

**BUDGET BRILLIANTLY**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the world of money management in Girl Scouting. You will embark on a great journey of goal setting, planning and budgeting all done with your girls. One basic principle of Girl Scouting is every activity should help girls take another step along the road to becoming self-assured adults, enabling them to cope with whatever life brings. Dealing with money in a troop is no exception.

* Troops should be self-supporting - the goal for the troop is to earn enough money to pay for anticipated program activities without repeatedly asking the parents for contributions.
* Money is often required to pay for activities, supplies and equipment.
* The Girl Scout program should not be expensive for girls.

**TROOP REVENUE**

**Council–sponsored Product Sales** are council-wide sales of Girl Scout authorized products in which members participate as part of the Girl Scout program.

**Troop/group Money-earning** refers to activities organized by the group (not the council) that are planned and carried out by girls (in partnership with adults) and earn money for the troop/group. Group/troop money-earning cannot take place during product sales boothing periods. These activities must be approved by the council in writing.

**Sponsorships** are voluntary agreements between individual, small local businesses, schools or community organizations to support troop/group membership and program. Sponsorships include employee matching gifts or employee volunteer hours’ programs.

**Troop/group Dues** are funds the girls contribute to help pay for the troop program and goals. No girl should be denied membership based on the inability to pay. It is recommended girls be given the opportunity to learn how to handle their money and have the responsibility of bringing their dues to each meeting rather than the parents paying monthly or quarterly.

By developing money management skills early in life, girls learn how to set financial goals, and gain the confidence they need to ultimately take control of their own financial future.

Girl Scout leaders guide girls in deciding, carrying out, and evaluating program activities. Helping girls estimate costs and talking with them about costs in relation to plans will help them develop good money management skills. When girls are involved in all stages of the goal setting, planning and budgeting processes, they DISCOVER the HOW of their activities.

Girl Scout troops/groups activities are funded by money earned through ***council-sponsored product sales, troop/group money-earning, sponsorships***, and ***troop/group dues***. If the income from product sales isn’t enough, girls have the other options available to them. All troop revenue received belongs to the troop and does not become property of individual girl members.

Troop/group money management skills include budgeting. A budget is a plan for discovering how much money you are going to need and where the money will be coming from. Budgets should always balance, which means your income is equal to your expenses. In teaching how to budget, remember progression in the learning experience.

All troop/group funds, including product sales, should be included in the total year’s projected income. Although troops/groups will not receive the funds until after the appropriate sale, it will help in planning troop/group activities for the spring as well as for the next

program year.

Girl Scout Brownies through Girl Scout Ambassadors should participate by taking turns as the troop/group treasurer and working with an adult to handle the troop/group money. The troop/group treasurer collects and records the dues. As money management skills develop, girls take on more financial responsibility for troop/group funds. Each grade level has its own role in troop/group financial management.

**GRADE LEVEL ROLE IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

**DAISY ROLE**

* The troop/group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and does all troop/group budgeting.
* Girls discuss which activities to attend.
* Girls can participate in council-sponsored products sales.
* Daisies are always paired with an adult when selling anything.

**BROWNIE ROLE**

* Troop/group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and shares some of the group/troop budgeting responsibilities.
* Girls discuss cost of supplies needed for activities.
* Girls learn to set goals and participate in council-sponsored product sale activities.
* Girls may decide to pay dues

**JUNIOR ROLE**

* The troop/group volunteer retains overall responsibility for long-term budgeting and record-keeping, but shares or delegates all other responsibilities.
* Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product sales.
* Girls decide on dues. Dues are collected by girls and recorded by a troop/group treasurer selected by the girls.
* Girls budget for short-term needs of the troop/group, on the basis of plans and income from the group dues.
* Girls budget for more long-term activities, such as overnight trips, troop/group camping, and special events.
* Girls budget for take-action projects, including the Girl Scout Bronze Award.

**CADETTE, SENIOR, AMBASSADOR ROLE**

* Girls estimate costs based on plans
* Girls determine the amount of group dues and scope of money-earning projects,
* Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product sales.
* Girls carry out budgeting, planning, and group money-earning projects.
* Girls budget for extended travel, take-action projects, and leadership projects.
* Girls may be involved in seeking donations for take-action projects, with council approval.
* Girls keep their own financial records and give report to parents and group volunteers.
* Girls budget for take-action projects, including the Girl Scout Silver and Gold Awards.

FIVE STEPS TO BUDGETING

Following steps will assist you in guiding the girls in determining a budget for one activity and then add the total expenses to determine how much is needed for the monthly or yearly activities.

STEP 1: BRAINSTORM!

Sit down with your girls and help them ***brainstorm***ideas for a Girl Scout wish list of activities they would like to do during the year. Most activities fall into the categories of trips, things to do, badges, community service and take action projects. Be sure to include upcoming council and service unit activities. Before brainstorming with the girls, review the rules.

Brainstorming Rules:

* Everyone takes part.
* List – in writing – every idea; repetition is okay; spelling doesn’t matter.

The purpose of **Brainstorming** is to produce as many ideas as possible in the least possible amount of time from as many people as possible.

* Do not think about money, cost, time, or space.
* Do not judge – no groaning, laughing, cheering, put-downs, or killer phrases.
* Do not discuss – this will take place later.

The younger the girls, the more they will need adults to help. Once the girls have brainstormed, they can lead a brainstorm session on their own.

STEP 2: SET GOALS!

Have the girls read the list, making sure they understand what is meant by everything on the list. Then discuss the pros and cons of each item and eliminate those they don’t want to pursue. Girls then vote on their choices, using a ***democratic decision-making process***. Each grade level has its own ***girl decision-making system***. Guide the girls in narrowing down the list. Once the girls have narrowed down the list, separate the list into 3 groups: NOW, SOON, and LATER. Choose from the NOW list to set your troop/group goal and save the other ideas for a later time.

With a **Democratice Decision-making Process** girls vote without pressure from others.

**GIRL DECISION-MAKING SYSTEM**

**DAISY**

In the Daisy Circle, girls use an either/or decision-making with 2 or 3 choices.

**BROWNIE**

In the Brownie Circle, girls vote on screened choices.

**JUNIOR CADETTE, SENIOR, AMBASSADOR**

In the patrol system (working in small groups) girls vote on choices and then bring the decision back to the entire group. In the town meeting system, all girls vote together.

Then help the girls discuss and choose which activities they would like to put on their troop/group calendar for the next few months or even the year. Once the girls have chosen a project to pursue, it is time to develop a budget by determining how much something costs and writing it down.

STEP 3: DETERMINE COST!

Research the cost of the activity. The younger the girls, the more they will need adults to help at this point. Older girls can do much of the research on their own. Expenses include admission, site fee, food, transportation, and supplies. This information is presented to the troop/group to discuss and make further decisions.

STEP 4: PLAN A BUDGET!

Brownies through Ambassadors benefit from learning how to budget. Once activities have been decided, the girls will be able to determine how the troop will secure funds for the activities.

Once the girls have figured out the total cost of an activity, they need to compare it to the troop/group treasury and projected income with the estimated cost of the activity. Begin to budget for an activity by asking the girls the following questions:

* Do we have enough money for the activity?
* Do we want to spend this much of our treasury on this one activity?
* What are ways we could cut the cost of this event?
* What are ways we could earn money to cover the cost of this activity?

This is the time for girls to revise the budget so that it becomes a more workable plan. They'll learn to make compromises and to think creatively when they fine-tune their budget. Sometimes we have to make choices based on funds available. Maybe a less expensive activity would enable all girls to attend. A troop working together to earn money helps every girl participate more fully.

**Estimated Cost** includes awards; ceremonies; take action projects; supplies; service projects; camping; trips; re-registration membership fees, unknowns.

**Anticipated Income** includes dues; product sales; donations; sponsorship; troop/group money-earning; recycling; individual contributions

A budget includes the ***estimated cost*** per person and ***anticipated income***. It might include just one activity or the entire year.

Even Girl Scout Daisies can make simple decisions about how to spend their troop funds. As the girls grow they take on more responsibility for budgeting and working within a budget. In this way, they develop both leadership and life skills-a goal for us in Girl Scouting.

STEP 5: HAVE FUN! That’s the process: brainstorm, set goals, determine cost, and plan a budget!

CONCLUSION

One critical task for each group, no matter what age, is to keep excellent records and establish a clear accounting system for all money earned and spent. Use a Troop Budget Worksheet or spreadsheet to plan your troop/group budget.

As the group volunteer, you’re in charge of making sure money is spent wisely and that excellent records are kept (keeping copies of all receipts in a binder or folder), and tracking all income, too. For older girls, your job is to oversee their work as they learn to keep impeccable records. Although troop adults are responsible for overseeing the troop funds, it is the girls’ money. No adult should add to it or remove it without the girls’ permission.