Girl Scouts brainstorm questions and figure out how to get the answers. Remind them that they may need buy-in from a group leader for this step, and advise them on how to make that happen.
2. **Understand your group's goals.** Go over the WOOP method in advance to give Girl Scouts the tools they need.
3. **Create your game plan.** Girl Scouts may vary in their planning experience and abilities. Help with practical aspects of the planning process as needed, but encourage Girl Scouts to take as much initiative as possible.

Step 3: Support your team

As Girl Scouts settle into their role, they'll practice different techniques for being a good teammate.

To Do (and how you might help):

1. **Create your teamwork toolbox.** Remind Girl Scouts to check their **Silver Torch Plan** in advance for prompts, and help them brainstorm further if needed.
2. **Prepare and participate.** You've set Girl Scouts up for success. Now it's their turn to fly!
3. **Reflect.** As Girl Scouts consider their experiences, encourage them to share successes and challenges with you or with a wider group, if they're comfortable doing so. That way they can get applause or support, whichever they need!

Step 4: Look ahead together

Midway through their term, Girl Scouts will check their progress toward their group goal. They'll also share their thoughts with their team.

Activity Options (and how leaders might help):

- **Visualize your progress.** Help Girl Scouts with any resources they need. Encourage them to share their work when complete, if desired.
- **Check in with a mentor or peer.** This check-in could be with you or another mentor/trusted peer in Girl Scouts' lives. If with you, focus on listening to the Girl Scout's perspective and asking questions rather than giving feedback or advice. This is their opportunity to process their experience in a safe space.

Step 5: Make your mark

At the end of their term, Girl Scouts will look back at their **Silver Torch Plan** to evaluate if/how they reached their goals. Then they'll make a plan for the future.

Activity Options (and how leaders might help):

- **Share what works.** Help Girl Scouts assemble any resources they need. When they're done, encourage them to share their work with you or the larger group, if they're comfortable doing so.
- **Plan your next move.** As in step 1, your role is to support Girl Scouts, not to evaluate. All plans and goals are valid. Applaud Girl Scouts' ideas without directing or judging their choices.

Award Overview: Reflect and grow

After all steps are complete, guide Girl Scouts to think about their Silver Torch experience as a whole and ask themselves how they've grown as a leader and teammate. Use the questions in the award guide to facilitate this conversation.

Girl Scouts receive the Silver Torch Award once the award overview process is complete.