

Field Day

Cadette *MEdia* badge

From friends playing in the park to countries competing against one another at the Olympics, games unite us all. And, Girl Scouts have been inventing their own games since 1912! In this badge, you'll experience this first hand by organizing teams and events for an exciting, do-it-yourself field day.

Steps

1. Team up and dress up
2. Host an historical game
3. Play a scientific game
4. Find fun in fiction
5. Stage your grand finale!

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to organize a field day filled with friends and fun.

"Is not amusement the very soul of life?"

-Frances Milton Trollope, English novelist

RECRUITING PLAYERS

If your field day is part of another event, like a birthday party or family reunion, you'll likely already have more than enough participants. However, if your event itself is the big attraction, you may need to come up with clever ways to recruit teams. Here are a few ideas to try out:

- Create posters and sign-up sheets to hang at your school, place of worship, and/or local club. Once you get enough players divide them into evenly matched teams.
- Find friends or family members to captain each team. Then, task them with the job of recruiting at least four players. Don't forget to get players together for your own squad.
- Find other Girl Scout groups in your area - or, for a real challenge, see if you can recruit Girl Scouts from farther afield. Open your day of games to all ages, and invite younger or older girls.

Step 1 Team up and dress up

Your field day is a team competition. Ideally, you should have at least four teams with five players each. Each team should have a name and a captain to explain rules and keep things organized. Use this step to gather your team. Then, as a show of team unity and to get everyone excited, pick one of the choices to help you create a uniform.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Go, Blue! Go, Red! One great way to make each team stand out is to color-coordinate them. You might host a captains' meeting before the competition and have a random color raffle. Each team must dress in the color its captain draws.

OR

Unique uniforms. Host a T-shirt making party before your field day kicks off. Ask everyone playing to bring a plain white T-shirt to decorate with markers, fabric paints, sparkles, and anything else that represents your team spirit.

OR

Theme costumes. Give each team captain a set of rules for costumes – for example, they shouldn't cost a lot, and players need to be able to run and jump in their outfits. Then, let each teams' imagination run wild! (How great would it be to watch a team of superheroes competing against a team of cowgirls?)

[More to EXPLORE](#) Get pumped up with a team cheer. Have each team invent a team name and a team cheer; then kick off your field day with a "cheer off!"

GAMES-PLANNING CHECKLIST

You'll need about two weeks to organize your field day. After picking a date, use this handy checklist to make sure you've got everything in order.

Two Weeks Before

- >Start scouting locations for your field day. If you need to reserve the space, do so now.
 - >Begin recruiting teams, team captains, a field day first aider, and adult helpers.
 - >Decide how and when you'll make costumes (uniforms). See step 1.
 - >Finalize the rules and requirements for at least two games. If you need equipment, start gathering it now. If you need to test your rules or instructions for a game you've created, do it now*
- *TIP: Talk through game safety with a knowledgeable adult (like a physical education teacher or coach). They might have equipment tips as well – a small budget can go far with a big imagination!

One Week Before

- >Finalize the location for your field day. Create a plan B in case of bad weather.
 - >Finalize teams and host your first team-captain meeting.
 - >Finalize the rules and requirements for two more games – or more if you have additional events. Gather equipment; test game rules.
- OPTIONAL: If you're going to have an opening or a closing ceremony, play them out this week. If you'll have awards, begin making them.

The Day Before

- >Call each team captain to confirm times and finalize details.
 - >Check the weather. If it's looking bad, consider activating your plan B.
 - >Pack a first aid kit and plan for emergencies.
 - >Make sure you have water and enough cups/bottles for everyone competing.
- OPTIONAL: If you're going to serve food, shop and prepare today. Make sure any awards are finished.

Game Day

- >Transport everything you need to your field at least an hour before hand.
- >Gather everyone competing. Thank them for coming, and briefly introduce all the games (give full rules just before each game starts). Wear a whistle, and let people know that if they hear it, it's time to come back together. Ask if there are any questions. If you are working with younger children, ask some of them to repeat the rules - to make sure they understood them – and to clarify their understanding of the rules.
- >Make certain everyone knows where to find important things like the first aider, bathrooms, water, sunscreen, parents.
- >Let the games begin – and have a great time!

After the Games

- >Clean up. Put all the trash in its proper receptacles, and take away anything you brought.
- >Thank everyone who helped you make your games a success.

The Olympics

The Olympics first began in Olympia, in ancient Greece, likely around 700 BC. Early competitions included wrestling, running, and chariot racing – and women were not allowed to compete in any events. Today, the Games are held in a new location every two years, in alternating seasons. Athletes from almost every nation in the world compete in more than 300 events. Occasionally, new events are added to the Games, but only after the International Olympic Committee approves them. Women's boxing will be introduced at the summer Games in 2012.

Step 2 Host an historical game

Make the first event a blast from the past! Pick a game or event that used to be played but isn't popular anymore. Then, give it a modern twist (and explain to everyone the historical inspiration behind your game). If you're having trouble coming up with an event, talk it over with your gym teacher or research games from the past, or check badge activities for other Girl Scout levels.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

An amazing race. Re-create an historical racing event. For example, the ancient Greeks and Romans couldn't live without their chariot races. You could replace the chariots with wagons filled with stuffed animals. Each team could take turns pulling the wagon, stopping to replace any animals that fall out along the way.

OR

Target practice. Everyone from Egyptians to Alaskan Inuits held archery competitions. Create your own target game by setting up 10 objects - soda cans, dolls, paper bull's eyes strung from branches - and seeing how many objects players from each team can hit with a water balloon or tennis ball.

OR

Tests of strength. From hammer throws to log-tossing competitions, the Scottish Highland games are famed for their strength competitions. Create your own match of might! Perhaps you could challenge teams to kick a soccer ball or throw a Frisbee the farthest?

More to Explore

Create a mini Olympics within your field day. Kick things off with a round of three games inspired by events from the original Greek Olympics.

Step 3 Play a scientific game

Give the next big event at your field day an unexpected twist by getting players to exercise their brains with a unique, science-based game. If you're stuck trying to design a winning game, try speaking with a high school science teacher - they'll likely have plenty of great ideas.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Construction challenge. One popular construction project is the egg drop, where teams get identical amounts of straws and tape to create a protective shell for an egg. Drop the egg from escalating heights, and the team whose egg remains unbroken the longest wins.

FOR MORE FUN: Make this a team-building activity that starts before the field day. Every team mails you a potato chip. Open the packages at the field day – the team whose chip arrives unbroken wins!

OR

Another construction challenge. Each team gets 20 straws (all the same size) and 10 straight pins. Each team must build the tallest free-standing structure possible. Or, the strongest bridge suspended between two stools or something similar. Strongest is determined by amount of weight each can hold (washers, pennies, etc.) before it breaks or bends.

OR

Soar winners. Challenge each team to create a flying object! You could give each team an identical piece of paper to create a paper airplane, and whoever gets the longest toss wins the game. Or maybe the challenge is to create a water-balloon catapult! (Girl Scouts in 1980 staged a kite-flying contest to earn their World of Today and Tomorrow badge.)

OR

Make it “flink.” A “flinker” is a fun name for an object that doesn’t float to the top or sink to the bottom of a container of water – it stays in the middle and “flinks.” See which team can make an object flink for the longest time. Each team needs a plastic, see-through container filled with water (like a wide-mouthed two-liter bottle), something to be the flinker (like a packing peanut or cork), heavier things to attach to the flinker (like washers, pennies, beads, or paper clips), and something to attach them with (string, waterproof tape, or pipe cleaners).

Awesome Awards

You can come up with all kinds of ways to keep score at your field day. But even if you don’t pick winners, everyone involved might like some kind of recognition. That’s a wonderful way of letting each person know how happy you are that they took part in your day! You could make medals out of cardboard and tinfoil; create wild ribbons using beads and crystals; or perhaps even use an instant camera to give teams photos as creative keepsakes before the competition even ends!

Step 4 Find fun in fiction

Now, it's time to make fiction a reality for an amazing event that your competitors might have read about or seen played, but never experience in real life. Your challenge is to bring to life a fictional game from a favorite book, movie, TV show, song, video game, or other source of inspiration.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

From read to reality. Pick a game from a book and find a way to turn it into a competition. For example, everyone knows about Quidditch from the *Harry Potter* series. But, until someone invents a flying broom, Muggles need to find another way to play. What about naming someone as Snitch and turning Quidditch into a game of tag?

The Quidditch World Cup Since 2005, the International Quidditch Association has been making waves at U.S. college campuses. Based on the game in the *Harry Potter* series, "Muggle Quidditch" (or "Ground Quidditch") has specially adapted rules, but is also close as you can get to the original without the ability to fly! The IQA is a registered nonprofit organization that works to organize and coordinate collegiate Quidditch matches all across the country. The finale is, of course, the Quidditch World Cup.

OR

From virtual to reality. Pick a favorite video game and turn it into a field day event. Take the arcade classic Pac-Man, for example. You could make a maze filled with tennis balls to collect. The team that collects the most tennis balls without being tagged out by "ghosts" wins!

OR

From board to reality. Turn a favorite board game into a field-day sport. For example, how would you turn Scrabble into an event? One way would be to create a pile of cardboard cutout letters, and challenge each team to create as many words as possible in two minutes.

Opening and Closing Ceremonies

Nowadays, it seems the Olympics are as popular for the spectacle of the opening and closing ceremonies as they are for the individual games. Perhaps you can add extra excitement to your day of games by including these ceremonies. Maybe an opening ceremony where competitors introduce themselves and show off their uniforms, a closing dance party, or a potluck barbecue cookout?

Step 5 Stage your grand finale!

End your competition with the wildest, craziest event yet – a wacky pentathlon that requires every competitor on every team to take part. A pentathlon is an event made up of five different competitions. Your challenge? Create a five-step end to your field day that the world has never seen before!

CHOICES – DO ONE:

A puzzle pentathlon. Combine speed and smarts with a series of five puzzle-based challenges. You could start by having captains race to put shuffled decks of cards in numerical order, then have the next team member build a foot tall house of cards. You have plenty of ways to go – just pick puzzles that can be completed relatively quickly.

OR

A relay pentathlon. There are dozens – if not hundreds – or wacky race games. Your challenge is to pick five that work well in order. On the first leg, you could make players race while balancing an egg on a wooden spoon. Then, teammates could partner up for a three-legged race, followed by a 50-yard dash with books balanced on their heads.

OR

A wheel pentathlon. Get pulses racing – and competitors laughing – with five wacky wheel-based events. You could start with a tricycle race, with one player from each team required to pedal a lap on a tiny tricycle. Then, you could move onto the likes of a scooter dash followed by limbo on roller skates or a unicycle challenge.

More to EXPLORE: A 100TH-anniversary pentathlon. Old handbooks and Girl Scout alumnae are the perfect resources to find five traditional Girl Scout games, songs, or other inspiration for your pentathlon. Maybe a round of Kim's game, a super-speedy sing down, and a knot-tying challenge can start off your pentathlon.

Add the Badge to Your Journey

Enjoy some real *MEdia* for girls, by girls! Recruit some extra friends to take photos and videos of all the fun on field day. Maybe local radio, news, or television stations will even cover your event. Either way, share the memories at school, in Girl Scouts or with an exhibit at the library - and inspire other girls to team up for friendship and active outdoor fun.

Not that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Volunteering to add a field-day game to a charity festival, cookout, or pancake breakfast
- Hosting a field day for younger Girl Scouts
- Helping plan games for a friend's birthday party or a family reunion

I'm inspired to.