

Ambassador *Handbook*

Welcome to Girl Scout Ambassadors

You're at the summit of Girl Scouting.

Your name - Ambassador - stands for more than just the ultimate grade level in Girl Scouting. You're an ambassador for the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Your example symbolizes the power of Girl Scouting as you give service, take action, and show the world what kind of leader you - and all young women - can be.

That may sound like a big mission to take on, but you're ready for it. There's a butterfly on the cover of this *Girl's Guide* to remind you of the butterfly effect. That's the idea that small acts create big change, just as a butterfly flapping its wings can create tiny shifts in the atmosphere - that can alter the path of a tornado - or even prevent it from happening in the first place. That's the power you have with your every word and action.

There's more to the butterfly, too: It's also a symbol that embraces everything you're about to become. It's a symbol of your transformation from a girl with stars in her eyes to a confident young woman ready to spread her wings and soar into the wide, wide world.

As exciting as that transformation is, as a Girl Scout, you don't have to do it alone. You fly with the power of every member of the Movement - with millions of girls from across the country and around the globe. With all the younger girls who look up to you and your example. And, with a century of sisters full of the courage, confidence, and character to show the world what women can do when they're prepared to make a difference.

Ways to Belong

Transforming takes energy – and you've got energy going in many directions right now. Sometimes, you might be so busy that all you want is some time to regain your calm so you can keep up with your active life.

So, here's the good news: You have flexibility and choice in how you take part in Girl Scouting.

- You can join a Girl Scout group that meets regularly.
- You can focus on one aspect of Girl Scouting that appeals to you.
 - If you like camping, sign up for an outdoor adventure.
 - If you'd rather participate in a short series and then take some time off, you can do that, too.
- You can customize your Girl Scout experience so that you focus on travel – and there are all kinds of fabulous places you can go.

Whatever path is right for you, you're a Girl Scout. And, you're a Girl Scout when you're doing all the other activities in your life – from homework to hanging out with friends, sports teams, and school clubs – anywhere and everywhere you live by the Promise and Law.

Many people think you can only be a teen Girl Scout since you were little. Not true! You can jump into Girl Scouting at any age. If you're new to Girl Scouts yourself, welcome! It's easy to dive right in: Check out the calendar at your Girl Scout council to find out about all the activities happening in your area.

The Girl Scout Promise and Law

Every Girl Scout makes the Girl Scout Promise and takes pride in doing her best to live by the Girl Scout Law. The Promise and Law have a place in your life as you grow into young adulthood, too. They are ethical codes that you can use to help guide your choices and decisions.

The Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be

honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
and responsible for what I say and do,

and to

respect myself and others
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place,
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

The Promise and Law have few words, but those words are packed with meaning – meaning you can find right now, and more that you'll find as you continue on your Girl Scout adventure. You might find that the challenges you have in living the Law change from moment to moment and from year to year – or that every time you read it, you have a spark or idea or flash of inspiration that wasn't there before. That's the elegance and strength of millions of women practicing the same ideals.

Remember to try and live up to the Promise and Law – for it's in the process (sometimes difficult) that your power and our power lie. What makes you strong is not in always living them perfectly, but in living the spirit. That's what makes you a leader and what builds vitality into the Movement.

As our very first handbook stated, we "should remember that simple living in the spirit of the Law is more important than being able to state the Law and talk glibly about it."

Girl Scout Traditions

Sharing traditions with millions of current Girl Scouts – and the huge network of Girl Scout alumnae who have come before you – helps to give you that important feeling of belonging in a big, powerful sisterhood. Here are a few popular traditions to enjoy. Your Girl Scout community and council might have some other special traditions, too. Share them all – and pass them on, to keep our sisterhood strong for the centuries to come.

Girl Scouts make the **Girl Scout sign** when they say the Girl Scout Promise, when they are welcomed into Girl Scouting at an investiture ceremony, or when they greet other Girl Scouts or Girl Guides. The three fingers represent the three parts of the Promise.

Girl Scouts greet each other with the **Girl Scout handshake**. It's used by Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all around the world. Shake hands with your left hand and make the Girl Scout sign with your right. The left hand is nearest your heart and signifies friendship.

The **Girl Scout motto** is "Be Prepared." It reminds us that we must not only be willing, but, also, be able to give service.

The **Girl Scout slogan** is "Do a Good Turn Daily." It's a reminder of the many ways, both large and small, that each of us can contribute to the lives of others.

The **friendship circle** stands for an unbroken chain of friendship with Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world. Everyone stands in a circle, crosses their right arms over the left, and clasps hands with her friends on both sides. Everyone makes a silent wish as a **friendship squeeze** is passed from hand to hand.

You, the leader

When you belong to Girl Scouts, you belong to a sisterhood with a century-strong tradition of courage, confidence, and character. Think of our combined impact!

Girl Scouting exists so that you and millions of other girls can make a commitment to change the world, save Earth, and create a more peaceful planet – and have a ton of fun and adventure along the way. It exists for us to blaze trails through the future just like we've been doing since 1912.

Girl Scouts have a proud history of figuring out what needs to be done (often before anyone else) and then doing it – from offering child care at the polls so women can vote for the first time to planting victory gardens during wartime to inspiring other women by flying airplanes and navigating the seas in eras when those activities were truly groundbreaking.

What do Girl Scout do today?

- We improve neighborhoods, protect the planet, and innovate using science, technology, engineering, and math.
- We set up sports clinics, build schools, and organize reading projects.
- We act as diplomats and advocates at home, at school, and in the government.
- We help girls in need through our network of women stretching across the country and around the world.
- We run the largest girl-led business in the world – think of it – million of girls get their first business education in Girl Scouting.
- We contribute our voices to the Girl Scout Research Institute, the country's leading authority on what girls need, want, and do.
- We are girls and women who don't just simply respond to or support change. We're change makers.

There are always plenty of ways to change the world for the better. Where will you start?

The answer? **Anywhere you want.** So, aim high! The future toward which you are flying is yours to design.

Bringing Leadership to Life

The magic, fun, and friendship of Girl Scouting happen when the Three Keys leap off the page and into life. How does that happen? In these three ways:

- Girl Scouts is girl-led. That means you decide what to do, how to do it, and why it matters to you.
- Girl Scouts is cooperative. Your team is millions of girls strong right now, and every one of those girls forms a team whose power you can draw on whenever you need it – just as those girls will draw on yours.
- Girl Scouts learn by doing. This means your activities are hands-on. You do an activity, reflect on what you learned, and then figure out how to apply your new knowledge in the world around you.

Service and Action

You've heard the terms "give service" and "take action." They're both important parts of what you do as a Girl Scout, and they each have a different role in the ways you make the world better.

Giving service to others means being helpful – doing a kind thing right now. That could mean anything from organizing a food drive to writing an editorial to helping a friend with a tough homework assignment.

Taking Action moves beyond immediate service to making lasting change. To take action, you dig to the root of a problem to find sustainable solutions. You use your global perspective to mobilize others and make an improvement that will continue even after you're no longer directly involved. This could mean anything from planting and staffing an

urban garden to advocating for a law or policy change to creating a center where children who need tutoring can always get it.

Service and action often blend together into one long-lasting effort. Together, through giving service and taking action, you live the Girl Scout Law and can truly change the world.

So, what will you do in Girl Scouting?

First, choose a National Leadership Journey to start your Ambassador adventure. Because Journeys were developed to bring the Leadership Keys to life, they're at the center of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience – they're the roots from which you can branch out any way you please. Your ambassador Journeys were designed specifically for you: a girl on the brink of adulthood, who's capable of taking sophisticated action.

Take a look at the Ambassador Journey map to start imagine the possibilities and start planning.

The Girl Scout AMBASSADOR EXPERIENCE

TRIPS Begin to understand a new culture (and maybe speak a new language!) on a trip across the world.

COOKIES Get the spark of a new business idea from the skills you've gained in the Girl Scout Cookie Program

OUTDOORS Take on a wilderness survival challenge to test your outdoor skills

TRADITIONS Mentor younger girls as they start their adventures in Girl Scouting

BADGES Go behind the scenes of social change in your Public Policy badge, and continue developing the skills you'll use to share your voice as an advocate. Or, earn your Photographer badge and gain the skills to capture the change you're making in the world.

GOLD AWARD Earn the highest award in Girl Scouting – an accomplishment that lets people know you're a young woman capable of doing great things and ready to change the world!

All while transforming the younger you into the adult you – with the fun, opportunity, and sisterhood of the Movement as a strong support!

Growing Your World

With transformation comes even more opportunities! Here are some things to look forward to as you launch your Ambassador adventure.

Networking: When you know more people, you'll learn new things, hear new ideas, and find that more possibilities are open to you. That's why your Leadership Journeys and National Proficiency badges challenge you to get out and meet new people. You never know what new relationships might launch you toward your dreams.

Gaining Career Savvy: Notice all the career ideas listed in your badges – not to mention the inspiring profiles in your Journeys sharing what girls and women are doing around the world. As you think about your life after high school, use these idea starters to rev up your imagination about what you might want to do. Don't be shy about asking your growing network how they got to where they are today – most people love to tell their stories and help you write yours.

Take on More Roles in Girl Scouting: Check out volunteer opportunities both at your council and at the national level. Maybe, you can serve on a committee, work with a planning board, or advocate for girls' issues on a larger stage.

Girl Scout *destinations*: As a Girl Scout Senior, you're eligible to take part in travel experiences that range from two days to three weeks. *Destinations* can whisk you to the far corners of the world where you will meet remarkable Girl Scouts and Girl Guides, develop leadership skills, gain confidence, and enjoy amazing Take Action opportunities. Going on a *destination* will take you out of your comfort zone – and that's a good thing! Whether you're trekking through the rain forest, spending time with your Costa Rican host family, or making life better for kids in an orphanage, you'll be inspired. Visit the Girl Scout *destinations* website for trip descriptions, applications, and current offerings.

Sharing Your Impressive Portfolio: The skills you gain in Girl Scouting are great resume builders that will impress adults at school and on the job. What you do right now in Girl Scouting supports and expands what you're doing in class (in fact, some Girl Scouting

activities might even be eligible for extra school credit). You'll certainly be ahead of the game if your high school has service learning requirements, since Take Action projects almost always include a service component.

After high school, your team building and conflict resolution skills, your ability to identify a problem and find solutions, and your strong Girl Scout values can make your application to any job or scholarship shine. Remember to always tell people not just what you've done, but why it matters - because you've been changing the world!

Read about the history of Girl Scouts and our founder, Juliette Gordon Low, at any of these websites.

http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/history/

http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/history/timeline/

<http://www.main.org/gsusahistory.htm>

Learn about Our Girl Scout/Girl Guide World at

<http://www.wagggg.org>

How Girls Can Help Their Country

The first Girl Scouts used the English Girl Guide handbook, *How Girls Can Help to Build Up the Empire*. Later, an adaptation, *How Girls Can Help Their Country*, was written by an American naturalist named Walter John Hoxie. In many ways, that American version foreshadowed the thinking of American women today. While it emphasized proper preparation for "housewifery," it, also, advised girls that "really well-educated women can make a good income" as architects, doctors, accountants, scientists, and even aviators - at a time when very few women even drove cars!

Which of the Girl Scout World Centers would you like to visit?

Ceremonies and Celebrations

Ceremonies connect us to each other – and they can be the reflective moments that start transformation inside us with a butterfly spark from a particular piece of music, an inspirational world, or a shared experience with close friends. They're opportunities for groups to make sense of important personal and public moments together. This power of ceremonies is why they're held – and have always been held – to mark important events not just in Girl Scouts, but everywhere from government to places of worship to our own homes. You might choose to celebrate and honor special moments as an Ambassador with a traditional ceremony or with one you create.

Girl Scout Ceremonies

The ceremony ideas and examples in your National Leadership Journeys can help you make each time you gather with your Girl Scout friends special, setting this time apart from the rest of what goes on in your day. There are, also, ideas for holding celebratory ceremonies each time you earn your Journey awards.

An investiture ceremony welcomes someone into Girl Scouting for the first time.

A bridging ceremony is held with you “cross the bridge” to the next level in Girl Scouting.

A rededication ceremony is held at special times, such as when you renew your Girl Scout Promise and review what the Girl Scout Law means to you.

A Court of Awards ceremony is where you receive awards and recognitions you've earned.

A flag ceremony honors the American flag as a symbol of our country, and all the hopes, dreams, and people who make it up. See this website for instructions for a flag ceremony.

<http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/traditions/ceremonies/flag.asp>

A Scouts' Own ceremony is a special ceremony created around a theme of your choice.

A Gold Award ceremony is held when girls are awarded Girl Scouting's highest and most prestigious award – the Girl Scout Gold Award.

Special Girl Scout Days

Celebrating Girl Scout days is another way to enjoy belonging in Girl Scouts, and to remind each other - and the world - what the Movement is all about.

February 22 - World Thinking Day

February 22 was chosen as World Thinking Day because it is the birthday of Robert Baden-Powell and his wife, Olave. Baden-Powell started the Scouting movement. Every year on this day, Girl Scouts and Girl Guides do activities and projects to celebrate world friendship and honor their sisters in other countries.

March 12 - The Girl Scout Birthday

On this date in 1912, the first 18 girls gathered to hold their first meeting as Girl Scouts in the United States. You can celebrate by throwing a birthday party or by doing something Juliette Gordon Low loved to do - like making the world better for girls. You might give a special presentation this day to tell your family and friends about a Take Action project.

Girl Scout Week

The week in which March 12 falls is called Girl Scout Week. Some Girl Scouts wear their uniforms if they go to a service at their place of worship on Girl Scout Sunday or Girl Scout Sabbath. Ambassadors often take an active role in services as readers, greeters, or ushers to mark the day.

April 22 - Girl Scout Volunteer Day

This is a day when you can say thank-you to the adult volunteers who help guide you on your Girl Scout adventures. What could you do to show your appreciation?

October 31 - Founder's Day

Juliette Gordon Low was born on October 31, so we honor her birthday. Every year, Girl Scouts celebrate with parties and special projects to help others.

To celebrate the start of your Ambassador adventure, you might choose to write a letter to yourself about your hopes and dreams for your last two years as a Girl Scout. There's a special page in the My Girl Scouts section to help you do this.

Then, when you get ready to bridge to Girl Scout adult, open the envelope and read what you wrote to yourself at the very beginning of your Ambassador years.

If you've been a Girl Scout for a while, you may have other letters that you wrote to yourself at different stages of your Girl Scout experience. Open those envelopes now, too, and find out what the younger you had to say to the person you are now.

Writing your dreams in a letter makes them more likely to come true, because you have to think them through in order to write them down. What dreams of yours have come true? And, what dreams are you still in the process of making into reality? Sometimes our dreams change, too. That's all a part of becoming you.

Look in the My Girl Scouts section (back of handbook) for more information.

Showing you're an Ambassador

See the pictures on this website for correct placement of all your Ambassador pins, badges, and awards.

http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/for_volunteers/where_to_place/

Show you belong:

Girl Scout Brownie membership pin

This pin tells others you are a Girl Scout Ambassador. You earn it by learning the Promise and Law and by being invested. It's shaped like a trefoil. Each leaf stands for one part of the Girl Scout Promise. You can wear your pin even when you're not wearing your uniform, just to show you're a Girl Scout.

GSUSA strip

You can wear this strip to show that you're a member of Girl Scouts of the USA.

Council ID strip or USA Girl Scouts Overseas strip

This strip shows the name of your Girl Scout council, or that you are a member of USA Girl Scouts Overseas.

USA Girl Overseas pin

Girls who belong to USA Girl Scouts Overseas wear this pin.

Membership stars

Each star represents one year as a Girl Scout and is pinned on a disc. The color of the disc shows your level. The number of stars shows how many years you've been a member at each level.

World Trefoil pin

This pin shows that you are part of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (also known as WAGGS). The golden trefoil on a blue background represents the sun shining over all the children of the world.

American Flag patch

This patch shows that you're an American Girl Scout.

Brownie wings

If you were a Girl Scout Brownie, you got your Brownie Wings when you "flew up" and became a Girl Scout Junior. You wear the wings to show everyone you were once a Brownie - which means you know a lot about Girl Scouts that you can share with girls who are Brownies right now.

Bridge to Girl Scout Cadette, Senior and/or Ambassador Award

You can wear this award to show you bridge from Girl Scout Cadette, Senior and/or Ambassador.

Troop numbers

Many Girl Scouts belong to troops, and wear their troop numbers.

Troop crest

Some families have crests that show for what they stand. Girl Scouts is like a family, too. You and your Ambassador friends can choose a crest to wear on your uniform. Talk about the symbols on each one. Which one best shows the world for what you want to stand? Go to <http://www.fortunecity.com/millennium/puppet/989/crests/index.html> for a list of crests and their meanings.

Awards that Show What You've Learned

You can proudly display the awards you've earned as a Girl Scout Ambassador on your sash or vest to show the world all you've learned and experienced. You should have the same sash or vest you wore as a Cadette/Senior, so it could be getting quite crowded by now.

Keep track of when you earn each on pages 24 - 25.

Ambassador Leadership Journey Awards

There are three Journeys for Seniors:

Your Voice, Your World: The Power of Advocacy, *Justice* and *Bliss*.

You and your Ambassador friends can choose to do them in any order you like.

It's Your World—Change It!

Introducing the First Series of Journeys

Your Voice, Your World:

The Power of Advocacy

How often have you seen something that really needed to be changed and wondered, "Why isn't someone doing something about that?" This journey gives Girl Scout Ambassadors a way to be that someone—an advocate with the power to start the first flutter of real and lasting change. While creating their own "butterfly effect," they'll gain an array of skills—such as networking, planning and learning to speak up for what they believe—that will benefit them as they prepare for life beyond high school.

Journey Awards

This journey offers Ambassadors the tools to dig for the root of an issue they deeply care about and then to explore possible solutions. As they advocate for a solution, girls at the highest level of Girl Scouts will develop confidence and valuable leadership skills—problem-solving, research, networking, persuasive speaking and consensus-building. These skills are a strong foundation for girls to be leaders who speak up for what they believe in life now—and into the future!

- The Girl Scout Advocate Award is earned by Girl Scout Ambassadors who choose to complete the eight Steps to Advocacy as they explore an issue that they find intriguing and exciting, engage community partners and advocate for change. Whether or not their advocacy effort succeeds, girls will have taken steps to make the world a better place!

It's Your Planet—Love It!

Introducing the Second Series of Journeys

Justice

- Justice—for Earth and all its inhabitants—we all know what it is. Why is it so hard to achieve?
- Ambassadors realize that maybe justice needs a brand-new equation—their equation.
- By "Doing the Math" with even the simplest of acts, deciphering how decisions get made, and exploring how to use scientific evidence, Ambassadors will create and then present their own unique equation for what justice asks of us.
- Along the way, they will find they are also networking and gathering new ideas for college and careers.
- Ambassadors can also take some time out to Nest and Soar as they ponder new inspirations from birds around the world.
- When they add the Sage Award to their list of accomplishments, Ambassadors will be confident that they are the wise and healing leaders Earth yearns for!

Journey Awards

On this journey to *JUSTICE*, Ambassadors have the opportunity to earn the prestigious Sage Award by participating in activities in the six steps to understanding environmental justice. The Sage Award takes its name from the word meaning wise person (from the Latin root *sapere*, to be wise) and the medicinal herb (from the Latin root *salvare*, to heal or to save). The award represents both the commitment and ability to be judicious, and it reminds us of the importance of healing.

While earning the Sage Award, girls explore justice (and injustice) from many angles including science, decision making and even doing a little math! Ultimately Ambassadors create and present their own unique definitions for Justice!



Introducing the Third Series of Journeys

BLISS: Live It! Give It!

Ambassadors learn to dream big, now and for their future, and begin their legacy as leaders who help others achieve their dreams too. As they prepare to move from high school into the next phase of their lives, *BLISS* helps girls navigate life's twists and turns in order realize their dreams – whether she wants to win a Gold Medal discover a vaccine that cures a disease or run for president.

Leadership Awards

- Dream Maker Award -Ambassadors understand the bliss they can achieve by helping others with their dreams, and realize that a leader pursues her own dreams and makes it possible for others to do the same.

Ambassador Journey Summit Award

If you complete all three Ambassador Journeys, you'll earn the Ambassador Journey Summit award. Earning this award showcases the thought and imagination you've put into becoming a leader – and shows you and the world the kind of change of which you're capable. It's a fantastic accomplishment!

National Leadership Awards

The **Gold** Torch award

This award recognizes an Ambassador who acts as a leader in her community. To earn this award, do these two things:

1. Complete one Ambassador Leadership Journey.
2. Serve for one full term in a leadership position at your school, place of worship, library, town council, community center, after-school club, or a similar organization. For example, you might serve on a planning committee for graduation, co-teach a youth class at your place of worship, or serve on a Girl Scout board of directors. The length of your service will depend on the term specified by the organization or the particular position you hold.

Ambassador Community Service bar

When you earn the Ambassador Community Service bar, you are making a difference in your community – and practicing the values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. It's, also, a great way to get involved with a cause about which you care.

To earn the bar, first choose an organization with which you'd like to volunteer. The organization will need to agree to give you instructions about the work you'll be doing. Your council needs to approve your service, so check with it before you begin. Once you've chosen your organization, complete at least 20 hours of service to earn the bar.

Ambassador Service to Girl Scouting bar

If you choose to volunteer at least 20 hours to the Girl Scout organization, you can receive the Ambassador Service to Girl Scouting bar. For example, you might volunteer your time at a special even for younger girls, be an office assistant for your council or service unit, or help with special projects.

Your service hours for these bars need to be separate from those you use toward other awards. Each bar represents a new project, and can only be earned once.

Service, Action, and Community Service

While you are giving service to others, keep an idea bank for Take Action projects that could help you mobilize others and get at the roots of some of the problems you might observe. For example, if you give service at a food pantry in your place of worship, you might observe trends like: busy and stressed parents with little kids in tow or lack of fresh fruits and vegetables to distribute. Observing these issues could propel you into a Take Action project for one of your National Leadership Journeys, where you decide to organize a tutoring and play station at the food pantry and gather volunteers to run it; or organize local businesses to provide fruits and veggies in the pantry and offer easy and fast recipes for families to use, too.

National Proficiency Badges

Your ambassador badges offer sophisticated, creative opportunities to gain new skills and explore big ideas. They're full of flexibility - so you decide which activities are the most interesting and appropriate for you, and then build your badge-earning process to match your tastes and preferences.

Juliette Gordon Low is reported to have said, "A badge is a symbol that you have done the thing it stands for often enough, thoroughly enough, and well enough to BE PREPARED to give service in it." This is why national badges are called "proficiency" badges: earning one means you've gained a skill you're ready to use to give service to others.

There are four kinds of National Proficiency badges: Legacy, Financial Literacy, Cookie Business, and Skill-Building. As an Ambassador, you've already developed many of the skills you'll use as you graduate from high school, so there are no Skill-Building badges at this final level of Girl Scouting. Your program includes the first three types of badges, and is designed to help you continue to grow in valuable and exciting ways.

Should you find you want another badge, you can develop it: the Make Your Own category allows you to create a badge to teach yourself any skill you'd like to learn.

Legacy

The Legacy badges are based on activities that Girl Scouts have been doing since 1912. There are seven categories of Legacy badges: Artist, Athlete, Citizen, Cook, First Aid, Girl Scout Way, and Naturalist. The Legacy badges give you all kinds of activities and choice, so you'll have lots to do and you get to pick which badges in which you're most interested. Plus, you'll see how relevant these topics still are to girls today.

Financial Literacy

Your *Girl's Guide*, also, includes Financial Literacy badges. These badges help you learn about money - how to make it, how to spend it, how to save it, and how to share it with others. The Ambassador program is focused on the skills you'll need in the coming years - it's all about gaining the financial wisdom to thrive as an adult.

Cookie Business

You can take the skills you've learned doing the Financial Literacy badges and use them during the cookie sale to earn your Cookie Business badges. Each year that you're an Ambassador, you can earn one Financial Literacy Badge and one Cookie Business Badge. These badges are a great opportunity to build real-world business skills to use in your future career, and to showcase as you apply for jobs or scholarships.

Make Your Own Badge

If there's a skill you feel you need, if there's more you want to understand about a particular topic, or if there's just an area where you want to have some fun, you can make yourself a Girl Scout badge to learn how. You write the steps, complete them, and design and order a badge online. You can make one badge for each year that you're an Ambassador. Turn to the Badges section to find out more.

Every National Proficiency badge includes a tip for tying the fun you're having earning the badge to your Journeys. And, this tip is just the beginning. Once you dive into a Journey's theme, you'll think of your own creative ideas to relate your badge-earning activities to your development as a leader.

The Girl Scout Honor Code

Awards mean so much more when you've earned them "on your honor." When you say those words from the Girl Scout Promise, you're acting in a way that connects you to Girl Scouts around the world and demonstrates your commitment to doing things thoroughly and with integrity. And, you get a confidence boost in the process!

When you earn awards, you have a decision to make.

You can do the least amount possible to earn the award – choosing activity options you've already done in school or figuring out which ones would be the easiest and fastest to complete. You can do the awards your friends are doing, without putting a lot of thought into figuring out what's best for you. That may be the fast track to decorating your uniform, but it may not be the example you want to set or indicative of the kind of life you want to lead.

The other option is to act on your honor as you take time to explore new topics and ideas that are most important to you. Choose some options that make you stretch, and see what new and wonderful things of which you're capable. You might even surprise yourself!

This process means adding awards to your uniform a little more slowly – and finding your own path – but your awards will mean more to you because you'll know you're truly ready to be of service to others with your new skills.

As a Girl Scout Ambassador, you may have been practicing this honor code for some time now. At its core, living by this code means you show respect for yourself by taking responsibility for the quality of the work you do. Has this approach made a difference in how you do your school work or act with your friends? How you'll prepare for and face the challenges beyond high school? Enjoy a moment connecting the dots between living the honor code and living a meaningful, ethical, and fulfilled life!

The Girl Scout Gold Award

This is the highest award a Girl Scout Senior can achieve. To earn the award, you'll team up with your Senior friends. Together, you'll pick a project that you care about and that will make a difference in the world. As you complete the project, you'll meet new people, develop more confidence and, also, have a lot of fun. Find everything you need to know to get started on your Gold Award project at the end of your handbook.

Mentoring Awards

When you guide people or teach them something you know, you're acting as a mentor to them. As an Ambassador, you have some exciting opportunities to help younger Girl Scouts by sharing your skills, passions, and experience.

CIT

Counselor -in-Training I

Mentor younger girls in a camp setting as you build skills toward becoming a camp counselor. To earn this award, complete these steps:

1. Take a leadership course designed by your council on outdoor experiences.
2. Work with younger girls over the course of a camp session.

CIT II

Counselor -in-Training II

To earn this award:

1. Earn your CIT I award.
2. Work with younger girls over the course of at least one camp session while focused on increasing your skills in one specific area - such as riding instruction, lifeguarding, or the arts.

VIT

Volunteer -in-Training

This award is for girls who'd like to mentor a Girl Scout Daisy, Brownie, Junior, or Cadette group outside of the camp experience. If you've completed ninth grade, you're eligible to earn this award. Your VIT project should span a three to six month period.

1. Find a mentor volunteer who is currently the adult volunteer for a group of girls at the level with which you'd like to work. This volunteer will help you through your training and internship, and you'll help the volunteer with her group of girls for the three to six month period.
2. Complete a council-designed leadership course.
3. Create and implement a thoughtful program based on a Journey or badge that lasts over four or more sessions. Be responsible for designing, planning, and evaluating the activities. If you're passionate about the topic like art or technology, you could design the activities around the area you love or in which you have expertise.

Girl Scout Council Opportunities

Every Girl Scout around the country earns National leadership Journey awards and National Proficiency badges. That means that you have something in common with other Ambassadors, no matter where they live! Your council may, also, have special awards you can earn. Talk to your Girl Scout volunteer about what's going on in your council.

Special Opportunity Awards

You can earn other awards for more fun Girl Scout activities.

Cookie Activity pin: When you sell Girl Scout cookies, you'll improve at five key business skills: Goal Setting, Decision Making, Money Management, People Skills, Business Ethics.

To earn this award, take part in the cookie sale – then wear the pin to celebrate helping lead the largest girl-run business in the world.

By participating, you'll be learning by doing – an important part of Girl Scouting. Every time you reach out and network to find customers, make a sales pitch, manage the orders and money and make decisions about how to use it, you're learning what goes into running a major business.

Notice that the five cookie business skills are not just handy for running a business, they're handy in life, too. Have a big project coming up at school? Goal setting and planning will be useful. Need to persuade your friends to do the right thing? Use people skills! Trying to save up some funds so you can take a trip? That's money management.

The cookies sale, also, helps support Girl Scouting for you, and millions of other girls. Part of the proceeds goes to your council to keep Girl Scouts thriving in your region.

World Thinking Day award: In honor of this day, Girl Scouts take part in special activities to honor their sisters around the world. Every year, girls think about something different. To find out what you need to do to earn this award, go to www.girlscouts.org/world_thinking_day.

Global Action award: When you earn this award, you'll learn more about how girls live around the world. You'll, also, do an activity to help girls who need it. To find out more, go to www.girlscouts.org/global_action_awards.

International Friendship Recognition pin: American Girl scouts who live overseas can earn this award by doing activities that encourage international friendships with girls in their host country.

Safety award

Know how you and your friends can stay safe on your Ambassador adventure.

Complete these five steps to earn this award:

1. Pick a safety issue important to you, and organize a forum where other teens can discuss the issue.
2. Talk to younger Girl Scouts about Internet safety and the safe use of social media.
3. List your duties as a counselor-in-training, volunteer-in-training, or in other leadership roles you hold. Carry the list with you, and use it to make sure you've covered all your bases when making a safety plan for trips and events.
4. Talk to a counselor, social worker, or someone who works at a local women's shelter to find out more about how to stay safe while dating.
5. Pick a sport or outdoor activity you enjoy. Find out how rules, training, and safety equipment are designed to protect players.

Meritorious Service Awards

Every Girl Scout is prepared to do heroic things. When a girl receives one of these awards, she's being honored for doing something exceptional, like saving someone's life.

Medal of Honor: This award is given to a Girl Scout who has shown presence of mind and true Girl Scout spirit in an emergency.

Bronze Cross: This award is given to a girl who has shown extraordinary heroism or risked her life to save another's.

My Promise, My Faith

Earning My Promise, My Faith helps you explore how Girl Scouting and your faith offer similar ideas about how to act – and how Girl Scouting can tie into your faith. You can earn this pin once a year, every year you are in Girl Scouts. Choose a different line of the Law each year.

Complete these five steps to earn the pin:

1. Choose one line from the Girl Scout Law. Find a hymn, psalm, prayer, reading, or ritual from your faith that relates to it. Think about how this shows a connection between your faith and what you've learned in Girl Scouting.
2. Interview a woman in your own or another faith community who can talk to you about how she tries to act in her life based on that line of the Law. Ask her to give you examples of what the line of the Law means to her and how she tries to follow it in her daily life.
3. Find three inspirational quotes by women that fit with that line of the Girl Scout Law. Put them somewhere you can see them every day to remind you to live that line of the Law.
4. Make something, like a drawing, painting, or poster, that reminds you of what you've learned. You could, also, make up a story or a skit.
5. Make a commitment to live what you've learned. You may want to talk to your friends, family, or a group in your faith community about how you plan to live what you've learned in your daily life. Maybe you'd enjoy performing your skit or showing them what you just made or performing your skit! You can choose to make a private commitment to yourself to live what you've learned.

The very first Girl Scout Handbook, *How Girls Can Help Their Country*, was full of advice for young women like you: ready to see how a flap of her wings can set a whole chain of positive change in motion.

"You girls may someday alter the lives of hundreds of thousands of people . . . so when you get an idea that will do good, follow it up, and don't fear that because it is only you that it cannot succeed.

Welcome all obstacles, as it is only by meeting with difficulties that you can know how to overcome them and Be Prepared for others in the future."

Get ready to take off . . .

Bridging to Girl Scout Adult

Your moment is here! As a graduating Girl Scout Ambassador, you'll embrace what you've learned in Girl Scouting, honor how that will forever be a part of who you are, and step into the world as a young woman of courage, confidence, and character.

When you become a Girl Scout adult, you join nearly one million Girl Scouts - across the country and around the world - who volunteer their time and inspire girls to become leaders. You're, also, linked to an astounding 10 million global sisters through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and 50 million Girl Scout alumnae.

Whether you want to build your resume, blaze a particular career path, or make new friends based on a shared Girl Scout experience, you've got a worldwide sisterhood that will add richness and fun to the rest of your life!

You'll find many different ways to stay connected to Girl Scouts, the organization that helped you grow into the young woman you are today. If you're heading to college, consider volunteering with the local council or interning with a professional who works in a field in which you're interested, a great way to make friends and earn service learning credits.

Girls love to connect with young adults, so you're in a perfect position to influence and inspire those younger than you. You can volunteer to guide a troop, help girls earn badges by teaching a skill such as photography or rock climbing, mentor Girl Scouts as they do a Leadership Journey, help out at a day camp, or work with girls as they participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

Love to travel? Think about chaperoning girls as they visit Aerospace Camp, ride horses in the Appalachian Mountains, or celebrate world culture at Mexico's Our Cabana. You can become a camp counselor, represent GSUSA at national and international events, raise funds for your council, or serve on the board of directors. Above all, you can give back to Girl Scouts by sharing your experiences, listening to the girls, and inspiring them to dream big, too.

Are you ready to cross the bridge to Girl Scout adult? Complete these two bridging steps to earn your Bridge to Girl Scout adult award, the last award you can earn as a girl member.

Celebrate your Accomplishments: If you wrote a letter to yourself when you first became an Ambassador, you may want to open it now. What's it like to read those words? How have you learned and grown as a leader since you wrote that letter? How are you the same, and how are you different?

To earn your **Bridging** award, complete these two bridging steps:

STEP 1 **Pass it on!**

Share your talents and skills by teaching younger Girl Scouts one thing you learned to do as an Ambassador.

This list has a few ideas to get started. You only have to do one of these - or something like it - to complete the step.

IDEAS

- Share favorite things you did on a National Leadership Journey. Did you add a trip? Meet local experts? Do something special when you earned your awards? Put together a special package or presentation to share advice and experiences with Seniors.
- Share with a group of Seniors your favorite memories of being an Ambassador - your Take Action projects, trips, outings, friendships, and leadership lessons learned. As you help Seniors define what leadership means to them, reflect on how others helped you along the way.
- Inspire younger girls by helping them earn badges or complete Journey activity. You could, also, hold a fitness clinic, teach a dance class, take them geocaching, or pass on any other special skill you've learned as a Girl Scout.

STEP 2 **Look Ahead**

More than 900,000 adults empower girls to become leaders through Girl Scouting. Talk to Girl Scout Adults to find out what inspires them and to get ideas about what you'd like to do.

This list has a few ideas to get started. You only have to do one of these - or something like it - to complete the step.

IDEAS

- Get together with a Girl Scout adult. This doesn't have to be formal. You can start a conversation at a pizza party, take a walk on the beach, have a movie night, or go on a camping trip. Ask your adult why she thinks the Girl Scout legacy has endured or what she considers the highlights of volunteering.
- Hold an appreciation breakfast or lunch for Girl Scout adults who have supported you. Share your memories, photos, or even a poem to tell them how much their help meant to you.

- Create a slide show of your best moments in Girl Scouts. Add some music, then gather your friends, family, and the Girl Scout adults who influenced you to share your walk down memory lane.

Congratulations!

You've earned your Bridge to Girl Scout Adult award! Celebrate with a favorite ceremony you learned in your time as a Girl Scout.

Once you have graduated, register as a Girl Scout adult. You may want to check out the special lifetime membership that's offered at reduced cost to registered Girl Scout Ambassadors whose membership is current at the time of their high school graduation.

Don't forget to share future plans with your Girl Scout council and stay in touch with them. They would love to hear from you! And, remember, no matter where in the country or world you live, there will always be Girl Scouts, USA Girl Scouts Overseas, and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

You've never far from the sisterhood –
and it could always use you.