



# Volunteer's Guide to the Cadette True North 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 to support Cadette Girl Scouts in earning the True North award. You may be supporting just one Girl Scout, a few, or a larger group—adjust your delivery and language accordingly.

Remind Girl Scouts that during each step, they should use the **Courage Plan** worksheet to capture their thoughts and reflect on their experience in any way they like.

Remember that your role in this award is to support Girl Scouts, not to evaluate them or to provide feedback. Your role is to create a space that allows girls to share authentically and vulnerably. **ALL meaningful values, courageous acts, and approaches are valid, no matter how big or small.** Keep it girl-led and applaud Girl Scouts' efforts without directing or judging their choices. DO, however, help (but only as needed) with specific items, such as building a plan or choosing first steps.

Before you begin, consider doing the thought work of steps 1 and 2 yourself. Doing so will give you insight into stumbling blocks your Girl Scouts may encounter and prepare you to address any issues that may arise.

## Step 1: Explore your values

### • 30–40 minutes

**Ask:** What values are most important to you, and how do your values shape your choices?

**Share:** Your character is based in large part on your values. Values are what *really* matter to you. They affect how you treat others—and yourself! Values guide you through friendship challenges, family situations, and tough choices at school.

**Guide:** Help Girl Scouts understand what values are and are not. Explain that values aren't just things you care about; they're personal qualities or beliefs that *support* the things you care about. For example:

- Being on a sports team isn't a value, but teamwork is.
- Having a best friend isn't a value, but loyalty is.

- Getting good grades isn't a value, but dedication is.
- Reducing pollution isn't a value, but respect for nature is.

Guide Girl Scouts to identify three to five things they care about most, then dig deeper to find the core values within those things. Help with vocabulary, if needed (pinning down ideas can be tough!). Consider sharing examples from your own life to provide a real-world framework.

**Sample activities (see award overview for details):**

- **Go on a values quest.** Prepare Girl Scouts by brainstorming examples of what values might look like (a jogger for determination, a striking piece of artwork for creativity, hugging a friend for empathy).
- **Express your values creatively.** Assist Girl Scouts in brainstorming ideas and methods, if needed, but refrain from discussing content—leave that up to them!

**PAUSE TO REFLECT:** Ensure Girl Scouts have filled out the **Courage Plan** worksheet before moving on to step 2.

## Step 2: Choose a goal that matters to you

### • 30–40 minutes

**Ask:** What does courage mean to you?

**Share:** Courage isn't just about big, dramatic moments—it shows up in our everyday actions, too. *Any* action that aligns with your values and pushes you out of your comfort zone is courageous. In this step, you'll choose an act of courage—big, small, or in between—that is meaningful to you.

**Guide:** Explain to Girl Scouts that the purpose of this step is NOT to think of the biggest, bravest thing they can do (unless that's what feels right to them, of course). It's to choose ANY goal that reflects their values and that feels a little scary. It could be something simple and quick, like making a tough phone call or answering questions in class. Or it could be something more involved and longer-term, like learning a new skill or getting involved with a cause

\*Detailed choice activities, meeting tools, and additional resources and materials can be found within the Volunteer Toolkit on [my.girlscouts.org](https://my.girlscouts.org).

they care about.

Emphasize that Girl Scouts are in a safe space where they're 100% free to follow their hearts. Tell them that your role (and that of any other Girl Scouts who may be participating) is to support and applaud, not critique or judge.

Girl Scouts should let their values guide their path and find the courageous act that feels most meaningful to them. Remind them that being true to themselves when sharing their ideas is a courageous act in itself!

**Sample activities (see award overview for details):**

- **Speak up for yourself.** Help Girl Scouts, if needed, to brainstorm areas that feel important to them, such as creative pursuits, academics, relationships, or community engagement.
- **Team up to act with courage.** Help as needed to facilitate the group discussion, but take a back seat if the conversation seems to be going well without you.

**PAUSE TO REFLECT:** Ensure Girl Scouts have filled out the **Courage Plan** worksheet before moving on to step 3.

### Step 3: Make a plan

- **30–40 minutes**

**Ask:** How will you build the confidence to put your courageous plan into action?

**Share:** A solid plan gives you the confidence to pursue your goals. When you lay the groundwork by preparing, connecting with others, and taking care of yourself, you transform your nerves into energy for action.

**Guide:** Girl Scouts may vary in their planning experience and abilities. Help with practical aspects of the following activities as needed, but continue to refrain from judging the content. If a Girl Scout specifically asks you for content-related feedback, gently redirect by asking questions such as, “Does this feel important to you?” “Are you happy with this plan?” “Will doing this thing require courage?” “How will you feel when this is done?” Help them see that they can trust and depend on their own thoughts and feelings.

**Required activities (see award overview for details):**

- **Break it down.** As Girl Scouts make their plans, help as needed. Remind them that plans don't always work out perfectly—in fact, they usually don't! Have them think about various scenarios and consider what they'll do if things don't go exactly as envisioned.
- **Find support.** This step asks Girl Scouts to form a support system. If Girl Scouts don't feel comfortable sharing their goals, they may skip that part of the step. But it's important for them to do the mental work of thinking about who they could talk to, if needed.

- **Take care of YOU!** Support Girl Scouts in developing strategies to look after their well-being throughout the planning process.

**PAUSE TO REFLECT:** Ensure Girl Scouts have filled out the **Courage Plan** worksheet before moving on to step 4.

### Step 4: Act with courage, confidence, and character

- **time varies**

**Ask:** Are you ready to act?

**Share:** This is your moment! It's time to put your plan into action. You might feel excited and nervous at the same time, and that's okay. What matters is that you're trying something meaningful and important—and through that process, you'll grow. It takes many steps to build a future that reflects your values—and today, you're setting your foot on the path.

**Guide:** Remind Girl Scouts that making their move is courageous, regardless of the outcome, and applaud the work they've done to get to this point. Explain to them that they'll earn their True North award after they complete the first step in their plan, but that they'll get the most personal value if they see their plan through to completion. Tell them that you'll be there to support them and cheer them on until the end. Consider setting a check-in schedule—it could be every troop meeting, once a month, or even quarterly, depending on the activity.

**Required activity:**

- **Act with courage.** Have Girl Scouts perform their acts of courage, confidence, and character.

**PAUSE TO REFLECT:** Ensure Girl Scouts have filled out the **Courage Plan** worksheet before moving on to the award overview process.

### Award Overview: Reflect and grow

- **20–30 minutes**

After all steps are complete, guide Girl Scouts to think about their True North award experience as a whole and ask themselves how they've grown as a leader. Questions could include:

- **What worked:** What are you most proud of?
- **What challenged you:** How did you respond and grow past any obstacles?
- **What's different:** How have these experiences changed your understanding of leadership?
- **What's next:** How and when will you use your strengthened courage, confidence, and character in your day-to-day life?

TM ® & © 2025 Girl Scouts of the United States of America. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical methods, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, now known or hereinafter invented, without the prior written permission of Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA), except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permissions requests, write to GSUSA at the address below or visit the [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org) website to access permission request forms.

First published in 2025 by Girl Scouts of the United States of America, 420 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018-2798, [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org)