



# Stepping Out Manual

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## Why take Stepping Out Training?

Stepping Out of the regular meeting place is a vital part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and is how many of the program goals we have here at Girl Scouts are met. Your job as a Stepping Out trained adult is to keep the girls and adults safe while helping to create meaningful experiences.

Stepping Out is designed to prepare adult volunteers with the necessary skills to safely and effectively lead girls to step out into the world through field trips and travel. This course is also a steppingstone between a regular troop meeting and wider outdoor experiences.

*Certification is valid for three years and will be granted after passing the test at the end of this document. Stepping Out Training is a prerequisite for Outdoor Training.*

At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the purpose of stepping out of the regular meeting location
2. Identify the possibilities and limits in travel, cooking, and overnight programs
3. Assess and choose appropriate activities in the progression of outdoor activities
4. Find and use these resources when planning activities: Safety Activity Checkpoints and Volunteer Essentials
5. Utilize the appropriate additional permission forms for activities outside of troop meetings.
6. Coordinate with other troop/group leaders to ensure adequate and sufficiently trained adult supervision
7. Take the next step to Outdoor Training

*\*This training does not cover outdoor overnight camping or outdoor cooking.*

Additional materials that will be used are:

[Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)

[Volunteer Essentials](#)

[Forms](#)

The above resources can be found on the Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast website at [www.girlscoutscoc.org](http://www.girlscoutscoc.org).

## Key Ingredients for Successful Adventures

The Key Ingredients for Successful Adventures are important to remember whenever you are planning a trip. Keep in mind that girls will all be at different levels of comfort when traveling so make sure you consider each girl when planning field trips. Below are the Key Ingredients and a basic description but will be covered further in the next sections of this manual.

**Progression:** Girls must first acquire the basics to progress to more difficult skills. When looking at outdoor progression, girls should learn about the outdoors before exploring the outdoors.

**Readiness:** A girl's readiness for an activity is not about her age but is dependent on her physical and emotional maturity.

**Girl-Led Planning:** This is inherent to the Girl Scout program. This gives girls the chance to mold their own Girl Scout experience and make their own decisions while benefiting from adult assistance and guidance. When girls help with the planning, they become more invested in it which furthers their interest in learning and growth.

**Safety and Standards:** Girls learn about the environment every day, and every day, Girl Scouts ask how they can take action to respect and protect the planet we all call home.

**Environmental Protection:** Learning about the environment can help girls learn to protect and care for it. This should be considered when going on field trips as this will impact the girls' futures.

**Skill Development:** Girl Scouts has a strong focus on skill development. Girls should be developing life skills, discovering their interests, and sharing their talents.

**Fun:** Outdoor activities should be experiential and hands-on, providing opportunities for positive interaction and a sense of accomplishment or adventure. Your attitude will shape the girl's perceptions, so be prepared for exploration, and always bring a sense of humor!

## Progression

The Girl Scout program is built on the foundation of progression. Girls must acquire the basic skills needed to progress to more difficult or highly skilled activities. Progression underlies all avenues of Girl Scouting, from troop meetings to field trips, preparing a snack to making a meal, troop sleepovers to an overnight in a museum.

As girls explore, discover, and learn, they build confidence through a variety of age-level-specific travel and outdoor activities. Their progressive experience can reach new levels, each one supported by a solid foundation and knowledge gained through previous experiences. It all begins with **STEPPING OUT** the door.

Your role as the Stepping Out Trained adult is to guide girls through the outdoor progression on the next page starting with “Look Out” through “Explore Out.” With this training, you can also assist with limited “Cook Out” and “Sleep Out” experiences including cooking on indoor appliances or indoor overnights but remember, Outdoor Training is required for outdoor overnights – including tent camping – and outdoor cooking. You should also make sure that progression is appropriately followed to the age, experience, and maturity of the girls. Too much too soon may create a bad or unsafe experience, while too little too late may cause girls to become uninterested. In each aspect of travel and outdoor activities, begin where the girls (and you) feel comfortable. Girls new to the group will catch on quickly if the more experienced ones share their skills and knowledge, and girls who teach other girls will feel empowered when their knowledge and expertise are recognized. Girl-led teaching is an especially rewarding method for both new and experienced troop/group members.

Travel Progression involves increasing the time and distance of trips as girls age and gain experience visiting new places away from their families. Begin with a brief local trip away from the meeting place for the youngest girls, followed by a day-long outing, then an indoor overnight, then a weekend trip to a nearby city or destination, an extended trip several days long or farther away, a trip out of state, and finally an international trip.

Troops interested in sleeping outdoors, camp outs, and adventure outs require an adult to be Outdoor Trained.



girl scouts

## Outdoor Progression

Progression allows girls to learn the skills they need to become competent in the outdoors, including how to plan and organize outdoor activities. Acknowledge a girl's mastery of an outdoor skill and invite her to challenge herself further by taking that next step up and out! Outdoor fun can be endless when girls lead.

**Look Out**  
Share past experiences in the outdoors.  
Talk about favorite outdoor places and why they're special.  
Wonder what else can be seen in the outdoors.

**Meet Out**  
Step outside to look, listen, feel, and smell.  
Share what was observed.  
Learn more about what was discovered.

**Move Out**  
Plan and take a short walk outside.  
Discuss being prepared for the weather.  
Do activities to explore nature.  
Plan and carry out an indoor sleepover.

**Explore Out**  
Plan and take a short and easy hike.  
Discuss what to take in a day pack.  
Dress for the weather.  
Plan a healthy snack or lunch.  
Learn how to stay safe in the outdoors.

**Cook Out**  
Plan and cook a simple meal outdoors.  
Make a list of gear and food supplies needed.  
Learn and practice skills needed to cook a meal.  
Review outdoor cooking safety.  
Practice hand and dish sanitation.  
Create a Kaper Chart for the cookout.

**Sleep Out**  
Plan and carry out an overnight in a cabin/backyard.  
Discuss what to pack for the sleep out.  
Learn to use and care for camping gear.  
Learn and practice new outdoor skills.  
Plan a menu with a new cooking skill.  
Discuss campsite organization.  
Plan time for fun activities.

**Camp Out**  
Plan and take a 1- to 2-night camping trip.  
Take more responsibility for planning.  
Learn and practice a new outdoor skill.  
Learn a new outdoor cooking skill.  
Plan a food budget, then buy and pack food.  
Practice campsite set up.  
Plan an agenda that includes fun activities.  
Explore/protect the surrounding environment.

**Adventure Out**  
Plan and take an outdoor trip for several days.  
Learn and practice a new outdoor skill.  
Learn a new outdoor cooking skill.  
Develop first-aid skills and use safety check points.  
Budget, schedule, and make arrangements.  
Participate in an environmental service project.  
Teach and inspire others about the outdoors.  
Imagine new experiences to be had outdoors.  
Practice all Leave No Trace principles.

**LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES:**  
Plan Ahead & Prepare  
Leave What You Find  
Respect Wildlife  
Minimize Campfire Impacts  
Dispose of Waste Properly  
Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces  
Be Considerate of Other Visitors

## Girl Scout Travel Progression

Progression allows girls to learn the skills they need to become competent travelers, including how to plan and organize trips. Because when girls take the lead, the possibilities are endless.

**LOCAL FIELD TRIPS**  
Get your travel feet wet! Walk to a nearby garden, or take a short ride to a firehouse or other local spot.  
Keep it girl-led: girls choose the location.

**DAY TRIPS**  
Take an all-day trip!  
Keep it girl-led: girls choose the location and activity (perhaps working toward a badge) and make plans for lunch.

**OVERNIGHTS**  
Start with one night, maybe at a camp or museum. Progress to a weekend trip in a nearby city or state park.  
Keep it girl-led: girls plan the activity and meals, create travel games, and pack their own overnight bags.

**REGIONAL TRIPS**  
Spend three to four nights away somewhere a few hours from home.  
Keep it girl-led: girls plan key details of the trip, such as the activities, the budget, the route, and lodging.  
(Extended trip insurance required.)

**NATIONAL TRIPS**  
Travel the country! Trips often last a week or more. Girls should think beyond a typical vacation location and consider historical sites, museums, or national parks!  
Keep it girl-led: girls lead the entire planning process and might add a community service or Take Action project.  
(Extended trip insurance required.)

**INTERNATIONAL TRIPS**  
Travel the world! These life-changing trips usually take one to three years to prepare. Consider visiting a WAGGGS World Centre!  
Keep it girl-led: girls download the Global Travel Toolkit and plan their entire trip (including learning about the language, culture, passports and visas, exchange rates, etc.).  
(Extended trip insurance required.)

**INDEPENDENT TRAVEL**  
Older girls with national or international travel experience can travel nationally or internationally independently through council-offered travel opportunities or GSUSA's Destinations program. Check with your council, or visit the Girl Scout Destinations website!

Check with your council about age requirements. Girls should have experience at every level of the progression before moving on to the next level. For regional travel, girls must be Juniors or older. For national and international trips, girls must be Cadettes or older.

When moving up to each level of the progression, consider girls' independence, flexibility, decision-making skills, group skills, and cross-cultural skills.

# Readiness

When planning trips, you need to gauge the group's readiness. This can vary from girl to girl, so make sure you gauge each girl individually. You should always use progression to build up readiness and work towards bigger trips. Make sure you discuss expectations, particularly regarding safety and courtesy, prior to the trip.

Keeping the girls involved in the planning process will give you the chance to observe the girls and allows them to voice any concerns they have. Use the list below to gauge readiness.

## Readiness Characteristics:

### Emotional Maturity

- Wants to go
- Is not afraid to be away from home or caregivers
- Can cope with unknowns
- Can deal with strange places – including bathrooms
- Is not afraid of night noises or darkness
- Can work together with others

### Skills and Knowledge

- Knows her caregiver's phone number and can ask for help
- Able to care for herself – including brushing her teeth, combing her hair, etc.
- Can keep personal belongings organized
- Able to perform tasks on a Kaper Chart\*

### Experience

- Follows directions well
- Has spent time away from home
- Able to participate with the group

*\*Kaper Chart: a chart listing different tasks that need to be completed by the girls such as washing dishes, setting up for a craft, etc. Tasks can vary from group to group and depends on the trip/activities.*

Before taking trips away from your meeting place, do a self-check. The girls may be ready but you and the other adults in your group need to ready as well. Make sure you don't get in over your head. Progress slowly, if needed, and stay within your comfort level. Your attitude affects the girls; if you aren't ready, they won't be either.

The Safety Activity Checkpoints have additional information on assessing the readiness for the group. Read the section titled "Adult Supervision" for information on the required adult supervision based on the number of girls and their age level. Make sure you review the chart on adult to girl ratios for each trip you take.

## Girl-Led Planning

One of the main aspects of the Girl Scouts Leadership Experience is that Girl Scout activities are girl-led. Including girls in the planning and preparation of a trip helps boost girls' confidence and leadership abilities.

Your job as the Stepping Out trained adult is to facilitate activities and guide decision-making as girls create their own experiences. Girls are usually more capable than we think and often only require some guidance and suggestions. Assess the girls' abilities and give them as much responsibility as you think they are capable of handling. Effective guidance includes making sure girls have respectful discussions, are listening to each other, and are including everyone. You also need to double check that their choices are reasonable and age/ability appropriate.

Younger girls will need more guidance from adults but as they get older, they can take on more responsibilities. For Daisies and Brownies, you may hear their ideas and give a couple options for the girls to vote on. As girls grow older and gain more experience, they can start to take on more decision-making responsibilities and can research choices and make informed budgetary and itinerary choices on their own. Encourage your girls to look at the Safety Activity Checkpoints before planning activities to make sure they are doable.



# Safety and Standards

## Guidelines

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Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of the girls. Your role is to work with other group chaperones and leaders to ensure that the guidelines listed in this manual are communicated to girls, their caregivers, and any other participants in an activity as well as making sure the guidelines are being met.

## Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC)

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Health and safety must be a priority in every Girl Scout activity. Safety should be planned, respected, and practiced by all, but this does not necessarily imply burdens or cumbersome restrictions. When a troop learns about safety, more activities are at its command, and participants can feel relaxed and confident.

The Safety Activity Checkpoints are created by GSUSA and are for leaders who work with girls. It serves as a resource for those adults who provide direct assistance or supporting service to leaders and councils. When planning an outing or trip, begin by reviewing Adult Supervision and First Aid requirements. Then, review the activity for further guidance.

### High-Risk Activities

High-Risk permission is needed for any activity involving height, speed, helmets, or water. All high-risk activities require troops to complete a Troop Travel Application Form and a High-Risk Parent Permission Form. Review the SACs to see which activities are considered high risk, the age limits for various activities, and activities that are not permitted by GSUSA.

Working with outside vendors: When planning an outing with a vendor, it is recommended to send the vendor the Safety Activity Checkpoints before you book with them, requesting confirmation that the vendor can abide by the guidelines.

## Adult to Girl Ratios

Girl Scout groups should be large enough to provide cooperative learning but small enough to allow the development of individual girls. Even with small groups, you still need to have proper supervision. The chart on the next page shows the minimum number of adults you need to supervise specific numbers of girls. These ratios are meant to ensure the safety and health of the girls. It is your job to work with the leaders in your troop to ensure that these ratios are met at all Girl Scout activities.

Adult volunteers must be 18 years of age or older and need to be registered and background checked through council. Mandated reporter training may also be required. Check the [AB-506 section](#) of the Volunteer page on the council website to determine which volunteers are required to get it. Note that ratios for outings will be different than the ratios for troop meetings

	Troop Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	<b>Two</b> unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for every:	<b>One</b> additional volunteer to each additional:	<b>Two</b> unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	<b>One</b> additional volunteer to each additional:
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8
Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6-8)	25	1-12	20	1-10
Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9-10)	30	1-15	24	1-12
Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11-12)	30	1-15	24	1-12

*For adult to girl ratios for swimming activities, look at the swimming section of the Safety Activity Checkpoints.*

### Adult Chaperones

Once you know how many adults you need, make sure the adults you have chaperoning are committed to:

- Being a positive role model
- Respecting all girls and adults equally
- Creating a safe space

- Prioritizing the safety of everyone
- Supporting and reinforcing the group agreement
- Handling pressure and stress by modeling flexibility and a positive attitude
- Creating an experience for and with the girls
- Preparing appropriately for the planned trip
- Modeling Girl Scout behavior (including language and beverage choices) **at all times** – even after girls have gone to sleep

Remember that the adult to girl ratio is the minimum number required. Assess the needs of the trip to determine if additional adults are required. More adults may hinder girls' interactions and group cohesion or could allow the flexibility to break into smaller groups. Consider the wealth of experience in the adult volunteers available to your group, who may enjoy lending their expertise.

# Insurance

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Your GSUSA membership provides basic secondary insurance – Plan 1. Some activities may require you to purchase additional insurance. It is your job to work with your troop leaders to determine if additional insurance is necessary and purchase it through council when needed. You also need to ensure that the proper insurance forms are submitted at least three weeks prior to an event. If some sort of emergency occurs, you will need to inform caregivers about the Girl Scout insurance coverage and assist in reaching out to council for more information.

Additional insurance plans include:

**Plan 2** is necessary whenever non-Girl Scouts attend Girl Scout events or for Girl Scout trips lasting longer than two nights and three days. Some trips that need Plan 2 insurance include field trips that include siblings, parents, or friends or hotel trips with just your troop that exceed the listed number of nights/days.

**Plan 3 (Excess)** covers members and non-members as participants, same as Plan 2 with the addition of sickness benefits when illness/symptoms occur while coverage is in place. Must be purchased for all participants.

**Plan 3 (Primary)** provides sickness coverage. It is identical to Plan 3 Excess, but the non-duplication provision does not apply. Must be purchased for all participants.

**Plan 3PI** is required for international travel. Must be purchased for all participants and covers accidents and medical costs.

See the Enrollment Form for price information. Note that there is a minimum cost of \$5 for each enrollment form submitted – not each event listed. Multiple events may be included in one form.

# Overnights

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Girls will be ready for overnights at different times. It is important to keep the girls involved in the planning of overnights and age-appropriate activities so you can gauge their readiness. Their first overnight should be in a home-like setting. Make sure you discuss the expectations – especially when it comes to safety – as well as review what they should bring, length of the outing, and buddy system rules. Make sure your group has a planned system of keeping track of all participants. This could be a sound off system, buddy system, or anything else that works for your group. Just make sure you discuss and practice with the girls before the outing.

## Family Camping

When family camping, each family is responsible for their own cooking and sleeping arrangements. Girl Scout volunteers may provide activities such as bug observation or stargazing. The Girl Scout volunteer cannot instruct girls on outdoor cooking, sleeping in soft-sided structures, fire building, pocketknife handling, or any other camping skills unless the volunteer is Outdoor Trained. Without an Outdoor Trained adult, family camping is the only option for outdoor overnights. Groups with Stepping Out trained adults can participate in indoor overnights.

Younger girls will likely feel most comfortable with family camping, especially if this is their first experience camping. Family camping will likely include non-Girl Scout members so make sure to purchase supplemental insurance for non-members prior to the event.

## Indoor Overnights

Overnight experiences and travel may involve staying in private homes, museums, hotels, or organized lock-in events. These activities vary in risk and require different strategies when planning depending on the accommodations chosen. At least one **Stepping Out trained adult** per troop must be present in the facility for all indoor overnights.

Your job as the Stepping Out trained adult is to ensure that the following guidelines for safe sleeping arrangements, overall safety, courtesy, and emergency preparedness are followed for any overnight trips:

### Sleeping Arrangements

Each participant should have her own bed. Individual side-by-side sleeping bags are considered separate beds. Caregivers must be notified if girls are to share a bed.

Girls need to know where chaperones will be sleeping in case help is needed during the night. It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the same sleeping area (cabin, motel room, designated room in a museum, etc.) with the girls. If an adult female will use the same sleeping area as the girls, there should always be a minimum of two unrelated adult females present. Two adults should be accessible to girls during the night.

Males may participate in overnights if they sleep in the same space as their family or in separate sleeping quarters. Separate bathrooms must be available for their use. Males may not sleep in the same space as girls and women they are not directly related to. In some circumstances, such as a museum or mall overnight with hundreds of girls, this accommodation may not be possible. If this is the case, males must either sleep in a separate area, or arrangements for female supervision must be made. Girls should not enter a male sleeping area during sleep time, so ensure that a female chaperone is accessible during the night. Male sleeping areas may not be in the path between girls' sleeping areas and the restrooms.

During family or caregiver-daughter overnights, one family unit (including males) may sleep in the same quarters where areas are designated to accommodate a family arrangement.

### Overall safety

Know your girls. Have they been prepared for the situations they might encounter?

Is the location safe? Utilize travel reviews and Google Street view.

Hotels and motels with interior hallways and keyed building access are preferred over ones with open exterior doors.

Suites for multiple occupants (i.e., an adult plus several girls) are preferred. Connected rooms are recommended.

### Courtesy

Respect each person's modesty. Plan for private changing spaces on overnights or any events where changing of clothes may be needed (such as a trip to the beach).

No running or inappropriate behavior that would reflect poorly on Girl Scouts.

No inappropriate words, voices, or noises in the rooms, hallways, or public areas.

Respect quiet time and facility usage hours (pools, workout room).

Know reservation details about check-in/out times, persons per room. Carry a copy.

### Emergency Preparedness

Designate a safe place outside the building in case of an emergency evacuation. Consider practicing the route if destinations aren't obvious.

Make an "If we get separated" plan and communicate it to all participants. Practice the buddy system and head counting sound off.

Share itinerary with all participants and their parents/guardians.

No swimming unless there is a lifeguard and watchers per the Swimming Safety Activity Checkpoint.

Consider whether meals, especially hotel provided continental breakfasts, are appropriate for all participants, or will you need to supplement due to health/allergy issues?

### Overnight challenges and suggestions

Typical challenges and solutions:

- Emotional/physical complaints (feeling excluded, bored, or ill)
  - Mix up the girls and assign partners
  - Assign tasks (Kaper charts)
  - Sing songs/play active games
  - Listen and address girl's concerns
  - Call guardian(s) in the event of illness
- Homesickness
  - Encourage girls to bring picture of caregiver(s)
  - Make sure there is not an additional issue (e.g., had an accident)
  - Distract with fun games
  - Allow girls to call home
  - Ask the girl about her family, pets, things she likes to do at home
  - When private conversations are needed, stay in view of the rest of the group to maintain safety
- Night sounds/shadows
  - Show girls what is making the sound or shadow
  - Use flashlights to show what might make a scary shape or sound before lights out
  - Consider bringing nightlights, glow sticks, and/or extra flashlights
- Bet-wetting (even with slightly older girls)
  - Focus on clean-up
  - Help her wash up and change clothes
  - Consider bringing extra Ziploc or grocery bags for soiled clothes
  - If possible, bring an extra sleeping bag/blankets
  - Wash and air-dry clothes and/or sleeping bag if time permits
  - Ask caregiver to bring a clean sleeping bag
- Behavior
  - Set expectations and discuss them ahead of time
  - Try new activities/partners/groups
  - Recognize and model good behavior
  - Ask the girl to help others, lead a song/game, or give her a specific task
  - Offer a snack or break
  - If the girl becomes physical or you feel unsafe handling the situation, call the caregiver(s) to take her home

# Transportation

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When planning activities with your troop, you need to consider how everyone will get to and from the location. This could mean each individual caregiver will secure their own transportation or your group may travel together. When traveling as a group, your job is to check that travel plans adhere to the below guidelines for either public or private transportation. In addition, you should also review the “Plan Transportation in Advance” section of the Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Public transportation – Whenever possible, choose public transportation as they have set safety standards for equipment, personnel, and insurance.

- Discuss behavior expectations with girls: both personal safety and respect for other passengers.
- Have an emergency action plan.
- Confirm tickets/reservations for each rider.
- Follow all rules required by the carrier.
- Stow belongings properly: Ensure items will not fall on passengers, keep aisles clear, and do not take up extra seats.
- Be prepared: Know the route, fares, wait times, transfers, gate numbers, walking distance, etc.

Private Transportation – If public transportation is not possible, private vehicles may be use only if the following guidelines are met.

- Drivers are approved volunteers at least 21 years old and have a good driving record, valid license, and registered/insured vehicle.
- Each passenger is in a legal seat, wearing a seatbelt at all times (Camper/RV passengers must wear seatbelts and must sit in seats designed by the manufacturer for that purpose).
- Drivers adhere to all state laws, including those regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.
- The following are NEVER suitable for transporting girls: Flatbed or panel truck, the bed of a pickup, fifth-wheel camper trailer, campers that fit onto pickup flatbeds, or the body of any other trailer.
- The rental of 15-passenger vans is not recommended, and a commercial license is required to carry 12 or more passengers.
- In the event of an accident, the vehicle owner’s insurance is the primary applicable insurance.
- Rideshares such as Uber or Lyft are not recommended

Drivers carrying Girl Scouts must carry the following (if multiple cars will be used, each vehicle must have the following):

- First Aid Kit
- Paperwork
  - First Aid Log
  - Council Emergency Procedures
  - Incident/Injury Report Form



- Troop Roster (recommended)
- Annual Permission and Parent Permission – Specific Trip Forms for each girl (if applicable)
- Health History for each girl
- Medication Permission for each girl
- Permission to release to other than parent or guardian for each girl

### Accident and Emergency Preparation

Accidents can happen at any time. You need to be prepared for any and all emergencies that could happen.

**In the event of an incident requiring medical attention, you must notify council within 5 days of the incident by following the Council Emergency Procedures and filing an Incident/Injury Report.**

You should also help Girl Scouts “Be Prepared” to avoid accidents and injuries in the first place. This includes anticipating and preparing to handle adverse conditions such as animal or poisonous plant encounters, a lost Girl Scout, dressing for the weather, and taking safety precautions in the kitchen.

# First Aid

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A first aid kit is required for all Girl Scout activities. See the First Aid section of the Safety Activity Checkpoints for suggestions. All participants should know where the first aid kit is at all times in case of an emergency. You must include a First Aid Log, Council Emergency Procedures, and an Incident/Injury Report form in each first aid kit. A troop roster is also recommended.

A First-Aider is someone who has current certifications in First Aid and CPR for adults and children. Your job is to know who your first-aider is in your troop and when they are required. You will also need to make sure they attend any required activities and assist them if needed in the event of an emergency. Review the chart in the Forms and Training section of this manual to determine when a first aider is required.

The first aider is responsible for treating any illness or injuries. You are responsible for handling any medications according to the guidelines below.

## Medication guidelines

1. Girls will not be given any prescribed or over-the-counter medication without prior expressed written approval and specific instructions from the custodial parent/guardian. This is done through the Medication Permission Form which must be completed annually and updated throughout the year as needed.
2. Medication will not be administered unless it is in the original container. All over-the-counter medication that a girl brings **MUST** be marked with the girl's name on the label and all prescriptions **MUST** have the girl participant's name clearly printed on the label, as prescribed by a medical doctor.
3. All medications must be placed in a sealed plastic bag and will be taken from the girl's possession at the beginning of the activity, remaining with the adult in charge. Medications will be returned to the girl at the end of the activity. Girls with written permission from their parent/guardian may carry physician-identified emergency medications such as a bronchial inhaler or epi-pen. If such emergency medicine is in a bag or backpack, whether by a girl or an adult, the pocket should be clearly labeled with brightly colored tape or a lanyard for quick retrieval.
4. Participants may keep over-the-counter insect repellent (non-aerosol), sunscreen, and anti-itch lotion/ointment that they bring in their possession, but caregivers must provide written approval for use.

## Poison oak – “LEAVES OF THREE, LET THEM BE”

Its leaflets are shiny, in groups of three, and are oak-leaf shaped. It usually grows as a low shrub with many white to red berries. It can cause a painful rash when the leaves or stems are rubbed against, even when the plant has no leaves at all.

To treat: Wearing gloves, pull back clothing upon itself, and then wash contact area with soap and cold water.

Anti-itch lotion/ointment may be applied if brought by the child and itemized on the Medication Permission form.

## Wild Animal safety

When Stepping Out with Girl Scouts, it is common to encounter wildlife. As Girl Scouts, we respect all living things and do not harass or harm them in any way. Most often, you will encounter small animals, birds, reptiles, and insects that are no threat to people. Teach girls to avoid wildlife and to respect the animal's space within their natural environments.

Occasionally, Girl Scouts will encounter dangerous animals such as the venomous Pacific Rattle Snake. If you encounter a Pacific Rattle Snake, back away slowly, and when safe to do so, turn and walk in the opposite direction. Never harass or harm any snakes.

Very rarely will Girl Scouts encounter large dangerous mammals such as mountain lions and black bears. These large animals do not frequent heavily populated areas. There is, however, a chance you may encounter one on a hike. If Girl Scouts encounter a large, dangerous mammal, make as much noise as possible and do not run! Mountain lions will eventually move away on their own. If you encounter a black bear, back away slowly and at an angle to appear non-threatening and it will likely lose interest and move away from your group.

If you encounter a large, dangerous mammal near heavily populated areas, contact 911 once it is safe to do so.

## Animal Bites or Scratches

Girl Scouts should never feed or handle wildlife due to the possibility of bites or scratches. Feeding wild animals is dangerous for girls and bad for wildlife that may become sick or lose their foraging instincts from consuming human food. Wild animals willing to be handled by a human may be sick or injured. Call animal control if you see this.

Even family pets can bite or scratch. Girl Scouts should not handle pets without the permission of their owners. *Any animal bite or scratch that breaks the skin must receive a medical examination right away.*

# Dressing for the weather

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When going on trips with your troop, you can encounter a wide variety of weather conditions. Make sure you and your troop check the weather forecast prior to the trip and plan to wear or bring weather appropriate clothes. Be prepared for sudden changes in weather and make sure your girls can select, put on, and care for their outdoor clothing.

Below are the Girl Scout standards for dressing safely. The Safety Activity Checkpoints also give specific suggestions based on the activity your troop is doing.

- Closed toed, closed heel shoes will protect from terrain and wildlife. They should be comfortable, broken in, and provide good support.
- Socks help prevent blisters and tall socks can reduce scratches and bug bites.
- Long pants offer better protection from sun, plant scratches, and wind than shorts.
- Shirts should cover the shoulders to protect against the sun.
- Hats with a brim can reduce sunburns, heatstroke, and eyestrain on hot, bright days. Headwear in cold weather conserves body heat.
- Additional clothing/accessories may be needed based on the weather such as sunglasses for sun protection, raincoats for downpours, or windbreakers for sudden gusts of wind.
  - Bandanas are recommended as they can be used for sun protection, to tie back hair, as a mask around fires, as a bandage, sling, or tourniquet, or to wet and apply to the neck when hot.
- A whistle on a lanyard should be kept with you at all times in the event of an emergency and should be easily accessible.

Layering is helpful to provide warmth, sun protection, and flexibility in case of sudden changes in weather. Layers should be loose fitting and light, so they don't hinder mobility or add too much weight. It is important to consider the type of material and even the color to prevent hypothermia (lowered body temperature) or hyperthermia (elevated body temperature). Knowing the properties of different fabrics can be helpful in planning and will help girls choose which clothes to wear/bring.

- Cotton – allows for air flow to stay cool. It does, however, soak up and retain water. This can make the garment significantly heavier and take a while to dry.
- Fleece or pile – Sheds water, insulates well, and is generally lightweight. When wet, pile gains only about 2% in weight verses wool which can gain about 40%.
- Lycra-Spandex – Stretches and has options to retain heat or keep you cool. Most resist water, dry quickly, and wick moisture from the skin.
- Nylon – Varies in durability and strength, as well as wind and water resistance. These are usually quick drying, resist abrasions, and are inexpensive.
- Wool – Helps retain body heat even when wet. Dries quickly and sheds water. Wool can be heavy, however, and cleaning it can be difficult. Wool blends are usually lighter, machine washable, and are great for socks.
- Light colors – best in heat as they reflect the sun's rays.
- Dark colors – best in cold and they absorb the sun's rays.

# Preventing Lost Girl Scouts

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Use the buddy system and count heads often. Make it a practice to designate a meeting place in case any buddy grouping becomes separated from the main group. Lanyards with names and emergency contact information can also be helpful. Girls should know or have their leaders' and caregiver's numbers. When hiking, each person should carry a whistle – 3 blasts is the customary distress signal.

## Streetwise safety

- Have an adult at the front and the end of the group
- On sidewalks, break up into twos and threes, but don't spread out and block the way
- At crosswalks, wait together for a light and cross together without straggling
- Along a roadway, walk on the left side facing traffic, forming a single line if narrow
- Wear something white or fluorescent at night and carry a flashlight
- Keep together on buses and trains and be considerate of others
- Follow the safety activity checkpoint when applicable

# Kitchen safety

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**Outdoor Training** is required if your troop is planning to cook on a campfire, barbeque, camp stove, solar heat, or any other outdoor heat source. **Stepping Out Training** is required for using conventional indoor appliances that use heat. Make sure you have an appropriate fire extinguisher and know how to use it. A **first-aider** is required if the girls will be using heat or sharp tools.

With just a first aider, girls can make smoothies, cold sandwiches, salads, cut fruit and veggies, fresh juice, and more. With the addition of a Stepping Out trained adult, girls can make soups, cookies, pizza, and much more. Encourage the girls to get creative! Your job is to keep them safe during the learning process. It is important to learn the skills of safety, care, and cleanup of their tools as they learn to cook.

## Around a heat source

- Pull back loose hair
- Remove dangling jewelry
- Roll up long sleeves
- Do not wear plastic garments that may burn
- Wear closed toed shoes

## Food handling

- Wash hands
- Keep raw foods separate from cooked foods
- Don't taste uncooked food
- Clean up spills right away to prevent injury

## When using knives

- Learn knife skills with progression – paper or plastic knives before using sharp knives
- Pass knives to others by offering the handle
- Sharp knives are safer than dull ones
- Knives dropped into a tub of dish water can be hard to see and may cut someone

## Around a stove or oven

- Use a fire extinguisher or smother a fire with baking soda or a pot lid. Do not use water to put out a cooking fire as it could make the fire spread.
- Turn pot handles away from edges
- Keep potholders and towels away from burners
- Confirm appliances are off when finished

## First Aid Badges and Safety Awards

Each level has a first aid badge and safety awards. This allows girls to learn about safety and first aid progressively. Daisies can learn the basics like “stop, drop, and roll” before stepping into the kitchen to learn to cook. Your role is to consider the age, experience, and skill level of each girl to determine her readiness for a specific activity. You can increase her readiness using progression from the basics to the planned activity. Also keep in mind any food allergies or dietary restrictions to make sure everyone is included.

# Environmental Protection

Girl Scouts learn to leave a place better than they found it. Your role as the Stepping Out Trained adult is to help girls appreciate nature and their surroundings without harming it. Practicing the principles of Leave No Trace with your troop will help them do this. The goal is to practice exploring nature without leaving any trace they were there. Pick up any trash you see, don't take items from nature, don't disturb animal's homes. "Take only pictures and leave only footprints." You can learn more about Leave No Trace at [lnt.org](http://lnt.org).

## In Nature

- Follow Leave No Trace principles
- Give wildlife of all sizes – even bugs – respect and space
- Keep lakes and rivers clean and safe
- Respect the home of any living thing
- Spare the wildflowers. Let them live in your memories, not die in your hand
- Encourage appreciation of nature without the desire for possession
- Leave trees, wooden structures, and sandstone formations free of markings, carvings, and graffiti
- Leave bark, twigs, and leaves attached to trees
- Stay on trails and leave trail signs as you found them
- Be sure to leave open gates open and closed gates closed as you use them
- Do not enter private property without permission
- Do not pick fruits, vegetables, or flowers on private property unless you have permission

## At the Beach

- Many living things attach themselves to rocks. Only pick up creatures that are not attached to their environment and remember to put them back where you found them.
- If you pick something up from a tide pool, put it back how you found it. Even empty shells can become homes for sea creatures

## When cleaning up

- Use gloves when picking up trash. Girls should never touch medical waste
- Recycle glass and plastic bottles. Use thick, protective gloves if handling broken glass
- Put recyclables in appropriate containers when available or carry them home to the proper facilities

## Skill Development and Fun

Travel and outdoor activities are excellent learning and leadership experiences for Girl Scouts. Adults should teach, advise, supervise, and exercise patience, while Girl Scouts learn to do things for themselves. Each Girl Scout is responsible for helping with the planning, set-up, tear-down, and clean-up of all activities.

Your role is to coordinate girl planning and communicate with caregivers about equipment, supplies, budget, group shopping, meals, and pocket money. Get girls involved by creating a Kaper chart to divide up responsibilities. Communicate with caregivers (and girls as appropriate for their age and progression) to delegate tasks concerning equipment, supplies, and food. Depending on the activity or trip, preparation might involve a personal packing list and gathering, borrowing, renting, or buying shared group equipment. Help girls create their packing list then share it with their caregivers. Involve girls in budgeting decisions as much as their age and experience allow and share all activity costs with the girls' guardians in advance.

### Activity Ideas for Skill Development and Fun

- Games, songs, and skits are fun during car rides or sleepovers
- Earn badges or complete steps for a Journey
- Include balanced amounts of activity, fun, and downtime
- Take ceremonies outside—Investiture, Girl Scout's Own, Bridging, etc.
- Explore beaches, parks, trails, mountains, museums, historic places, and businesses
- Visit Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast events and Program Centers
- Connect with other Girl Scouts
- Include community service such as beautification, donation drives, flag ceremonies, and food pantries



# Sit-Upons

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Girl Scouts make sit-upons to use when the ground is damp or to keep their clothes clean. Below are a few suggestions for making sit-upons.

**Pattern:** Cut waterproof material (vinyl/plastic tablecloth or shower curtain) into two squares large enough to sit on. Choose filling material (newspaper, fiberfill, foam, or lightweight carpet scrap) and place it between the waterproof squares. Overcast the edges of the squares, fastening them together using a yarn needle threaded with yarn or string. Another option is to use a hole punch to punch holes 2" or 3" apart around all four sides and overcast using long shoelaces, knotting at the corners.



**Try ECO Choices:** Decorate and waterproof a pair of shorts or jean cut-offs, sewing the openings closed after stuffing. Use fabric or a belt to carry the sit-upon around your waist during hikes. Try other plastic-free, eco-materials such as burlap or canvas fabric for the outside and coconut coir, which is naturally water-resistant, for stuffing. Coconut coir is in the gardening aisle of craft and home improvement stores.



**Bucket Sit-Upons:** Use a clean, 5-gallon bucket with a lid. Make a pattern of the top, inside part of the lid. Cut this circle out of stiff cardboard (the base) and another out of fiberfill, foam, or carpet (the filling). Cut a circle of heavy vinyl (the top) 3-4" bigger all around than your seating circles. Baste all around the vinyl circle with heavy thread to make a drawstring, with an inch border outside the sewing line. Lightly glue the filling to the inside of the top, then to the base. Using the end of the thread, gather the vinyl, pull tight, and tie it off. Duct tape the end of the thread to the cardboard. Apply epoxy, NOT a water-based glue, to the bucket lid and pad and press onto the lid. Leave a heavy item on top until dry.



# S.W.A.P.S. (Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere)

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These are handmade, little remembrances that one Girl Scout gives another. They may include event names, dates, and troop numbers. Do NOT include edible foods or personal information. Typically, they include a safety pin or some way to attach them to clothing or a hat.

Etiquette includes giving a SWAP, even when another girl may not have one to give. It is considered rude to give away SWAPS that were given to you. Carry the two separately.

Swapping promotes friendship, encourages girls to talk to one another, and is a great way to remember group events. Remember to make extras!



## Planning Activities

### Planning a Great Outdoor Activity

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Keep in mind all the Key Ingredients for Successful Adventures when planning activities. Note that there are a few components to make a good outdoor activity a great one.

When working with girls to determine what activities will be done on their adventure, guide the girls in their decision-making by keeping the following in mind:

#### **Encouragement and Variety**

All girls should be encouraged to participate in a variety of outdoor activities.

#### **Quality and Quantity**

When it comes to outdoor experiences, both quality and quantity count. There are a wide variety of settings, from zoos and nature centers to camps and farms. Girls who develop a sense of deep appreciation and respect for the environment are the girls who have had many opportunities to discover and explore the natural world. Significant attitude changes occur in girls who have had exposure to multiple outdoor experiences.

#### **Do It Outdoors**

Physically doing activities outdoors has a greater impact on girls. You can supplement activities with videos, DVDs, computer games, or surfing the net, but nothing can take the place of an outdoor classroom.

#### **See, Touch, Smell, Taste, & Hear**

Connect the girls to the outdoors by using all their senses. The smell of food cooking outdoors may be familiar, but what about the scent of dirt, wildflowers, pine, friendly skunk, or the air after a quick summer rainstorm? Have the girls seen a sunset, a sunrise, or gazed up into a starlit night in a peaceful outdoor setting? Can they feel the difference in the bark of a pine tree and an oak tree? With their eyes shut, sitting on a beautiful mountain, have they counted the many different sounds you may hear on a crisp autumn day? Fish, honey, and pine nuts are just a few of the many foods found in nature. Have their taste buds discovered the many treats nature has in store for them?

#### **Keep It Real**

Whenever possible, use authentic items or objects.

#### **Hands-On**

Keep girls involved by doing hands-on activities. Each girl can build her skills by doing rather than watching.

#### **Making the Connection**

Show interrelationships between different elements of the outdoors. Discuss how nature is connected; every living thing is dependent on another. Certain species of bird may solely depend on one type of tree to live. If our actions cause these trees to die, so may this bird species.

### **Fun and Challenging**

Make it fun and safe with an element of challenge, based upon age level and progression. Make it different and unique. At times, focus on individual interest and firsthand experiences. Then the activities will have built-in motivation.

### **Leave No Trace**

Follow the seven principles of Leave No Trace, doing activities with minimal impact on our natural environment. Girl Scouts leave a place better than they found it!

### **Plan It Together**

Involve girls in planning the activities. Girl/adult planning and partnerships promote positive attitudes and strengthen girl and adult relationships.

### **Role Models**

Surround the girls with good role models. Provide girls with positive adult role models who can set and maintain a positive tone in the group.

### **Being Enthusiastic**

Enthusiasm creates enthusiasm.

**Caution Statement:** Do not forget to use one of the most important senses—COMMON sense. Avoid hazards by being on the lookout for dangers and taking precautions to avoid them, from slippery edges and poisonous plants to dangerous intersections and inappropriate horseplay.

## Planning an overnight in 6 meetings

Below is a suggested outline for how you can incorporate girl-led planning for an overnight adventure with the responsibilities of the group's adult chaperones to put together a great overnight experience.

	Meeting Content	Leaders Do
Meeting 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorm ideas or vote on going</li> <li>Treasurer Report—do we have enough money to go?</li> <li>Set Product Sales goals and plan money-earning events in addition, if needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make reservations</li> <li>Visit site if possible</li> <li>Review Safety Activity Checkpoints to ensure all precautions are followed</li> </ul>
Meeting 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan an agenda with the troop</li> <li>Plan a budget</li> <li>Create a shopping list</li> <li>Look at weather reports and discuss your packing lists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share agenda with families, including date &amp; address</li> <li>Ask for adult volunteer support for shopping, transportation, chaperones, etc.</li> <li>Turn in necessary trip forms</li> </ul>
Meeting 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan activities</li> <li>Make a sit-upon</li> <li>Look at a map to see where they are going</li> <li>Learn an active song and/or grace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send packing list home to caregivers</li> <li>Send permission forms home</li> <li>Display appropriate items to pack and what to leave at home</li> </ul>
Meeting 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make SWAPS, if desired (not all events use them)</li> <li>Practice safety skills, emergency signal, buddy system, fire drill, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect permission forms</li> <li>Ensure all forms are up to date</li> <li>Set up transportation</li> <li>Check First Aid kit</li> </ul>
Meeting 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss expectations and behaviors for overnight</li> <li>Practice other skills</li> <li>Learn two quiet songs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with adult volunteers to discuss transportation, shopping, meals, etc</li> </ul>
Meeting 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a Kaper Chart</li> <li>Plan a Girl Scout's Own ceremony</li> <li>Review plans with troop</li> <li>Answer questions</li> <li>Give final details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Print directions</li> <li>Provide caregivers with agenda</li> <li>Get ready</li> <li>Have fun!</li> </ul>

*These suggestions are planning ideas (some are necessary, such as paperwork), but they do not all need to be completed, nor in the order given. They should be tailored to the age level and individual readiness of the group.*

# Forms and Training

## Forms

A set of annual participant forms (described below) is required for each girl for all girl scout activities. The troop leader should carry these forms at every event, including regular meetings. Any drivers that carry girls must also have these forms for everyone in the car. Health History forms are recommended for adults as well in case of emergency.

Form Name	Purpose	Completed By:	Submitted To:
<b>Annual Forms for EACH GIRL for ALL Activities:</b>			
Annual Permission Form	Grants permission to girls to attend local meetings or events that are within 60 miles of the normal meeting place or no longer than six hours in length, participate in non-high-risk activities, and participate in product sales.	Caregivers	Troop or Group Leader Drivers
Health History	Grants permission for girls to receive medical treatment in case of emergency.		
Medication Permission Form	Grants permission to administer medication (both prescribed by a physician and over-the-counter medications).		
Girl Release to other than Guardian	List of those authorized to pick up a girl other than her parent or guardian as well as anyone not permitted to be released to.		
<b>Injury and Emergency Forms:</b>			
Council Emergency Procedures	Steps for leaders for handling an emergency.	n/a	n/a
Incident and Injury Report	For notifying council and Service Unit in case of an accident or injury.	Leader	Chief Operating Officer and Service Unit Manager
First Aid Log	For recording all first aid treatment rendered including minor injuries.	First Aider	Council, if requested

Additional forms and approvals may be required based on the activities chosen. See the charts in this section for more information. For field trips and travel away from the regular meeting place and for high-risk activities, additional approval may be required from the Service Unit, Girl Scout council, and caregivers to participate.

**NOTE: Volunteers *are not* authorized by Girl Scouts to sign any contracts or hold harmless agreements.**

<b>Form Name</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Completed By:</b>	<b>Submitted To:</b>
<a href="#"><u>Troop Travel Application Form</u></a>	For requesting permission from Service Unit or council for participation in activities not covered by the Annual Permission Form	Leader	Council
<a href="#"><u>Parent Permission Form - Specific Trip</u></a>	For requesting permission from parent or guardian for activities not covered on the Annual Permission Form	Caregiver	Leader
<a href="#"><u>High Risk Activity Permission Form</u></a>	For requesting permission from parent or guardian for high adventure activities not covered on the Annual Permission Form	Caregiver	Leader
Physician Medical Release	Required for some activities including resident camp and international travel	Doctor and Caregiver	Leader (international travel) or Camp Administrator
<a href="#"><u>Plan 2/3 Activity Insurance</u></a>	For requesting insurance for non-Girl Scout children and adults attending a Girl Scout event or for insurance for certain traveling Girl Scouts	Leader	Council (to the mailing address on the form)

If something comes up and you are unable to submit forms in a timely manner, please contact Girl Scouts of California’s Central Coast at 800-822-2427 or email [info@girlscoutscoc.org](mailto:info@girlscoutscoc.org) so we can assist you.

Lead Time:

Form Name	Activity Type	Approved by:		Submitted in Advance of the Activity Date By:
			Council	
Troop Travel Application Form	Any field trip more than 60 miles away from the regular meeting location Any activity, event, or field trip that exceeds six hours, including time for transportation		✓	2 weeks (3 weeks preferred)
	Any trip of three or more nights Any trip including air travel		✓	3 months
	Any international travel		✓	1 year; updated 6 months prior
	Any activity listed on the High-Risk Activity Permission Form Any other activity of height, speed, or requiring participants to wear a helmet Any day hike or backpacking where participants will be located more than 30 minutes from emergency services Any activity in Safety Activity Checkpoints that requires the leader/instructor to have additional training or documented experience Except when vendor approval is required		✓	2 weeks
	Vendor Approval: When a professional, whose services are hired or donated to the Girl Scouts, will lead the high-risk activity*		✓	1 month
<u>Parent Permission Form - Specific Trip</u>	Accompanies any Trip or High-Risk Approval Form submission.			As above for THR
	Recommended, but not required, for cooking and pool swimming activities that do not otherwise require a Trip or High-Risk Approval Form for any of the reasons listed above.			Not submitted, used only between leaders and caregivers
<u>High-Risk Activity Permission Form</u>	Accompanies Trip or High-Risk Approval Form submission when concerning a high-risk activity			As above for THR
<u>Plan 2/3 Activity Insurance</u>	Plan 2: Any activity that includes participants who are not registered as Girl Scouts. ** Plan 3: Accident, Sickness, and Travel insurance for longer trips.			3 weeks

\* For example, a bike ride conducted by troop leaders can be approved in three weeks. But, a group surfing lesson from a hired professional or whitewater rafting booked with a rafting company needs three months' advance notice.

\*\* For example, a family campout with unregistered siblings and caregivers.



# Training

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Different trainings are required for different activities. The next page shows a chart that describes common activities and required trainings needed to participate in those activities. It does not include every single type of activity or training so make sure you check the Safety Activity Checkpoints or seek guidance from your Service Unit or Council to determine trainings needed for activities not included in this chart.

The Stepping Out trained adult should be aware of training available to volunteers and check that appropriately trained adults are included whenever the group will have a cooking activity or an outing away from the meeting place.

Every activity with Girl Scouts requires the following of at least one adult (troop leader):

- GSUSA Membership
- Background check
- gsLearn: Successful Leader Learning Series
- Face-to-face meeting with Service Unit and/or council
- First aid kit

If the Planned Activity Includes:	Then Required Adult Training is:						
	Stepping Out	Outdoor Training	Back-packing	Other Specialty Training*	First Aid + CPR	Wilderness First Aid	Lifeguard + Watchers
Any field trip away from the regular meeting location	✓				✓		
Overnight with indoor sleeping accommodations (incl. home, hotel, museum)	✓				✓		
Overnight with outdoor sleeping accommodations (incl. tents, yurts, open-air)	✓	✓			✓		
No heat, no sharp tools cooking							
Food preparation using sharp tools such as knives or skewers					✓		
Indoor cooking with conventional appliances	✓				✓		
Outdoor cooking, incl. BBQ, box oven, open fire, solar oven, hobo stove, etc.	✓	✓			✓		
Hiking within 30 minutes of services	✓				✓		
Hiking beyond 30 minutes of services	✓				✓	✓	
Family camping	✓				✓		
Troop camping	✓	✓			✓		
Outdoor skills instruction for soft-sided shelters, fire-building, knife handling, outdoor cooking, etc.	✓	✓			✓		
Backpacking (with no swimming)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Swimming	✓				✓		✓
Firearms sports with girls over age 12	✓			✓	✓		
Any activity on the High-Risk Activity Permission Form	✓	As needed per SAC			✓	As needed per SAC	

\* Specialty training depends on the activity. Check SAC for specific requirements. Examples include ski instructor, small watercraft certification, climbing instructor, whitewater rafting guide, shooting range safety officer, etc.

# Summary Checklist

Much of a Stepping Out Volunteer's job happens before actually attending an event as a chaperone. A majority of this role is carried out during the planning stages for all events beyond the regular troop meeting. Work together with other group leaders to plan with girls and caregivers, and assist the group in ensuring adequate supervision, training, and safety paperwork are complete. Adapt this checklist to the particular event or activity and refer back to sections of this manual as needed for more details.

## Progressions, Readiness, and Girl-Led Planning

- Involve girls in planning
- Guide girls' decision-making to be inclusive and respectful
- Check chosen activities for appropriate progression
- Assess girl readiness
- Assess adult readiness

## Safety and Standards

- Communicate Girl Scout Safety Guidelines to chaperones, caregivers, and girls
- Check Safety Activity Checkpoints
  1. Confirm supervising adults have enough certification and training
  2. Confirm minimum adult-to-girl supervision ratios
- Confirm purchase of insurance for any non-Girl Scout participants
- Inform caregivers of optional insurance
- Confirm that sleeping arrangements follow guidelines
- Confirm that transportation plans follow guidelines
  1. Review guidelines with chaperones
  2. Provide directions to chaperones
  3. Review behavior expectations with girls
  4. Confirm the number of seatbelts matches cars and drivers
- Secure tickets, registrations, and reservations
- Communicate with caregivers and girls
  1. Trip rules, behavior expectations, and consequences
  2. Trip itinerary
  3. Costs
  4. Sleeping arrangements
  5. Packing List
  6. Equipment and food needs
- Check freshness of first aid kit supplies – have any medications expired?
- Inform caregivers and chaperones of medication handling guidelines
- Discuss accident and injury prevention appropriate for the event with chaperones and girls

## Environmental Protection, Skill Development, and Fun!

- Discuss environmental protection guidelines and Leave No Trace
- Check that the plan includes learning, leadership, and goals of the Girl Scout program

- Check that the plan includes FUN!

### Forms and Adult Training

- Confirm GSUSA registrations for girls and adults
- Assess whether a Troop Travel Application Form will be needed
- Set a timeline for submitting forms for approval
- Set a timeline for permission forms and any money collection with caregivers
- Confirm submission of Trip and High-Risk Forms to SU and/or council

YOU MUST RECEIVE APPROVAL - this is not just a “notification” process

Confirm that during any Stepping Out activity/trip, one adult chaperone carries:

- Current Forms for each girl
  - Annual Permission and Parent Permission – Specific Trip
  - Health History
  - Medication Permission
  - Girl Release to other than Guardian
- First Aid Kit containing:
  - First Aid Log
  - Council Emergency Procedures
  - Incident and Injury Report Form

Also, if required, one chaperone carries:

- Approved: Troop Travel Application Form
- Signed: High Risk Activity Parent Permission Form
  - Also, if driving by private cars, each driver carries:
    - First Aid Kit with the above three forms
    - Basic Forms for each girl riding in their car
    - Confirm that at least one adult accompanying the group has First Aid training
    - Confirm that at least one adult accompanying the group has Stepping Out training
    - Check that adults with specialized certification or training required for the planned activity will be present and verify that their certification is current (for example, lifeguard, GS Outdoor Trained, ski instructor, etc.

[Stepping Out Test](#)

*(click for online test)*

# Course Evaluation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Troop # \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

	Yes	Som ewh at	No
I understand the purpose of taking trips outdoors and/or away from the regular meeting place in Girl Scouting.			
I understand the importance of progression in outdoor education, travel, and cooking.			
I understand how to assess girls' readiness for an overnight.			
I understand how to use the Safety Activity Checkpoints.			
I understand the need for First Aid/CPR Cert. for outdoor activities and field trips beyond regular troop meetings.			
I understand the additional permissions required beyond the Annual Permission form, where to find the forms, and how to use them.			
I understand the requirements of High-Risk Activity participation.			
I understand the role of the Stepping Out trained adult and when additional training is needed.			

Suggestions, Comments, Questions:

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Note: This evaluation is a part of the online test so you do not need to submit an additional evaluation

If you need help with accessing or submitting the test or evaluation, email [info@girlscoutsccc.org](mailto:info@girlscoutsccc.org) or call 1-800-822-2427 for assistance.