

Chapter 6: Trips, Camping and Travel

Not only do some of the most memorable moments in a Girl Scout's life happen while taking trips, camping and travel also offer a wealth of opportunities for girls to develop leadership skills. This chapter helps you prepare girls for local, regional, or international travel of any scope and duration.

Juliette Low World Friendship Fund

To honor Juliette Gordon Low's love of travel, of experiencing different cultures, and of making friends, Girl Scouts created the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund in 1927. Today, this fund supports girls' international travel, participation in adult learning, and attendance at other international events—any event that fosters global friendships that connect Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from 145 nations. Visit this link to find out more or to donate to the fund <https://donate.girlscouts.org/worldfriendshipfund>

Using Journeys and *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting in Their Travels*

Girl Scout travel is an ideal way to offer girls leadership opportunities. Encourage girls to choose one of the three series of National Leadership Journeys. The Journey's theme will give girls a way to explore leadership through their travels. Use the adult guide to incorporate activities and discussions that help girls explore the Three Keys to Leadership (Discover, Connect, and Take Action) as they plan their trip and eventually travel.

Tying your trip to the topic of a Leadership Journey is a cinch. For example, if Daisy girls have chosen *Daisy Flower Garden*, they may take a trip to visit a nursery, where they can learn how to care for their mini garden. For Brownie girls using *WOW Wonders of Water*, they might choose to take an overnight trip to Sea World where they can see how different creatures move in water. Junior girls might choose a camping trip if they are using *Get Moving*, where they can experience the night sky without light pollution. If Cadette girls have chosen *MEdia*, before their trip they can read online newspapers from the area to which they're traveling—and evaluate when they arrive how well the media reflects the realities there. If Senior girls are using *SOW WHAT?*, they can plan to observe agricultural practices in other parts of the country or around the world. Ambassadors using *BLISS: Live It! Give It!* can build a trip around dreaming big—and empowering others in their community to dream big, too.

If girls also want to complete skill-building badge requirements as part of their trip, they can. The most obvious example is the Senior Traveler badge, which fits perfectly into planning a trip. In addition, girls can explore other badge topics, depending on the focus of their trip. For examples Daisies can earn *use resources wisely* and *make the world a better place* petals with a trip to the nursery, Brownies while on their camping trip can experience a nighttime scavenger hunt for their Outdoor Adventurer badge, Juniors can learn how to prepare a foil dinner for their meals while camping, Cadettes can explore the food in other regions or countries for their New Cuisines badge, Seniors can find out about international business customs as part of their Business Etiquette badge, and Ambassadors can work on their Photography badge while documenting their trip.

To ensure that any travel you do with girls infuses the Girl Scout Leadership Experience at every opportunity, limit your role to facilitating the girls' brainstorming and planning—but never doing the work for them. Allow the girls to lead, learn collaboratively, and learn by doing (and by making mistakes). All the while, however, provide ideas and insight, ask tough questions when you have to, and support all their decisions with enthusiasm and encouragement!

Include girls with disabilities. Communicate with girls with disabilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations. Make sure that reasonable accommodations are made for girls with disabilities. Learn more about the resources and information that Global Explorers <http://www.nobarriersusa.org/youth/> and Wilderness Inquiries <https://www.wildernessinquiry.org/> provide to people with disabilities.



Minimum Impact and Leave No Trace (LNT)

To ensure that we, as well as generations that follow, have the opportunity to enjoy quality outdoor experiences, each one of us must share the responsibility of making it so. Each of us must adopt a personal code of conduct for outdoor activities and try to live by it. The rules and suggestions below are, for the most part, versions of commonly agreed upon practices employed to achieve minimum impact outdoor activities. Remember Leave No Trace isn't only for the outdoors; it is in what we are already practicing beginning at home!

Leave No Trace means exactly what it implies; that when we venture out-of-doors, we leave no impact to show that we were there. It is awareness and an attitude rather than a set of rules. It applies in our backyard or local park as much as in the backcountry. We should all practice Leave No Trace in our thinking and actions, wherever we go. Leave No Trace offers an online awareness course <https://lnt.org/learn/online-awareness-course> should you like more detailed information about LNT principles. www.LNT.org

The following bullet points are intended to help you understand the meaning of Leave No Trace *Outdoor Ethics* and minimum impact:

- **Plan Ahead and Prepare –**
 - Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
 - Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.
 - Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
 - Visit, travel and camp in small groups – No more than the group size prescribed by land managers.
 - Repackage food to minimize waste.
- **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces –**
 - Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
 - Stay on the Trail – Use established trails when hiking. Each time we leave the trail, we contribute to further erosion and degradation of the trail.
 - Protect riparian (close to water) areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes, streams.
 - Walk, single file, in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
 - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
 - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.
- **Dispose of Waste Properly –**
 - Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out trash, leftover food, and litter, even if it is not your own. Burning trash is never recommended.
 - To wash yourself or your dishes, try to be 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Strain and then scatter dishwater.
- **Leave What You Find –**
 - Preserve the past: observe, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
 - Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
 - Avoid introducing or transporting non-native or even non-local species.
 - Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.
 - Do Not Offend Living Plants – Do not pick, cut, chop, smash, carve, stab, or burn living plants (including trees).
- **Minimize Campfire Impacts –**
 - Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the environment. Use a light-weight stove for cooking and consider a battery lantern for light.
 - Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings. Keep fires small.
 - Don't bring firewood with you. It may be contaminated with non-local insects or diseases. Instead, buy local wood near your destination.
 - Burn all wood to coals and ash, put out campfires completely, and then scatter cool ashes.
 - Keep Cooking Fires Appropriate – Try cooking meals using propane or butane stoves instead of wood. The earth needs decomposing wood to renew itself, and it is a food source for many animals and insects. If you must cook over wood, keep your fire to the bare minimum needed to get the food cooked. Use only downed dead wood. Never take wood from live trees and use existing fire rings, where possible.
- **Respect Wildlife –**
 - Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
 - Never feed or leave food out for animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
 - Protect wildlife by storing food and trash securely.
 - Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
- **Be Considerate of Other Visitors –**
 - Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
 - Select campsites away from other groups – To help preserve their solitude.
 - Always travel and camp quietly – To avoid disturbing other visitors.
 - Respect private property – and leave gates (open or closed) as found.
 - Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail especially uphill hikers and animals.
 - Take breaks and make camp away from trails and other visitors if possible.
 - Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices, noises, and electronic devices.

Leave No Trace Principles for Kids

- Know Before You Go (plan ahead and prepare)
- Choose The Right Path
- Trash Your Trash
- Leave What You Find
- Be Careful With Fire
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Kind To Other Visitors

Letting Girls Lead

Whether the trip is a day hike or a cross-country trek, the basic steps of trip planning are essentially the same. It's true that as the locale gets farther away, the itinerary more complex, and the trip of greater duration, the details become richer and more complex, but planning every trip—from a day-long event to an international trek—starts by asking the following:

- What do we hope to experience?
- Who will we want to talk to and meet? What will we ask?
- Where are we interested in going?
- When are we all available to go?
- Will everyone in our group be able to go?
- Are there physical barriers that cannot be accommodated?
- What are visiting hours and the need for advance reservations?
- What are our options for getting there?
- What's the least and most this trip could cost?
- What can we do now to get ourselves ready?
- How will we earn the money?
- What's the availability of drinking water, restrooms, and eating places?
- Where is emergency help available?
- What safety factors must we consider?
- What will we do as we travel?
- What will we do when we get there?
- How will we share the Take Action story?

As girls answer these questions, they begin the trip-planning process. In time, girls can make specific arrangements, attend to a myriad of details, create a budget and handle money, and accept responsibility for their personal conduct and safety. Later, after they've returned from an event or trip, girls also have the chance to evaluate their experiences and share them with others.

Tips for Girls Traveling Alone

If a Girl Scout Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador will be traveling alone during any part of a trip, use the opportunity to help her feel comfortable with and capable of being on her own. Always talk first with her parents to assess her maturity and ability to handle herself, and have them complete an emergency form. If she is flying, discuss the possibility of booking a nonstop flight to make her trip less stressful, and ask parents to contact the airline, which will make special arrangements for any unaccompanied minor. With the girl herself, develop a trip plan, discuss hotel security and safety, and talk about avoiding excess communication with strangers, **not** wearing a nametag, and avoiding exposing money or other items (such as smartphones, iPads, and iPods) that are attractive to pickpockets.

Additional Activity Insurance for Accidents and Illness

Review the section related to accident and illness insurance, Girl Scout Additional Activity Insurance, for current information regarding coverage that GSGLA offers or requires for specific events. Click here for Mutual of Omaha Girl Scout plans: www.mutualofomaha.com/girl_scouts_of_the_usa/index.html.

TRIPS

Traveling with Girls

Girls love trips and Girl Scouts is a great place for them to learn how to plan and take exciting trips, because travel is built on a progression of activities—that is, one activity leads to the next. Girl Scout Daisies, for example, can begin with a discovery walk. As girls grow in their travel skills and experience and can better manage the planning process, they progress to longer trips. Your Journey adult guide has a lot of other ideas about trips that bring the Journey to life. Here are some examples of the progression of events and trips in Girl Scouting's Ladder of Leadership

http://www.girlscouts.org/program/journeys/your_story/pdf/leadership_ladder.pdf:

- **Short trips to points of interest in the neighborhood (Daisies and older):** A walk to the nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to the firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies.
- **Day trip (Brownies and older):** An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a day-long trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal)—younger girls can select locations and do much of the trip-planning, while never being too far from home.
- **Overnight trips (Brownies and older):** One (or possibly two) nights away to a state or national park, historic city, or nearby city for sightseeing or consider a short campout. These short trips are just long enough to whet their appetites, but not long enough to generate homesickness.
- **Extended overnight trips (Juniors and older):** Three or four nights camping or a stay in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the girls' home region (for example, San Francisco, San Diego, Arizona, and so on). Planning a trip to a large museum—and many offer unique opportunities for girls to actually spend the night on museum grounds—makes for an exciting experience for girls.
- **National trips (Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors):** Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Try to steer clear of trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component—this often means no Disney and no cruises, but can incorporate some incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country.
- **International trips (Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors):** Travel around the world, often requiring one or two years of preparation; when girls show an interest in traveling abroad, contact our council to get permission to plan the trip and download the Global Travel Toolkit here: http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/global/travel_toolkit.asp. Visiting one of the four World Centers (<http://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/global/world-centers.html>) is a great place to start, but also consider traveling with worldwide service organizations. Recently, girls have traveled to rural Costa Rica to volunteer at an elementary school, to Mexico to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, and to India to work with girls living in poverty in urban slums.

Trip Progression Checklist

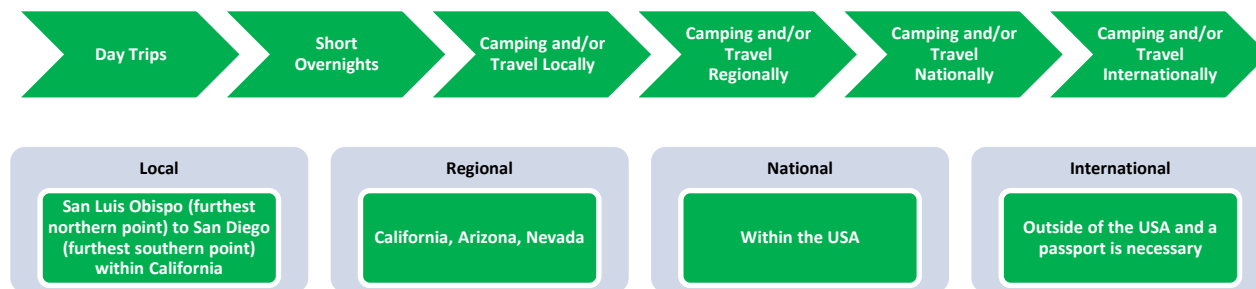
If your group is thinking about traveling, consider first whether the girls are mature enough to handle the trip. Determine a group's readiness for travel by assessing the girls':

- Ability to be away from their parents and their homes
- Ability to adapt to unfamiliar surroundings and situations
- Ability to make decisions for themselves and the good of the group well and easily
- Previous cross-cultural experiences
- Ability to get along with each other and handle challenges
- Ability to work well as a team
- Skills, interests, and language skills (where applicable)

PROGRESSION

Progression in Girl Scouting is of primary importance for both girls and adults. Start with day trips and then progress to short overnights close to home. Once the girls are ready and able to expand their scope of travel, take Indoor Overnight training. This class will help you prepare the girls for their first adventures away from home. The Indoor Overnight class is the first step in progression and is a pre-requisite for Camping Skills and Domestic Troop Travel.

Progression Steps:



Day Trips: If you like to visit points of interest in the neighborhood, then a meeting time or day trip gives you that opportunity.

Camping: If you like the outdoors, then the Camping Skills class is required before you and the girls plan your first camping trip. In this class you will learn all about fires, outdoor cooking, knots, and knives. Be sure to give yourself enough time to teach the girls camping skills at home before their camping adventure.

Travel: If you like to travel and are planning on staying in hotels and/or hostels, then the Domestic Troop Travel class is required before you and the girls plan their travel trip. Be sure to give yourself enough time to teach them the expected behavior, etiquette, and other expectations before your trip. Staying at hotels and hostels involves a different knowledge and skill set to ensure girls have a fun and safe experience.

Extended Travel: If you are planning a trip of more than three days and two nights, your trip is an extended trip and the Domestic Troop Travel class is required. For extended trips, Troops/groups must submit an Extended Travel/High Risk Application e-form (<https://www.gsglavolunteerapps.org/extended-travelhigh-risk-application/>) for approval. Learn which extra Activity Insurance is required and what type to purchase.

International Travel: If you are planning on traveling internationally, then the International Travel class is required before you and the girls plan their international travel trip. The class covers what is needed to take an international trip. Troops/groups must submit an Extended Travel/High Risk Application e-form (<https://www.gsglavolunteerapps.org/extended-travelhigh-risk-application/>) for pre-approval. Pre-approval is required 18-24 months in advance of the trip.

Use this handy chart to determine which classes to take in order to give your girls the best and safest experiences. What I Need For My Girls To Attend A...(http://www.girlscoutsla.org/documents/What_I_need_for.pdf)

Trip Guidelines

One tool that will help you keep trips girl-led, is to start with short, close-to-home trips, then as girls succeed at planning those, move on to longer or more complex trips. If girls are not able to choose the what/when/where/who and how of a trip, it may not be age-appropriate! As you help girls choose and plan their trips, be sure they use these Trip Guidelines established for troop and other pathways in Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles:

Program Age Level	Day Trip Travel Guidelines	Overnight Trip Travel Guidelines
Girl Scout Daisies	Start out with short, local trips of several hours in duration. You may want to invite a parent or other caregiver to accompany for the first few trips until you know the girls are comfortable in the troop. When girls are ready — take progressively longer trips working up to full day trips.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girl Scout Daisies in First Grade may participate in a one-night Indoor Overnight* troop experience once the troop has successfully completed at least 5 day trips. • These day trips must be of progressively longer time periods and take place during both Kindergarten and first grade. The next progressive step would be an Indoor Overnight once the leaders, girls, and parents feel that the group is ready. • Girls should help in planning the overnight and this experience would occur near the end of the first grade school year with adult ratios or one parent per family.
Girl Scout Brownies	Day travel is unlimited. No hotels, motels, or hostels	May take local overnight troop trips of one or two nights once progressive day trips have been successfully completed. Travel is unlimited within the local area (San Luis Obispo to San Diego).
Girl Scout Juniors	Day travel is unlimited.	May take overnight trips of two or more nights based on previous troop travel experiences. Travel is unlimited within the region (CA, NV, AZ).
Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors & Ambassadors	Day travel is unlimited.	May take overnight trips of three nights based on previous troop travel experiences. Travel is unlimited in the United States. Troop international travel is approved for girls Cadette and above. May travel internationally, once approved. International Travel Training is required at least one year in advance before applying for this type of trip.

Girl Readiness

When is a girl ready for a day trip or one-night overnight at an indoor facility with kitchen and bathrooms? As troop leader, you must decide if the trip or overnight activity is appropriate for the maturity of the girls and their basic skill level. Here are some things to consider:

A girl needs to...

- Be ready emotionally and physically for the planned trip.
- Have the skills needed to plan the trip and participate in activities/camp living.
- Want to attend the planned trip.

She is ready when she...

- Is not afraid to be away from home and family overnight (and parents are prepared to let her go!).
- Can keep up with, and take care of, personal and troop belongings.
- Gets along well with all girls in the troop, can work as part of a group, and can help resolve conflicts that might arise within the group.
- Can cope with the “unknown” – strange places, darkness, sharing of space, “critters,” etc.
- Is in good health* and takes responsibility for her personal health and safety, such as hygiene, dressing, staying with the group, etc.

- Has stamina, does not tire quickly, and is strong enough to carry personal luggage or troop gear like a bucket of water, armload of wood, etc.
- Can help plan a short trip – what, when, where, who, how; can plan simple menus.
- Can help make and use kaper charts sharing responsibility: for general clean-up of site, food preparation, washing dishes, cleaning up kitchen or cooking area, cleaning bathrooms and sleeping quarters.
- Knows health and safety rules, use of the buddy system, simple first aid, staying safe and found, what to do in an emergency.
- Knows how to dress and pack for activities/weather; can make a bedroll or roll a sleeping bag.
- Is willing to help her troop earn money for the trip (dues and product sales).

***Include girls with disabilities and other special needs!** *Communicate with girls and/or with their caregivers, to assess any special needs or accommodations related to health issues or disabilities.*

Learn more about adaptive camping resources and information from Global Explorers (www.globalexplorers.org) and Wilderness Inquiries (www.wildernessinquiry.org).

Adult Supervision

As a troop or other pathway leader, you are not only supervising activities yourself, you help the other adults accompanying you on trips understand what supervision means when activities are girl-led:

- Teaching, watching, guiding, and directing girls as they take part in activities, but not taking over and doing things for the girls
- Encouraging girls to try new things and learn new skills
- Giving girls real responsibility for finishing a job, so they can see themselves as useful and competent.
- Being aware of potential danger and if necessary, intervening before injuries occur. (Safety is a primary concern.)
- Providing effective correction when needed – reminding girls what is and is not acceptable behavior; expressing disapproval of the behavior, not the child.
- Taking full responsibility for the group and know where everyone is at all times (counting heads, checking that girls are where they say – in bathroom, in bed, etc.).
- Being available for advice and assistance for difficult tasks.
- Being a role model by your actions.

Involving Chaperones, Drivers and First-Aiders

Every chaperone, driver, and first-aider must be screened and cleared (To determine how many volunteer chaperones the girls will need with them on the trip, see the adult-to-girl ratios in this handbook. As you ask for chaperones, drivers, and a first-aider, be sure to look for ones who are committed to:

- Being a GSGLA approved volunteer*.
- Being a positive role model and knowing their role and the leader's expectations. Handling pressure and stress by modeling flexibility and a sense of humor. Getting fit (appropriate to the trip)
- Creating an experience for and with girls, by understanding the plans the girls have made for the trip, plus realizing all adults on the trip should be acting as coaches (watching, guiding, and not doing). Supporting and reinforcing a group agreement the girls created.
- Knowing what equipment and clothing they need and what the site will be like. It is suggested that members should wear closed toed shoes when participating in outdoor activities unless engaging in water sports.
- Creating a safe space for girls, by being aware of the rules in force at the site as well as the schedule and expectations that the girls have set for themselves. Respecting all girls and adults equally, with no preferential treatment.
- Prioritizing the safety of all girls, by understanding the safety systems for the trip (travel rules, buddy system, staying found, etc.) that the girls have learned.
- Knowing the emergency procedures for the site.
- Knowing GSGLA's transportation procedures, guidelines, and program standards for transportation safety in *Volunteer Essentials*.
- Having appropriate forms and emergency equipment in vehicles and on site.

Be sure every chaperone reviews the Safety-Wise and Troop Chaperone online training modules found at www.gsglaonlinetraining.org.

An adult chaperone's primary responsibility is supervision of the girls to ensure that *Safety Activity Checkpoints* are being adhered to. Keep this in mind before participating in any activities with the girls that may distract your attention from this critical responsibility.

***Being an approved volunteer means that you are a registered member, have a volunteer application and a cleared background screening on file (within the last three years), and have completed position related training.**

Transporting Girls

How parents decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parent's decision and responsibility.

For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities—outside the normal time and place—in which a group will be transported in private vehicles:

- Every driver must be an approved* adult volunteer, at least **21** years of age, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.
- Girls never drive other girls.
- If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated cleared adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios must be followed.
- If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, cleared adult volunteers, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single car (with a single adult driver) is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

***Being an approved volunteer means that you are a registered member, have a volunteer application and a cleared background screening on file (within the last three years), and have completed position related training.**

For more about driving, see the "Transporting Girls" section of "Chapter 4: Safety-Wise" in this handbook.



Staying Safe during the Trip

Be sure to discuss the following items with the girls and their parents before you leave on any trip. You may also want to put this information in writing and have girls sign it:

- Who her buddy is—and how the buddy system works
- What to do if she is separated from the group, whether by accident or because of a crime
- What to do if she loses something significant: money, passport, luggage
- How to report a crime
- What to do if emergency help is needed
- How to perform basic first aid procedures
- How to deal with a large crowd (if applicable)
- What to do in the event of a crime
- What behaviors you expect—and what consequences exist for not living up to those behaviors

Volunteers in a supervisory position should always carry copies of:

- Parent Permission forms
- Health History, Over-the-Counter (OTC), and Provided Prescription and Provided OTC Medication forms and the Troop Medical Log.
- Any Additional Activity Insurance & emergency numbers
- Sleeping arrangement form (as needed if girls are sharing a bed).
- Adult medical and Emergency information

These documents should be easily accessible when engaged in activities with girls. GSGLA also recommends that an emergency drill or safety discussion always occur when arriving at a new site.

Health History

Girl Scouting helps girls discover how to stay healthy and have a feeling of well-being, and adult volunteers provide supervision and model healthy behavior, but ultimately the health of a girl is the responsibility of herself and her parent or caregiver. In addition to a Parent Permission Form, and *Health History*, girls may also need, Over-the-Counter (OTC), Provided Prescription and Provided OTC medication forms signed by their parent or caregiver for troop camping, water sports, horseback riding, skiing, hiking, non-contact sports, or other physically demanding sports. Health History forms are available by clicking this link: http://www.girlscoutsla.org/documents/2016_17_GSGLA_Health_History_Form.pdf.

They are filled out by the girl's parent or caregiver to give an updated record of the girl's health status. Form should be reviewed and updated before each trip if any information has changed or new medications are being used, and must be updated at least once a year. Adults participating in troop activities should complete a green Adult Emergency Information and Authorization to Treat card; their card is to be kept on their person in an easily accessible spot, to be accessed by the first-aider only in case of an emergency.

Seeking GSGLA Permission

Before most trips, you and the girls will need to obtain council permission. Check with GSGLA for specifics, and also see whether specific forms must be filled out before traveling. Before working with the girls to plan any trip a responsible adult who will be working with the girls and other adults is to:

For Day Trips

- Complete Basic Leader Training or online equivalencies prior to the planning of any trip.
- Review the applicable Safety Activity Checkpoints and the need for a trained first-aider.
- Ensure all adults attending or participating in any trip have a clearance on file and are a registered member. Having a clearance means: filling out an application and a criminal background check, and have received a clearance email.
- Ensure that all appropriate paperwork and approvals such as Parent Permission Form, Health History Form, Volunteer Driver Log, and any other records be obtained prior to the beginning of any trip.
- Complete and submit a signed Parent Permission form and send to your service unit manager/designee at least **2 weeks prior** to the trip

For Short Overnight Trips

1-2 nights (three if a federal holiday) Local or Regional

- Complete Indoor Overnight, and/or Camping Skills and/or Domestic Troop Travel depending on trip plans
- Review the applicable Safety Activity Checkpoints and the need for a trained first-aider.
- Ensure all adults attending or participating in any trip have a clearance on file and are a registered member. Having a clearance means: filling out an application and a criminal background check, and have received a clearance email.
- Ensure that all appropriate paperwork and approvals such as Parent Permission Form, Health History Form, Volunteer Driver Log, and any other records be obtained prior to the beginning of any trip.
- Complete and submit a signed Parent Permission form and send to your service unit manager/designee at least **4 weeks prior** to the trip

Depending on whether the plan is to sleep indoors or outdoors, and the activities expected at the location, Indoor Overnight training must be taken before planning begins. Then either Camping Skills (outdoor) and/or Domestic Troop Travel (indoor) training is to be taken before planning begins. (Indoor and Camping Skills Overnight is also offered as a combination class)

For Extended Overnight Trips

3+ nights Local, Regional, National/1-2nights National/10+nights Local, Regional, National/1+ nights International

- For Overnight Trips whether sleeping in an open room, outdoors, in a hotel/hostel, complete Domestic Troop Travel training prior to submitting the Extended Travel/High Risk Application e-form or <https://www.gsglavolunteerapps.org/extended-travelhigh-risk-application>
- For International Trips or cruises, complete International Troop Travel Training prior to submitting the Extended Travel/High Risk Application e-form. <https://www.gsglavolunteerapps.org/extended-travelhigh-risk-application>
- Review the applicable Safety Activity Checkpoints and the need for a trained first-aider.
- Ensure all adults attending or participating in any trip are a cleared adult.
- Ensure that all appropriate paperwork and approvals such as Parent Permission Form, Health History Form, Volunteer Driver Log, and any other records be obtained prior to the beginning of any trip.
- Troops/groups must submit an Extended Travel/High Risk Application e-form (<https://www.gsglavolunteerapps.org/extended-travelhigh-risk-application/>) following these time frames:
 - Regional – 3 months prior to trip
 - National – 6 months prior to trip
 - International – 18-24 months prior to trip
- The application will ask for:
 - A detailed itinerary and budget, including specific activities involved, mode of travel, and all dates and times.
 - Location and type of premises to be used
 - Roster of girls who will be participating including contact information
 - Roster of adults participating, including contact information
 - Any other groups, organizations, consultants, or resource people who will be involved
 - Participants' skill levels, if applicable (language skills, backpacking or camping experience, etc.)
 - Any specialized equipment that will be used, if applicable
 - Required agreements or contracts (for example, reservations, hiring a bus, use of premises)
 - Secure additional Activity Insurance and prepare Extended Troop Travel paperwork. Available here: [www.girlscoutsla.org/documents/Additional Insurance Request Form.pdf](http://www.girlscoutsla.org/documents/Additional_Insurance_Request_Form.pdf).

For High Risk Activities

- Complete required trainings or online module equivalencies prior to the planning of any trip.
- Review the applicable Safety Activity Checkpoints and the need for a first-aider.
- Ensure all adults attending or participating in any trip have a clearance on file and are a registered member. Having a clearance means: filling out an application and a criminal background check, and have received a clearance email.
- Ensure that all appropriate paperwork and approvals such as Parent Permission Form, Health History Form, Volunteer Driver Log, and any other records be obtained prior to the beginning of any trip.
- Troops/groups must submit an Extended Travel/High Risk Application e-form to receive approval, at least 4 weeks before the activity, <https://www.gsglavolunteerapps.org/extended-travelhigh-risk-application/>

- The application will ask for:
 - The specific activity involved, mode of travel, and all dates and times
 - Location and type of premises to be used including website URL if available
 - Roster of girls who will be participating including contact information
 - Roster of adults participating, including contact information
 - Any other groups, organizations, consultants, or resource people who will be involved
 - Participants' skill levels, if applicable (waterfront, backpacking or camping experience, etc.)
 - Any specialized equipment that will be used, if applicable
 - Required agreements or contracts (for example, reservations, facility use, hiring a bus, etc.)
- Submit to <mailto:coi@girlscoutsla.org>

How do you know if the trip is approved?

- Short Overnight Trips: the service unit manager or designee contacts the leader.
- For extended trips (any trip that is three nights or more), cruises and international trips, you will be notified of approval or not, by email, within 14 business days of receipt of application

Trip Application Deadlines:

- Day trips: The troop leader is responsible for ensuring that all safety guidelines are followed for day trips taken by the troop – an eform application does not need to be submitted to GSGLA unless a high risk activity is involved.
- Local and regional trips of one or two nights: four weeks prior to departure
- Local trips of three nights or more: three months prior to departure
- Regional trips of three nights or more: three months prior to departure
- National trips of three nights or more: six months prior to departure.
- Cruises and International trips: 18-24 months prior to departure. International Training must be taken prior to submitting e-form for pre-approval for international travel.

When the Trip Ends: Re-engaging Girls

The end of this trip doesn't have to be the end of a girls' time with Girl Scouting. Some girls participate in Girl Scouting in all sorts of ways; others are excited only about travel. What lies ahead for them—and for you?

- Girls who have never been involved in any other way besides travel may be looking for longer-term opportunities closer to home. Younger Cadettes may want to participate in resident camp, while Seniors and Ambassadors—as well as older Cadettes—will want to hear all about upcoming series and events at our council.
- Girls who have traveled once tend to want to travel again. Be sure girls are aware that other travel opportunities, such as Destinations <http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/Destinations/> will exist for them in the years ahead. The great experiences they had on this trip may have prepared them for longer and more global trips in the future. (See the travel section in this chapter)
- Girls may want to hear about the Girl Scout Silver and Gold Awards, which are opportunities for them to make a dramatic difference in their communities—and to have plenty to brag about with college admissions officers, too! For some girls, issues they identified while traveling in another state or country became the focus of their Gold Award Take Action Project.

And what about you? If you're ready for more opportunities to work with girls, be sure to let us know how you'd like to be a part of girls' lives in the future. Are you ready for a year-long volunteer opportunity with a troop? Help organize a series or event? Take another trip? The possibilities are endless.

Camping

Where May We Camp?

Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles operates two camps and ten program centers. Our camps offer many outdoor experiences for troop camping, service unit camporees and other fun-filled events. Our program centers offer the space you need for your weekly troop meetings, trainings, overnights and special events. With Southern California's geographically diverse environment from the oceans to the deserts to the mountains and coastal hills, GSGLA offers a number of opportunities to explore the natural world!

For further information, please go to our website at <http://www.girlscoutsla.org/pages/camp/index.html>.

Non-Council Campsites

In addition to GSGLA's two council camps and ten program centers, Girl Scouts may camp at other youth agency camps; in state parks or national forests; or private campsites. These sites must meet the guidelines for troop camping in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, located on our website.

Facility Use Agreements/Reservation Contracts for these sites must be completed and signed by the requestor and sent to COI@girlscoutsla.org. Designated GSGLA Risk Management will review and approve before they can be submitted to the site. An adult trained in Indoor Overnight and Camping Skills/Domestic Troop Travel (depending on activity) and an adult trained and currently certified in first aid/CPR/AED are required. All adults accompanying the troop must be approved volunteers*.

As an organization committed to open membership regardless of race, creed, nationality, or socio-economic factors, Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles will patronize only those public accommodations that are open to all individuals.

***Being an approved volunteer means that you are a registered member, have a volunteer application and a cleared background screening on file (within the last three years), and have completed position related training.**

Who Can Go Troop Camping?

Currently registered Girl Scout Daisy (see special note below), Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador troops trained and accompanied by an adult who has taken council approved outdoor training, (as detailed below) and an adult with a current First Aid/CPR/AED certification are eligible to apply for overnight camping.

Girl Scout Daisies in First Grade may participate in a one-night Indoor Overnight* troop experience once the troop has successfully completed at least 5 day trips. These day trips must be of progressively longer time periods and take place during both Kindergarten and first grade. The next progressive step would be an Indoor Overnight once the leaders, parents, and girls feel that the group is ready. Girls should help in planning the overnight and this experience would occur near the end of the first grade school year with adult ratios or one parent per family.



Required Outdoor Training for Troop Camping

Refer to the "What I Need for My Girls to Attend A..." http://www.girlscoutsla.org/documents/What_I_need_for.pdf chart for specific outdoor training requirements for the following activities:

- Indoor Overnights require Indoor Overnight training
- Hotel stays require Indoor Overnight and Domestic Troop Travel training
- Camping requires Indoor Overnight and Camping Skills training
- Backpacking requires Indoor Overnight, Camping Skills, and Backpacking training
- Extended overnights (3 nights or more) require Indoor Overnight and Domestic Troop Travel training

Additionally each outdoor event or activity must include a Troop First Aid volunteer based on the standard found in the "Safety-Wise" chapter.

*Please note that all adults accompanying the troop must have a clearance on file and are a registered member. Having a clearance means: filling out an application and a criminal background check, and have received a clearance email. The process can take up to two weeks so please plan accordingly.

Pre-camp training for girls and adults should include:

- identifying the skills they will need
- learning new skills
- reviewing and practicing present skills
- learning about and practicing minimal impact camping (see Leave No Trace below)
- learning health and safety procedures, first aid, and emergency procedures
- working together as partners to plan menus and activities

Camp Safety and Security

Before going on any trip in the outdoors, become familiar with the security and safety guidelines in this manual, and, of course, in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. Camp safety and security are just part of being prepared. Before any outdoor activity, girls and adults should plan ahead and discuss safety. Planning ahead, anticipating possible problems and their solutions, is all a part of prevention or risk management planning. Girls and adults should work together to create a prevention plan for their outing. Your troop's certified first aid adult would be a good person to help girls review safety rules, check out the first aid kit and practice simple first aid.

Safety means helping girls be safe and secure and preventing accidents as they take part in activities or use facilities, supplies, equipment, and tools.

Security means to protect, or safeguard. It also means freedom from fear. It is the protection of individuals and the protection of "things" – sites, facilities, and possessions – from unwanted visitors, both human and animal! Some basic security guidelines include:

- If possible, the troop leader and trained troop camper (and perhaps the troop officers in an older girl troop) should visit the campsite ahead of time and become familiar with its facilities. Leaders may call the resident ranger at a GSGLA campsite to arrange a visit at a time convenient to the ranger, since she/he has a regular maintenance schedule to keep. A day-use area may be reserved through the property registrar if a troop wishes to pre-visit a camp,.
- At camp, always use the buddy system. An adult may be a "substitute buddy" for after-dark trips to the bathroom or latrine.
- Stay near the group. Don't wander away from the campsite (unit).
- Get to know other troops camping near you. Avoid contact with strangers – if feeling threatened or in trouble, move away from the threat and toward people and lights.
- Always carry a flashlight at night. Be sure girls know where the certified first aid adult and other adults are.
- Girls should report suspicious sounds, activities or people to an adult in their group. An adult should report to the camp ranger, or if in a public place – call 911.
- Any food left out on tables, taken into tents or thrown into bushes is a great attraction for unwanted animals.
- Clean up promptly after meals and secure trash. Put food away in sturdy coolers locked in a cabinet.
- Lock cars, cabinets, and buildings whenever you leave your campsite. Bring only what you need to camp and leave your valuables at home.
- Discuss and practice emergency drills with the group – lost camper, suspicious person, etc.
- Role play or practice what to do if lost, approached by a stranger or animal, an alarm sounds, there is thunder or other trouble (girls can think of "scenarios" – that's good risk management!)

Emergencies

Review the Emergency Procedures that can be found in "Chapter 4: Safety-Wise". When you arrive at a council camp, locate the posted emergency procedures. They are usually located in the unit shelter, but ask the ranger if you cannot find them. Be familiar enough with what to do in various emergencies (fire, severe storms, etc.) so you and the girls can act quickly and efficiently. There is less chance of panic if girls have had "drills" and know what to do. Make this a natural part of your camp planning and preparation. If camping in a public use campground, make sure that you are aware of safety procedures and safe places to go in an emergency situation.

Camp Equipment

When troops discover that they love camping and other outdoor adventures, it may become practical for them to own their own camping equipment. This will allow girls to use a wider range of campsites, to have equipment available when they need it, and to become familiar with its use and care. Large items, like tents, will take long-range planning and budgeting, but families might help with small items at a “camping shower” when extra utensils or gadgets from home are donated to the troop. For beginning campers, the next time your group wants to “make something,” try a campfire toaster, nest of kettles, stuff bag, patrol box, etc. made from recycled or re-used materials – it’s fun!

If girls borrow camp equipment from family or friends, they must be prepared to return it clean and in good condition. Also be prepared to replace lost items promptly or pay for any necessary repairs. You might consider renting equipment from a local camping equipment supplier.

Travel

Travel Pathways

Although some girls who are in a group (for example, a troop of Cadettes) may decide to travel together, travel pathway opportunities exists for girls who are not otherwise involved in Girl Scouts to get together specifically for the purpose of traveling locally, regionally, and even internationally. Girls can travel regardless of how else they are—or aren’t—participating in Girl Scouting.

From the Birth of Girl Scouting to the World Centers

The Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace (<http://www.juliettegordonlowbirthplace.org/>) in Savannah, Georgia, is a fantastic place for Girl Scout Juniors and older to visit. Reservations and council approval are required to take a group of girls to visit the birthplace, and most educational opportunities are booked at least a year in advance, so book early! Families and individuals, however, do not need to reserve a tour in advance.

In addition, four lodges are available in England, Mexico, Switzerland, and India for use by Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, each with hostel- or dormitory-style accommodations. The world centers <http://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/global/world-centers.html> are operated by WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) and offer low-cost accommodations and special programs. They are also a great way to meet Girl Guides and Girl Scouts from around the world.

Travel Security and Safety Tips

Share these safety tips with girls before you leave on any trip that involves a stay at a hotel, motel, hostel, or dormitory:

- Always lock the door behind you, using the deadbolt and the chain or anchor.
- Do not open the door for strangers; if hotel staff claims to be at the door, call the front desk to confirm.
- Don’t mention or display your room number when in the presence of strangers.
- Never leave jewelry, cameras, electronics, cash, or credit cards in your room.
- Never leave luggage unattended in the hotel lobby (or in an airport or train or bus station).
- When arriving at the hotel, locate emergency exits.
- Keep a small flashlight on your bedside table, along with a small bag with your room key, wallet, passport, and cell phone. Take the flashlight and bag with you if you have to leave the room in an emergency.
- If a fire alarm goes off, get out as quickly as possible. Don’t stop to pack your suitcase.
- Before leaving your room, feel the door: If it is warm, do not open it. Stay in your room and stuff towels around the door. Call the hotel operator immediately. If the door is cool, proceed slowly out the door, looking for flames or smoke. Repeat these instructions for any door you encounter.
- Contact the front desk to make sure girls’ rooms are cleared of any minibars or refrigerators. Also be sure the hotel doesn’t provide access to inappropriate movies on TVs and does not allow long-distance calls. Alert the hotel management that underage girls are staying in the hotel, and ask them to contact you if any girls are seen out of their rooms after bedtime.

Girl Scout Getaways and Guide/Scout Jamborees

Troop travel also includes national Getaways and international Jamborees, which range from two days to three weeks and are for Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors. They are sponsored by Girl Scouts of the USA, by Girl Scout councils, and by Girl Guide associations. For details and a list of destinations, go to <http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/> and <https://www.waggs.org/en/events/>. **Getaways** are short term travel opportunities designed for Girl Scout troops or groups. These are also nationally sponsored events and available within many areas of the United States. If your Cadette/Senior/or Ambassador troop is thinking of taking an extended trip, within the United States, have your girls check the website for ideas of a Getaway <http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/getaways/> they might be able to join while on their trip. Many of them are in California! There is no application process for a Getaway.

Girl Scout Destinations

Destinations are nationally sponsored trips, which range from two days to three weeks, and are exclusively designed for individual Girl Scout travel. Girls apply individually for national or international Destinations, depending upon their grade level in Girl Scouts. Following the travel progression, usually girls 11-14, with previous family or troop travel experience travel on a national Destinations and girls 15-18 travel internationally.

For details and a list of Destinations, go to <http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/Destinations/>.

GSGLA is committed to helping individual girls apply for Destinations, learn how to raise the money to attend, and how to go safely on their Destination adventures. Each October, we offer a Destinations Day in each region for girls and their parents/caregivers to gain more information. Make sure your girls register through their parent's eBiz. They can even attend the Destinations Day as a troop. It is a fun and educational day!

A Destination is a chance for a girl, traveling alone, to go somewhere new, participate in activities of her interest, make new friends, and have a great adventure. The Destinations program is sponsored and encouraged by GSUSA in each council in the United States and its territories and for girls in troops overseas.

If an older Girl Scout is in a troop that does not like to travel or she has a special interest that the others don't share, then applying for a Destination is her best choice. She is still in an all-girl environment while on her trip with a Girl Scout focus. This is a perfect opportunity for a Juliette girl to participate in individual Girl Scout travel.

Girls between the ages of 11-17 may apply to attend a Destination, but must look carefully at the description of the Destination to check on the age requirements.

Most international trips are for girls ages 14 and older, while only a few national opportunities are for girls 11 years. Most are for girls 12 and older. Some of GSGLA sponsored events and a few of the international events request staff, so then an adult may apply. At the bottom of each Destination description is where the need for staff is located and the instructions of how to apply or who to contact.

There are two types of Destinations. One **sponsored by a Girl Scout council** in the United States and the other sponsored by a corporation/business such as Outward Bound, Space Camp, or Alpine Training Services. GSGLA sponsored events tend to be limited to 25-30 girls, run by Girl Scout staff and volunteers, and are the favorite Destinations.



Reviewers are looking for applications that are complete, essays keeping the focus of the Destination, those with carefully selected references, and those that use the guidance of a parent or mentor.

An application must stand out as one of the most qualified, as sometimes there are as many as 500 applications for a specific destination. Most **corporate sponsored** events have a special focus such as Space Camp or canoeing for 5 days on the Great Lakes, backpacking/hiking across a state. Most of these destinations will accept most girls and do not fill up quickly, as there will be many girls in a group. They will break the girls into smaller groups as they arrive at the destination. Corporations must follow GSUSA procedures and safety standards, as must all GSGLA events.

Each Destination has its own requirements: age, skill level, location, length of stay, time of year, interest theme, and cost. There are five different types of Destinations:

- **Apprenticeships** concentrate on career oriented opportunities and giving service.
- Those with an **Outdoor** theme may require specific skills such as: primitive camping, canoeing, swimming, hiking, or biking. A girl can apply for an Outdoor Destination and may find that she needs to take classes that will enhance the skills she will need on the trip.
- Several of the Destinations include touring, activities, museums, and history of the people of a specific city/region and those are listed under **People**.
- Space, nature, ecology, and geology are only a few of the themes of the **Science** Destinations.

Many of the **International** trips, especially if sponsored by a council, would like (but do not require) girls to attend a national Destination first. Usually these trips are for girls 15 years and older, so there is plenty of time for a girl 11-14 to participate in a national Destination. Many international Destinations range from just touring to giving service to communities throughout the world. This might include visiting one of the four World Centers: Pax Lodge in the United Kingdom, Our Chalet in Switzerland, Our Cabana in Mexico, and Sangam in India.

Tips for Girls Traveling Alone

If a Girl Scout Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador will be traveling alone during any part of a trip, such as attending a GSUSA Destination, as her leader use the opportunity to help her feel comfortable with and capable of being on her own. Always talk first with her parents to assess her maturity and ability to handle herself. If she is flying, discuss the possibility of booking a non-stop flight to make her trip less stressful, and ask parents/caregivers to contact the airline, which will make special arrangements for any unaccompanied minor. With the girl, develop a trip plan, discuss safety, talk about avoiding excess communication with strangers, not wearing a nametag, and avoiding exposing money or other items (such as smartphones, iPads, or iPods) that are attractive to pickpockets. Make sure girls carry the 1.877.ICE-GSGLA (1-877-423-4752) number for emergencies or help with contacting family or the authorities. Of course, all of this will be covered again at the Destinations Day in October! Remember to register on eBiz!

