

Girl Scout Cookie Season Op-Ed Tips & Examples

What is an op-ed?

An op-ed is a piece in a newspaper or magazine that presents the opinion of its writer—someone who is not employed by the newspaper or magazine. The name comes from the words “opposite editorial,” as an op-ed usually appears opposite the editorial page.

How do you submit an op-ed to your local newspaper?

Look at your newspaper’s sections: Is there an op-ed or opinion section that includes opinions of local community members? Do they print a “Letters to the Editor” section? Often time, these sections include instructions on how to contribute and where you can email your op-ed. If you can’t easily find that information, simply contact the newspaper and ask how you can get an op-ed placed in the paper. They’ll direct you to someone who can help. **IMPORTANT:** Be ready to talk about why you are submitting an op-ed right *now*. Your answer: It’s Girl Scout Cookie time, and you want to thank the community for their support, share the newest cookie program info, and talk about why the cookie sale is so much more than handing over money for cookies. Make sure to ask them for deadlines and word count information.

Where else can you submit your op-ed?

Does your community have a blog, such as a Patch, where community members can submit opinion pieces or run press releases verbatim? Do some research and post your op-ed. (Remember to send it to pr@girlscoutsla.org for approval first.)

Examples of Op-eds

IMPORTANT NOTE: The following are op-ed examples. Use these as *examples only!* Please do not use the language verbatim in your version. Rather, use them as inspiration for flow and formatting and write from your own perspective, as a Girl Scout volunteer, parent of a Girl Scout, or as a girl member of Girl Scouts. You are welcome to pull some wording/elements of these op-eds for use in your own. Think of your piece as a testimonial about why Girl Scouting is so important and why it’s vital for our communities to support girls through the cookie program. All op-eds must include a clear call to action: Giving your reader the information they need to find out more about Girl Scouts (girlscoutsla.org) or where to buy cookies (girlscoutcookies.org). Also, please keep your op-ed under 600 words—your newspaper may have a maximum word count, so check with them. Another idea is to recruit an older girl in your service unit to write an op-ed piece from her perspective. Regardless of who writes it, you still need to send it to GSGLA Communications Manager Melanie Larsen at pr@girlscoutsla.org for editing support and approval before submitting to your local newspaper.

Example 1:

What can a Girl Scout Cookie buy? An experience of a lifetime

Every bite of peanut buttery or chocolate minty deliciousness helps a girl realize her goals. That’s because every Girl Scout Cookie has a mission: to help girls do great things. You can support that mission right now, as Girl Scouts in [YOUR CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD] are honing those entrepreneurial skills by selling cookies at booth sales in front of local storefronts now through March 8.

[Insert personal anecdote. Example: As a cookie mom for three years, I have seen how this leadership experience has helped my daughter not only gain goal-setting, decision-making, money management, people skills, and business ethics—she is using these skills to do positive things to benefit our very community. Last year, our troop hosted a park clean-up and food drive using funds earned from the cookie program. Of course, we also used the funds to go camping and have visited a museum, too.]

All proceeds from the cookie program stay local. In fact, it's one of the few youth programs in the nation that allows girls to make a decision on where a portion of the profits are applied. There's always a reason to buy one more box: This year we have a new Rah-Rah Raisin Cookie—an oatmeal raisin cookie with Greek yogurt-flavored chunks. And if you still want to support without actually eating the cookies, you can donate a portion of money to our Gift of Caring program, for which we donate cookies to soldiers overseas and local food banks.

I hope you'll get out there and support Girl Scouts this year. Remember to ask the girls about their goals: What do they plan to do with their cookie proceeds this year? I think you'll be amazed at the variety of answers. Girl Scouts helps girls set goals and dream big.

For more information about Girl Scout Cookies or to locate a booth sale nearest you, go to girlscoutcookies.org and enter your zip code. Thank you for your support!

Example 2:

It's Girl Scout Cookie season—my favorite time of the year

When I was in third grade, I told my mom that I wanted to sell Girl Scout Cookies like the other girls I saw around town. My mom initiated the process of getting a troop together at my school and by April of 2010, I was in Troop 215. I didn't know it then, but that day became the beginning of the most exciting adventures of my young life!

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is not only a lot of fun, it is also exciting and a much better learning experience than sitting in a classroom. By selling cookies, a girl can learn math, psychology, sociology, creative advertising, and marketing strategies.

Selling cookies challenges me to interact with people that I wouldn't normally talk to at school, a sidewalk on Beverly Drive, at the neighborhood grocery stores, or at the campus of UCLA. I have met Girls Scout supporters from around the area and a few visiting from foreign countries who always share their cookie stories with me.

Last season, for four whole weeks, I thought, dreamt, strategized, and sold cookies. I decided to concentrate on selling cookies to businesses. I pitched Gift of Caring, which is where you can donate cookies to soldiers overseas or other nonprofits. My troop chose to send cookies to the West Los Angeles Veterans Center and the US troops stationed overseas. I managed to personally sell 3,000 boxes this way!

Our troop usually ends the school year by playing Bingo with the veterans at West Los Angeles Veterans Center. That's when we bring several cases of our Girl Scouts Cookies as their prizes. It is such a great feeling

to be able to bring some joy to people's lives in this way. It is at moments like this that I am truly proud to be wearing my Girl Scout vest and be considered a Girl Scout.

Participating in the cookie program has helped me feel like I can do anything I set my mind to accomplish—and I couldn't do it without all those cookie customers in our community. Thank you for your support year after year!

Example 3:

Buying Girl Scout Cookies Helps Girls Thrive

By Kay Bailey Hutchison – Special to the American-Statesman

Some of my best memories are the joys of getting a sale for Girl Scout cookies ... myself as a girl going door-to-door, and my own daughter when a neighbor bought two cases from her to treat his whole office. Chances are you know that we are in the midst of Girl Scout cookie season – and if you have a daughter, you may have a young cookie entrepreneur of your own. There is no shortage of options for consumers when it comes to purchasing an after-dinner treat, but there is something about Girl Scout cookies that causes them to rise to the top.

Perhaps it's their limited availability (cookie season is just a few months a year); perhaps it's because of their unique flavors. But in my long association with Girl Scouts, including serving during my time in the Senate as co-chair of Girl Scout Troop Capitol Hill, I've always believed it's because everyone knows that buying Girl Scout cookies is good for the world. When you buy cookies from a Girl Scout, you are investing in so much more than a box of treats – you are investing in her future, and the future leadership of our country.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is a vitally important program for girls. A cornerstone of the Girl Scout experience, it's the largest, most successful girl-run business in the world. Through this program, girls not only learn goal setting but also decision making, money management, people skills and business ethics — key 21st century business and finance skills. The Girl Scout Research Institute studies these benefits and found 85 percent of girls develop money management skills through the cookie program.

Many times, Girl Scouts decide to utilize their earned funds to give back to their communities, which is good for the world. They may decide to donate troop proceeds to a local animal hospital, build a playground or use their hard-earned money to help fund a back-to-nature wilderness adventure. Whatever the specific goals and outcomes, I can testify that participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program does great things for girls.

On a deeper level, financial skills are leadership skills in an ever-changing economy and world. As the premier leadership organization for girls, Girl Scouts supports girls' financial confidence, skills and independence by providing them with resources focused on everything from saving to developing strong credit, minimizing debt, philanthropy and financing their dreams.

According to the Girl Scout Research Institute study "Having It All: Girls and Financial Literacy," girls are quite clear that they need and want financial literacy skills to help them achieve their dreams, with 90 percent saying it is important for them to learn how to manage money. However, just 12 percent of girls surveyed feel confident in making financial decisions.

It is critical to ensure today's girls are developing the financial savvy, business skills and innovative thinking that will position them to be leaders. An overwhelming majority of girls feel gender is not a barrier to what they can accomplish financially.

So perhaps that's why buying Girl Scout cookies feels so satisfying to me. After the boxes are empty and the cookies are gone, you're left with a feeling of fullness and fulfillment, knowing that you played a small part in helping a young girl – a young leader – reach her truest potential. In a world that too often throws up roadblocks for girls, you helped tear them down. The cookies? That's just the dessert, your prize if you will, for a job well done.