

Musician

Junior Agent of Change badge

Just about everyone loves music. And, making it is just as much fun as listening to it! Whether you're already a musician, or you just want to see what it's like to make sounds on an instrument, there's something for you in this badge.

Steps

1. Explore how music is made
2. Travel around the world of music
3. Check out the music in your life
4. Make your own music
5. Perform your music

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how music is made and how to perform music myself.

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

One of the nicest things about music is that it can be understood by all people in all parts of the world.

-Girl Scout Handbook, 1940

Step 1 Explore how music is made

All music is made of individual sounds called notes. Played in a certain order, notes make a song. Instruments turn songs into music, and the music shares a mood with the audience.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Find out about three different instruments. For each instrument, listen to a recording in which you can hear the instrument well. Find out when it's commonly played and from where it originated. You could choose an instrument from another country or time period as well.

FOR MORE FUNS: Try to make a sound on the three instruments of your choice. Ask for help from a music teacher or an instrument rental store.

OR

Be a conductor. A conductor guides musicians through the music by counting and telling various instruments when to start, stop, and play loudly or softly. Choose a piece of music and learn how to conduct it. For help understanding how the music is written and what different symbols mean, team up with a musician.

OR

Get in the musical mood. Find out song from each of these kinds of performance groups: orchestra, choir or opera, pop artist, and marching band. While listening to each song, move your body to match the mood of the music. Is it sad and slow? Happy and fast?

FOR MORE FUN: As girls did for their Musician badge in 1930, be able to tell major from minor by hearing a few bars played in a major or minor key.

MUSICAL TERMS

Musical symbols are placed on a set of five lines and four spaces called **STAFF**. (That's why paper on which music is written is called "staff paper.")

A **clef** defines the pitch range of a piece of music. The most common are **bass clef** and **treble clef**.

A **tie** shows that two or more notes should be played together as one note.

Symbols placed next to the note tell you if it should be **flat** or **sharp**.

A **measure** is the section of the staff that comes between two bar lines. A **note** symbol shows its length - how many beats it covers in a measure.

Some symbols indicate how a note should be played:

A lower case **f** stands for **forte**, which means the note should be loud. Three **fs**? Extremely loud!

The symbol for **crescendo** shows that the volume of a note should slowly get louder.

A **rest** shows a pause in the music.

A **staccato dot** means that the note should be played short and quick.

Music, you know, is like food. You can't tell what you like until you taste it.

-Girl Scout Handbook, 1953

With an adult, do an internet search for popular kinds of music and instruments.

Step 2 Travel around the world of music

Music is as varied as the people who make it. Take this chance to travel back in time or to different countries through sound.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Listen to one pop song from three different countries. Talk about what you think of the songs and how they're similar or different to other music you've heard.

FOR MORE FUN: Listen to a hit from the year you were born - or songs from the birth year of each member of your family!

OR

Find out more about three composers and their music. As part of your three, choose one modern and one historic composer. Listen to one piece from each. Research from where the composer is/was and when the piece was written. Share what you liked about the music with your group, friends, or family.

FOR MORE FUN: Write a short story or play based on an incident in the life of a great composer.

OR

Oh say, can you see? The anthem for the United States is "The Star-Spangled Banner." Listen to and compare the U.S. anthem with anthems from three other countries. When and why are the anthems played? What do they have in common? And, how do they make you feel?

FOR MORE FUN: Make up a short anthem for you or your Junior group.

More to EXPLORE

Pretend you're a Girl Scout in 1980. As Girl Scouts did to earn their Musician badge, find out about early singing groups - minstrels, troubadours, minnesingers, and Meistersingers. Sing one song from this period, and describe the group, the time, and the country where it was found.

"It's our Song!" Music sometimes helps people remember a fun time or special moment. It might be the tune on the radio during your first day of fourth grade, or a song that a couple danced to at a wedding. You could choose a special song for an occasion, trip, or holiday, and make a music memory with your family or friends.

Step 3 Check out the music in your life

Your family and friends probably like certain types of music more than others. Maybe your community or city is famous for a certain type of music. Find out more about the music that's all around you.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Take a music poll. Ask five members of your family or friends what their favorite type of music is and why. Also, ask them to play (or sing) you their favorite song and tell you why they like it.

FOR MORE FUN: Work with an adult to use a music-preference program, like iTunes, Genius, or Pandora, to suggest other songs or artists your five people might like, based on what they shared with you.

OR

Go to a live musical performance. Team up with an adult and your friends to attend a local music event. You could see someone play at a coffee shop, a festival, a concert, or even on a city street.

FOR MORE FUN: After the performance, draw a picture of how the music made you feel - experiment with colors and shapes to express the mood!

OR

Interview someone with a job in music. It might be a performer, a sound engineer, a music critic, or a music teacher. Find out why they became interested in music, and why they like their job. Share what you find with family or friends.

Famous Women Musicians

Ella Fitzgerald was born in Newport News, Virginia, in 1917. She lived in an orphanage after her mother died in 1932, but she always loved to dance and sing. When Ella was 17, she sang at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York. The audience loved her. She won 14 Grammy awards in her career, earning the nickname "The First Lady of Song."

Alison Krauss was born in Decatur, Illinois, in 1971. She began classical violin lessons at age five, and then switched to bluegrass when she got a little older. When Alison was 13, the Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America called her the "Most Promising Fiddler in the Midwest." Today, she holds the record for the female artist with the most Grammy awards in history.

Step 4 Make your own music

Try out your music skills by making your own instrument or composing a song. Think about how you want to perform in the last step, so you can use this one to prepare.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Make a simple instrument. You might make musical glasses, maracas, or a drum. Play a simple song or keep a basic rhythm on your instrument.

FOR MORE FUN: Draw a one-of-a-kind instrument. Label all of its parts and explain what it would sound like and what kinds of music it would play.

OR

Compose your own song. Writing music takes a lot of training, but you can start in a simple way. If you play an instrument, write a melody of at least eight measures. Show notes, key, tempo, and dynamics. Try to teach someone to play your piece - or make it a duet and practice the song together!

OR

Make up lyrics to a song. The words in a song are called lyrics. Using the tune of a song you know, make up new words and write them down. Most lyrics rhyme, so see if yours can, too!

FOR MORE FUN: Find out how to play the song on a musical instrument, and play along with your new lyrics.

The trees, birds, and rivers that lure you to the trail and woods have given many a musician, and many a Girl Scout, too, an idea for a song.

-Girl Scout Handbook, 1940

More to EXPLORE

Pretend you're a Junior Girl Scout in 1977. Do this activity from their Musician badge: Read the story of an operetta or an opera, and listen to some excerpts from it until you are familiar with them. Then, perform a scene from the operetta or opera. Act it out with friends or puppets to the piece of music.

Step 5 Perform your music

Put on or participate in a performance for family, friends, or neighbors. The show can be big or small, and anywhere from your living room to the school cafeteria to a community center stage.

CHOICES - DO ONE:

Create a performance. Use your new instrument, new composition, or reworded song from the previous step. If you want to play in a group, find a way to use everyone's musical talent together.

OR

Perform in a musical event. It could be a school play, recital, band concert, or a church choir. Invite your Girl Scout friends to come and watch your perform.

OR

Add to your skills. If you're a seasoned musical performer, try to take a solo in a concert, conduct a group, help others in the band practice their parts, or record background sounds or a sound track for a play.

Add the badge to your Journey

For step 4, try creating lyrics that inspire listeners to bust a stereotype. Maybe you can use the song as part of your Speak Out! project.

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

- Creating or composing a song for someone to cheer them up
- Teaching Brownies or Daisies how to make a simple instrument
- Accompanying singers on an instrument at a Girl Scout sing-along!

I'm inspired to.