Short and Snappy

Learning Opportunity for Volunteers

What is a Short and Snappy?

- These short trainings can be provided at a service unit meeting.
- Any interested volunteer may lead a Short and Snappy.
- Short and Snappys are usually 10-45 minutes in length.

What you'll need

- Short and Snappy outline
- FAQ handout
- Laptop, projector, wifi, VTK login

Things to remember

- Stay within the allotted time.
- If you don't know the answer, seek the correct answer from the appropriate support person.

Questions? Comments?

Contact training@sdgirlscouts.org

www.sdgirlscouts.org

Volunteer Toolkit

10 minutes

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is a web app that works on a computer, tablet or smartphone. It contains Journey and badge meeting instructions in a simple, easy-to-deliver format. Also included are calendar and year-planning tabs, attendance, email and achievement functions, and handy resources. Because it's so easy to use, the VTK is the suggested program option for new K-5 troops. Traditional publications are still available for the time being.

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) offers:
- Yearlong badge and Journey-based troop meeting plans
- Meeting activities and resources
- Supply lists
- An easy way to add, delete and customize meetings

Watch the VTK tutorial and webinar at sdgirlscouts.org/elearning.

Troop leaders can access all functions of the VTK. Daisy, Brownie and Junior leaders can create a Year Plan; involve girls in the planning process. This feature will be added for Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors in the future, and may work differently to allow more girl involvement. Multi-level leaders, you'll need to designate your troop as just one level; email customercare@sdgirlscouts.org to change the level you use for VTK.

Tips
For everyone:
- Use Chrome as your browser, if possible.
- Dive in and give it a try; it's very intuitive and forgiving.
- When enrolling in council events, be sure to complete the registration process. The activity will be added to your year plan when you select the event, but don't consider yourself registered until you receive email confirmation.
- Keep your Year Plan and Finance tabs up-to-date for clear, easy communication with troop families.

- Note that emails you send to troop members won't come from your personal address — and replies won't come back to you. Type your own email address at the front of the pre-populated email text so families can easily respond to you.

For new Daisy, Brownie or Junior leaders:

- Log in to "My GS" at sdgirlscouts.org (top right of the page). Choose Volunteer Toolkit.
- In VTK, start by selecting a Year Plan. Pick a temporary petal or badge year to start with — your girls will decide which year they want to pursue.
- Each Year Plan starts with an Intro meeting, where girls get to know each other and learn a bit about Girl Scouts.
- The second meeting is a sampling of activities from the badge year and the two Journey years within VTK. After this meeting, the girls will decide, with your guidance, on the types of activities they liked best. This will tell you which Year Plan is best.
- Now go to the Year Plan Library and click/tap the Year Plan the girls selected.
- Of course, girls' passions aren't that simple! No worries: You can drag and drop all sorts of alternate meeting plans into your Year Plan. It's completely customizable.
  - Set meeting dates and locations
  - Customize the meetings if needed (date, order or agenda)
  - Send reminders through the Meeting Plans
  - Go!

For returning leaders:

- Make sure your status is set as direct primary volunteer. If you're a lifetime member, you may still need to renew your role as a direct primary volunteer. If you're the leader of a multi-age group, choose a program grade level to focus on, and ask Customer Care to adjust the setting if needed.
- Continue to keep your detailed cash record and retain receipts and other info for your annual report. The Finances tab in VTK does not provide all the information needed for a complete financial report.
- Use the Safety Activity Checkpoints posted at sdgirlscouts.org/safety. The checkpoints listed on the VTK do not have our locally customized details.

Activity: Have everyone log onto VTK on their phone. Send them on a scavenger hunt to:
- Find their first meeting (in the Year Plan library)
- Switch their second meeting with the fourth meeting (use drag and drop)
- Set their meeting date and time (select "specify dates and locations" link)

FAQs

Is Girl Scouts going digital? We're not changing to digital; we're adding digital. Increasingly, our volunteers use electronic tools in all aspects of their lives. VTK allows leaders to integrate their Girl Scout practices with those habits. You can still use printed materials, if you prefer.

Can I get my year all planned out before I meet the girls? Resist the urge to make all the decisions up front, no matter how excited you are about the coming year! It's important to provide choice and opportunities for group decision-making so your girls have a meaningful experience and grow as leaders. Ask their opinions, listen to their needs, and take program development one step at a time.

Does VTK include plans for the highest awards (Bronze, Silver, Gold) or other individual achievements? Not at this time. Continue to use resources at sdgirlscouts.org/bronze or /silver or /gold. You can also search for upcoming trainings at sdgirlscouts.org/events.

Can service units use the calendar function? No, the Year Plan function is for troops only, and can only connect to the Girl Scouts San Diego calendar.

When will older girls get program info? Year Plans for grades 6-12 will be developed in 2017; watch for further announcements! In the meantime, you'll soon be able to use a blank Year Plan to help your girls map out their year. And you can already use the admin functions of the toolkit, like the calendar and troop email reminders.

My troop members got my reminder email, but I didn't get their replies. Why? The email reminder comes from GSUSA, so any replies go to an unmonitored mailbox. Adjustments will be made over time. For now, we suggest you add a line to top of the email, where it will be most visible to parents, saying, "Please reply to [your email address] or call me at [your number]."

Who can access the toolkit? Direct primary volunteers (troop leaders and co-leaders) have access to the toolkit. If you are a leader or co-leader and don't have access, contact your troop support specialist. If you've been a parent helper, but not a primary leader, you may need to take some training or a background check to obtain this status. It's suggested that troops (even co-op troops) limit their number of direct primary volunteers to two or three.

What do parents see? The parent view allows all parents to see, download and print the meeting plans, which is a great way to involve them. They cannot customize meeting plans, edit the Year Plan, etc. Parents can also see the financial postings on the Finances tab, and they have a view of the troop roster without personal information.

I have a multi-age troop. How do I use VTK? GSUSA is working to provide additional content so multi-age troop leaders can plan across multiple levels. For now, choose the program grade level that you need most info about (typically the oldest level, if you've led the younger levels before) or the level most members of your troop belong to. You can add make-your-own activities to customize your meeting plans for multiple levels. Choosing a program age level for VTK does not change any girl's record to that level; it simply provides a setting for the toolkit. To change your program age level in VTK, contact Customer Care or your troop support specialist.

I'm a lifetime member. Why am I getting a message to renew my membership? The renewal message refers to the renewal of your role in Girl Scouting, not the membership itself (or fees). Click "member profile" to view settings, and ask Customer Care if you need help.

How much does it cost? VTK is free to the volunteer! GSUSA and participating councils collaborate on development costs.

I'm taking over leadership of a troop (or have changed my role). How do I get access for the toolkit? Once you're set up and approved for the new role, you'll receive login info.

How do I add a council event to my Year Plan? From the Year Plan, select "add an activity," then choose the "council activity" tab. Search for the activity with the filters available. Click "select activity and register for event." Complete the registration process; be sure to confirm registration is complete. The event will be added to your Year Plan.

How do I use the Finances tab? The Finances tab allows the troop leader or troop treasurer to post a snapshot of the troop's financial situation, which families can view. Enter information in the toolkit as often as you like (at least quarterly) for transparent communication from the leader or treasurer to the girls' parents or guardians. Make finances a frequent topic of discussion at troop meetings, too. When updates are made, the information is transmitted to our council, but it does not replace the need to track income and expenses, and it does not reconcile bank statements, as required by our financial guidelines. Continue to use the Detailed Cash Record and the Annual Report for these purposes.

How do I log into My GS?
a. Go to sdgirlscouts.org and click My GS at top right.
b. Your username is the email address you're registered for Girl Scouts under.
c. If you have not yet set up a password, or don't know it, click Forgot My Password.
d. Follow instructions in the email to set up password and log in. If you still have difficulty, contact Customer Care at customercare@sdgirlscouts.org or (619) 610-0821.

How can I change my settings or get help with a glitch? Start by contacting Customer Care at customercare@sdgirlscouts.org or (619) 610-0821.