

Outdoor Resources

When girls spend quality time outdoors and increase their exposure to nature, they thrive physically, emotionally, and intellectually. Volunteers need to be confident in their outdoor skills in order to lead the best safe and fun-filled outdoor experience for their Girl Scouts! We are here to help you if you're not feeling confident or even just want to brush up on some outdoor knowledge.

We invite you to share your love for the outdoors with our Girl Scouts. [Click here](#) to learn about becoming an Outdoor Volunteer!

Taking activities outdoors:

Venture Out: Learn practical tips and tricks, read other volunteers' stories, and explore the joys of taking girls outside with Venture Out!, a fun, interactive "outdoor" adventure made possible by GSUSA's [Elliott Wildlife Values Project](#).

Step-by-Step: Developing Outdoor Skills in Girls: At Girl Scouts, we work to build girls' outdoor skills and inspire girls to care for the environment. The [Girl Scout Outdoor Progression Chart](#) (PDF) is a tool you can use as you advance girls' skills in an age-appropriate way.

Taking the Journey Outside: It's easy to take a Girl Scout Journey outside. Each Journey is full of fun, interactive activities that can easily go outdoors and inspire girls to love and protect the planet. Watch this video to find out how!

How to Leave No Trace Outdoors: A Girl Scout always leaves an area better than she found it. Throughout this video, girls will learn the importance of caring for the land, and how to easily "Leave No Trace" when exploring and enjoying the outdoors.

Outdoors Songs and Games: This video provides fun tips on how to teach songs and games to girls to do in the outdoors, and resources available to learn more about Girl Scout songs and games.



<-- Keep an eye out for the tree icon in [Volunteer Toolkit](#)! This icon indicates an activity can be taken outdoors!

Camping with the Girls

Sample Packing List

[Click here](#) for a sample packing list to share with your girls as you plan for your overnight trip!

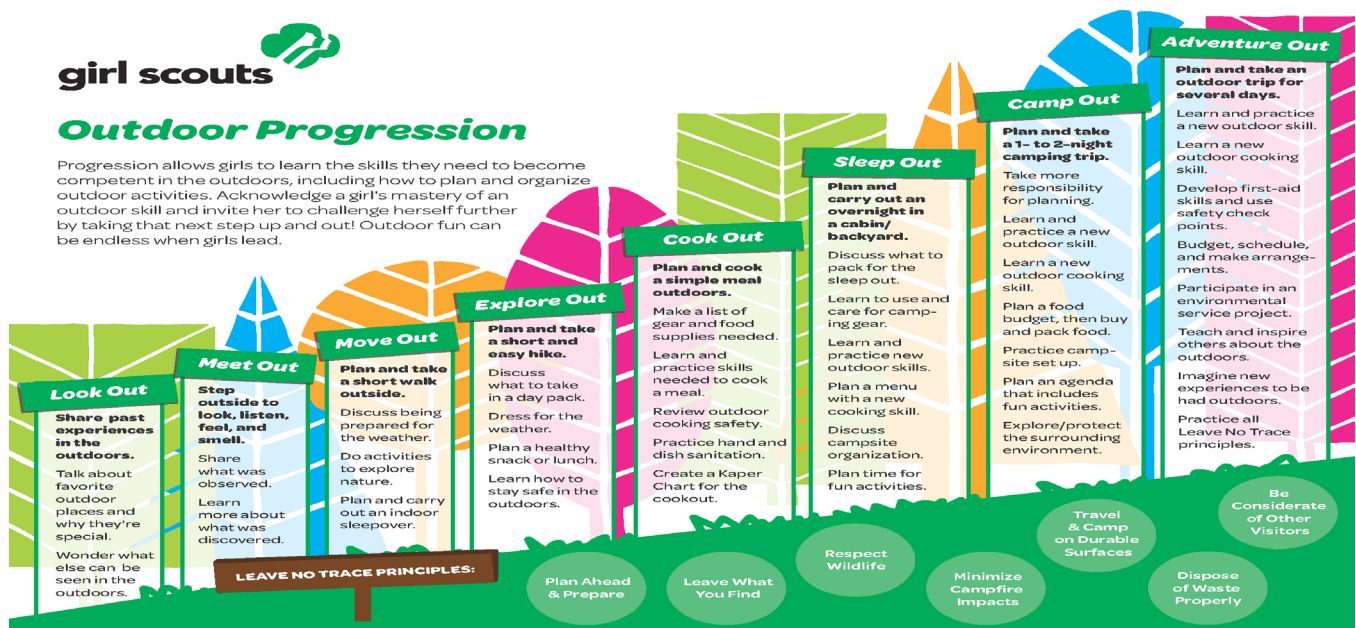
Planning Your Troop's First Campout: In order to have a great campout, you need to plan ahead—and be prepared. This video will give you plenty to think about as you plan your next outdoor adventure with Girl Scouts.

Introduction to Campsite Set-Up: A safe, efficient campsite is important when camping. Watch and learn how to set up a proper camp!

Introduction to Cooking Outdoors: Propane, charcoal, box ovens—there are so many choices when cooking outside. This video shares ideas about the delicious possibilities. Tasty!

Introduction to Fire Building: To ensure a fun campfire experience and help minimize impact on the environment, this video provides basic skills on Leave No Trace ethics, wood gathering, types of fire building methods, and how to start and extinguish a campfire.

Not ready to take your troop out on your own? Check out our [event calendar](#) to find upcoming Troop Adventure Camp or Troop Adventure Day opportunities! At these events, you and your volunteers will supervise your troop while GSHPA staff facilitate outdoor activities.



Outdoor Adult Enrichment

For activities that are available at GSHPA camp properties that require training or certification, these opportunities are available periodically throughout the year.

Opportunities include, but are not limited to the topics below:

- Archery
- Climbing Wall Facilitation
- Low Ropes Facilitation
- Leave No Trace Awareness
- First Aid/CPR/AED
- Fire Building & Outdoor Cooking



Check our [Event Calendar](#) for upcoming opportunities!

NEW! Girl Scouts in the Heart of PA (GSHPA) offers four levels of training for GSHPA adult members and leaders to prepare for taking girls on an overnight experience! The four levels are outlined below.

Introduction to Overnight Stays on GSHPA Properties (online course) - Topics covered during this training include: The Girl Scout Leadership Experience, outdoor progression, how a leader should prepare, what to pack, nighttime jitters, food/mess kits, first aid/medication, ratio requirements, group sleeping, when a male volunteer is staying over, and a Leave No Trace Online Awareness Course.

Introduction to Overnight Stays on GSHPA Properties and Fire Building & Outdoor Cooking are both required before taking girls on an overnight stay on any GSHPA property. These trainings are valid for three years.

Fire Building & Outdoor Cooking (blended learning) – Topics covered during this training include: fire building, outdoor cooking, putting out your fire and cleaning up, and campfire alternatives.

Introduction to Overnight Stays on GSHPA Properties and Fire Building & Outdoor Cooking are both required before taking girls on an overnight stay on any GSHPA property. These trainings are valid for three years.

The in-person portion of Fire Building & Outdoor Cooking is not required, but will periodically be offered for those interested in additional training.

Advanced Camping Skills (online course) – Volunteers interested in advanced camping skills should consider this training. This training will include topics such as: tent site selection, how to set up a tent, and safety considerations when camping at a public facility such as a state park.

Backpacking/Primitive Camping (in-person) – Volunteers interested in taking girls backpacking or primitive camping should consider the [GSHPA Backpacking Introductory Course](#). In addition, there will be one adult spot available in each Level 1-3 course for an adult who is interested in gaining the skills necessary to lead GSHPA backpacking events.

GSHPA members can access the online and blended courses through [gsLearn](#) (search by course name). The in-person portion of Fire Building & Outdoor Cooking and Backpacking/Primitive Camping are routinely offered by GSHPA Outdoor Experience staff and volunteers and can be found on the [Event Calendar](#).

Additional Training

For those that are interested in acquiring training or certification that is not offered by GSHPA, the following organizations meet Safety Activity Checkpoints.

- **Archery:** USA Archery, National Field Archery Association, or Easton Foundation
- **Lake Swimming:** American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguard Training
- **Pool Swimming:** American Red Cross Lifeguard Training
- **Low ropes, climbing wall, or climbing wall/zip line:** This training is coordinated with an outside vendor by GSHPA
- **Boating**
- **Rowboat:** GSUSA Small Craft Safety Training or American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguarding
- **Canoe:** American Canoe Association (ACA) Canoe Level 1 Instructor or higher, ACA Paddle Sport Safety Facilitator-Canoeing, GSUSA Small Craft Safety Training, or American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguarding
- **Kayak:** ACA Kayaking Level 1 Instructor or higher, ACA Paddle Sports Safety Facilitator-Kayaking, GSUSA Small Craft Safety Training, or American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguarding
- **SUP:** ACA SUP Instructor Level 1 or higher, ACA Paddle Sports Safety Facilitator-SUP, or American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguarding. ACA SUP Yoga endorsement or equivalent for yoga on flat water.

***GSUSA Small Craft Safety Training is not applicable to non-GSHPA properties.**

GSHPA + DCNR Partnership



Pennsylvania State Parks offer a variety of professional development opportunities for teachers as well as non-formal environmental educators. We provide hands-on, cross-curricula training for teachers from all grades (Pre-K - College). *Learn more!*

Leave No Trace

At GSHPA, we believe in responsible behavior and respecting the environment. That's why we're one of only two Girl Scout Councils that are Leave No Trace Partners! The [Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics](#) is a national organization that supports protecting the outdoors by teaching and inspiring people to enjoy it responsibly. That's something we can get behind!



How can Girl Scouts ensure they're practicing #LNT daily?

There are seven principles of Leave No Trace. It's important that Girl Scouts are familiar with these principles, considering so many of our activities happen in the outdoors. Let's go through each one and think about how the principles apply to Girl Scouts.

Have questions about getting girls outdoors? Reach out to our Member Services team at 800-692-7816 or MemberServices@gshpa.org.