

Cadette *Good Sportsmanship*

Athlete

It's good to be a great athlete, but the greatest athletes agree it's just as important to be a good sport.

Steps

1. Create your own definition of sportsmanship
2. Be a good competitor
3. Be a good teammate
4. Psych yourself up
5. Put your definition of good sportsmanship into action

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how I define sportsmanship and will have put my definition into action.

“It's really tough to shake the hand of someone who just beat you, and it's even harder to do it with a smile. If you can learn to do this an push through the pain, you will remember what that moment is like the next time you win.”

-Amy Van Dyken, Olympic gold medal-winning swimmer

Every step has three choices. Do ONE choice to complete each step. Inspired? Do more.

- Do you think there is any difference between “sportsmanship” and “sportswomanship?”

Step 1 Create your own definition of sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship can be a lot of things:
Playing Fair,
Respecting officials and other players,
Following the rules.

Whining,
Cheating,
and Bragging
Are generally bad sportsmanship.

But the lines can get blurry. Is it good or bad sportsmanship to do a victory dance, taunt batters, or question an official's call? Use this step to create your own definition using the chart on the next page.

CHOOSE ONE:

Go to a sports event. Take note of as many interactions among athletes, coaches, and officials as you can (arriving early or staying late could help). Emotions and stress can make for more good *and* bad behavior, so see if you can find an event that's part of a championship or longtime rivalry.

OR

Watch a sports series. Choose a sport or game you like and pull up an old championship series to watch: the X Games, the Olympics, Wimbledon, the World Series, even a billiards tournament. The beauty of this option is you can watch the replay as often as you like!

OR

Head to the Web. Read three news stories about good and bad sports behavior. From the triathlete who hopped onto a bus during a race to the home-run hitter who admitted to using steroids, stories of bad behavior abound. Luckily, there are lots of good stories, like when a women's college softball team carried an opposing team member around the bases when her knee gave out.

Your Definition of Sportsmanship

Your definition of sportsmanship should include a list of five things to do and five things not to do. As you do the steps in the badge, keep the list handy and keep revising as you get more great ideas from your network. In step 5, you'll put your definition into action.

5 Things to Do

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

5 Things Not to Do

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

"I hope that we shall all remember the rules of Girl Scouting game of ours.
They are:

To play fair,

To play in your place,

To play for your side and not yourself.

And, as for the score, the best thing in a game is the fun and not the result."

-from Juliette Gordon Low's, 1924 birthday message to Girl Scouts

Step 2 Be a good competitor

You don't have to dial it down to be a good sport. In fact, giving it your all in every game or event can be part of good sportsmanship. What else does it take to be a good competitor every time you hit the field or court or track?

CHOOSE ONE:

Make an illustrated quote book. Athletes and coaches share this kind of wisdom all the time ("practice makes perfect," "if at first you don't succeed . . ."). Gather a dozen or more quotes from athletes and coaches and make an inspiration album

OR

Talk to an athletic director, coach, or player you admire. Ask them to share their experiences. Make up a list of areas you'd like to cover before you chat – perhaps preparation, frustrations, pain and setbacks, and maintaining focus.

OR

Get a biography of a female athlete who's a great competitor. Then, write an essay, poem, or song that focuses on why and how she's such a strong competitor and a good sport.

Step 3 Be a good teammate

Coaches always say they don't want a show-off, they want a team player. Teamwork skills help you on and off the field. There's teamwork involved in every group, from Girl Scouts to debate team. Play one of these games, then, agree on three strategies that helped you build a team and three practices that got in the way.

CHOOSE ONE:

Play Trust, like they did on *Survivor*. Get a team of at least four girls together and create an obstacle course about 20 yards long. Take turns being the caller, who yells directions to her blindfolded teammates to get them all through the course without running into each other.

OR

Play three team-building games. Try three of the classic team-building games sports psychologist Colleen Hacker plays with the U.S. Women's National soccer Team:

Human Dragon, Wolves and Sheep, Human Knots,
Scavenger Hunt, classic Trust, Triangle Tag,

and others. Some of these are explained on the following pages.

OR

Play Capture the Flag. It's hard to find another game on the planet that uses as many team-building skills as this classic! Not to mention, it's hard to find a more fun way to spend an afternoon.

Copy each game's instructions into a notebook or onto index cards so you can add to them as you find more. You can use them when you're a Senior/Ambassador for your CIT and/or VI T awards.

TRIANGLE TAG

Equipment: None

Space: Several 10-yard grids

Players: Groups of 4

Game: Three of four players form a circle or triangle, linking arms at the wrist, shoulder, or elbow. They must never break a link. The fourth player, the "tagger" is outside the circle/triangle. One of the three in the circle is the "target," and the other two must shuffle, spin, or otherwise move to protect the target from being tagged. After 15 seconds, someone else becomes the tagger, and the game continues. Everyone takes three turns being a protector and one turn being a tagger. Everyone competes for the best win-loss record. Keep track of wins and losses as both protector and tagger.

PLAY THE HANDKERCHIEF

This is a quick, fun game to improve focus.

Equipment: handkerchief,
or bandana

Space: An area about 15 square feet

Players: 6 to 12 girls

Game: Place a bandana or handkerchief on the ground. One at a time, each girl puts one foot on the kerchief. Once everyone has a foot on the kerchief (your foot can be on top of another girl's foot), everyone has to pick up their other foot. Use each other and your own mental focus to keep one foot on the kerchief and the other in the air.

- Exercises from Colleen Hacker, Ph.D., sports psychology consultant to the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team, found in *Catch Them Being Good*, cowritten with coach Tony DiCicco.

HUMAN DRAGON

Equipment: None

Space: A field or gym free of obstacles

Players: Four teams of 6 to 8 girls – each team is a dragon. You can have odd numbers and vary the length of each dragon according to players' skill and size.

Game: Each team chooses someone to be the head of its dragon, and another person to be the tail. The rest of the team fills in the dragon's body, holding on to the person in front of them at the waist. The goal is for the head of each dragon to tag the tail of any other dragon team. Only the head can do the tagging; everyone else must stay connected with both hands. Meanwhile, each team is, also, trying to avoid having its own tail tagged. After a tag, the tagging team receives one point, and the other team creates a new tail by moving its tail to its head. If one person is a tail too long, switch them to the head even if they weren't tagged. If any player loses their grip on the person in front of them, the team should self-report the loss of a point for their team and switch the tail. Dragons call out their score every time they gain or lose a point. The game keeps going as long as you want it to.

WOLVES and SHEEP

Equipment: Cones or other markers to designate playing area and safety box

Space: A Rectangular field of 5 yards per player; so for eight players a 40-yard field

Players: Any number

Game: Divide your group into two equal teams. Give each team a name, like **Reds** and **Blues**. At each of the two diagonal corners of the field, create a safety zone. Each zone should be about 5x5 yards². Use cones to mark the two sides of the square that are inside the playing area. Players from both teams jog, run, sprint, or skip around the playing area. After unpredictable intervals of time – 1 minute, 30 seconds, 90 seconds, 10 seconds – yell out one team's name ("**Reds!**") to turn them into "**wolves.**" Now all the **Reds** chase the **Blues**, who are the "**sheep,**" tagging as many as they can before the sheep can get to the safety zones. Tagged sheep join the other team. Next time, the **Blues** might be the **wolves.**

How often you call a team name to begin the chase, and which team you call, should be as random as possible. When all of one team has been captured by the game ends.

Step 4 Psych yourself up

Whether you're involved in a team or solo sport, the biggest obstacle can be the voices in your own head. Train those voices, though, and they can be your path to success. Check out the methods sports psychologists and extreme athletes use to psych themselves up for competition and find three that work for you.

CHOOSE ONE:

But I landed my triple axel! Judging in sports like figure skating and gymnastics is subjective. How do athletes deal with knowing that no matter what they do, some things are out of their control (you didn't like my music? my outfit?). Find an athlete who competes in a subjectively scored sport and see what they have to say.

OR

Mind over matter. It's tough to find an athlete these days, from the oldest skier to the youngest X Games shredder, who doesn't talk about visualization. Mental training can improve performance. A golfer, for example, might visualize the perfect stroke over and over to help her muscles remember it. Find out more about the technique and how it might improve your game.

OR

Play sports psychology games. You'd be surprised how many teams routinely work with sports psychologists. Play a team game and run your group through some of their psych-up exercises before you start. Use the ones on the next page, or ask for help from a sports psychologist, coach, or athlete.

Careers to EXPLORE

Athlete	Personal trainer	Youth recreation administrator
Coach	Sports instructor	Sports official (umpire, referee)
Politician	Guidance counselor	Elementary school teacher
Judge	Sports psychologist	Sports team manager
Lawyer	Sports psychiatrist	Professional sports scout/recruiter
Journalist	School administrator	Military officer
Sportscaster	Physical therapist	Sports agent

Psych-Up Activities from SPORTS

Accentuate the positive. Change “I’m missing all my shots” to “I’m getting to the goal, now I’ve just got to get the shots in.”

Use positive imagery. Visualize the prize! Picture yourself on the podium receiving the medal or trophy you desire. Picture yourself doing every step needed to get there, too.

Don’t let failures get you down. Smile! Using those muscles naturally relaxes you and sends a signal to your brain that things are good. Choose a cue word, such as focus, to say to yourself to break negative thinking.

Stay focused. Break down your task into small steps, periods, or quarters, so you don’t get overwhelmed.

Think 100. Just before heading into the big game or the big event, commit to “100:” 100% energy, effort, and commitment, 100% of the time, over 100% of the field, court, or gym.

TRY. Take responsibility for yourself. Develop the talents that you have, and that you need, to be great. Don’t make excuses or blame anyone else.

Step 5 Put your definition of good sportsmanship into action

Consider insights you’ve gained during steps 2, 3, and 4, and, then, take a moment to make revisions to the definition you came up with in step 1. Once you’ve got your ultimate list, put your new ideas and strategies to the test.

CHOOSE ONE:

Compete. If you're already involved in a sport, take your definition and follow it during a big game or event. Or, try a new sport: It's harder to fall back into old habits that way. After you play, review your definition. What's easier said than done? Anything in your definition to adjust?

OR

Play with little kids. Volunteer to help with Little League, to play board games or simple active games (like Red Light, Green Light, or Duck, Duck, Goose) at a nursery school, or to run a kindergarten field day. As you teach the kids, you'll be testing the strength of your own convictions! After the event, look over your definition. How does it apply to other age groups? Do you need to change anything to make your definition more universal?

OR

Take on the role of referee, umpire, or judge. Volunteer to work with a league, start an afternoon pickup game, or host a subjective competition (roller skating, figure skating, ballroom dance . . .). Keep your "good sport" list in mind during the game. After, review each point and make sure you still agree with it. If not, make adjustments.

More to **EXPLORE**

Compose a contract. Write a Good Sportsmanship Contract for your school or community sports program and get the coaches and athletes to sign it.

Tip: After you complete this step, you'll have your tried-and-true definition of sportsmanship. You might want to hang it in your locker or a personal space – you might find your insights helpful off the field, too.

Add the Badge to Your Journey

As you create and practice your definition of sportsmanship, compare it to insights and examples you are exploring on your Leadership Journey. What do sportsmanship and leadership have in common? How can good sportsmanship prepare you for being a leader in your daily life and in the world around you?

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Showing others good sportsmanship whenever I play a sport or game
- Assisting Brownies with activities in their Fair Play game
- Helping a coach, teacher, or teammates create sportsmanship guidelines

I'm inspired to: