Moving Meetings to a Digital Space

Online meetings can be a source of continuity and comfort for girls—and volunteers. If you have the interest and capacity to move online, these tips may help. Options are changing daily, so feel free to reach out for help if needed. Contact customercare@sdgirlscouts.org.

Visit Girl Scouts San Diego's Girl Scouts at Home/Staying Connected page. You'll find all sorts of resources, for troop leaders, families, girls who want to "do" Girl Scouts on their own, and more.

Check out these popular options for hosting digital meetings:

Platform	Number of participants	Time limits	Account needed?	Cost
Zoom	Up to 100 (or pay)	40 minutes (or pay)	Host only	Free
Amazon Chime	Unlimited	None	Host only	Free
WebEx	Up to 100	None	Host only	Free
GoToMeeting	Up to 150	None	Organizer only	$12/mo
Google Hangouts	Up to 10	Unlimited	App	Free
Skype	Up to 10	Unlimited	Yes	Free
Facebook Groups/Video Chat	Unlimited	Unlimited	Yes	Free
BlueJeans	Up to 50	None	Host only	$9.99/mo
Girl Scouts San Diego doesn't endorse any particular platform or guarantee these features				

General tips—for any online meeting platform

- Be aware that different families will have varying access to technology. They may have to juggle timing so that devices are available for multiple work and learning obligations. Accommodate however you can. It's ok to go low-tech by emailing activities or just calling each other!
- Practice with a few folks who'll give you feedback. Try your microphone and speaker or headset.
- Keep it simple. Focus on your basic meeting at first. Add features one at a time.
- Have an agenda. Girls can send topics in advance or suggest them at the top of the meeting.
- Consider etiquette badges, or reviewing the Girl Scout Promise and Law, as a reminder of how to treat each other.
- Obtain parental consent, especially for girls under 13. The Trip or Event Permission form can be used. For address, for dates, say ongoing. Use the meeting link or the platform name as the address. Be sure parents or guardians authorize use of images in the Health History and Annual Permission form, before publishing any likenesses.

Set up for success—and safety!

- Have girls and parents read and understand the Virtual Troop Meeting and Computer and Internet Use safety activity checkpoints. Girls can sign the Internet Safety Pledge in the latter.
- Maintain adult supervision with at least two unrelated, background-checked adults (one or more female) in all chat rooms or meetings.
- Don't share your troop meeting info in public places. Invite people individually.
- Use a strong password that is unique to each account you hold.
- Create individual meetings, rather than using your Personal Meeting ID to host events.
- For larger Zoom meetings, use these Meeting Options (in setup) as needed:
  - Mute participants upon entry—reduce chatter and feedback.
  - Enable waiting room—you'll allow entry to each person.

- o Only authenticated users can join—keep strangers out.
  - o Also: in Advanced Screen Sharing, set so only the host may share a screen. Then allow sharing only if you know the participant.
- Create a code of conduct with your troop. This will maintain emotional safety, and help manage the group. Use the Promise and Law to prompt ideas, if needed. Consider these virtual specifics:
  - o I'll keep my controls to myself and not mute other people.
  - o I'll ask before sharing my screen.
  - o I'll speak up when I have something to say.
  - o I'll be forgiving if someone talks over me—sometimes it's just an audio delay. But if it keeps happening, I'll help correct the situation kindly.
  - o I won't share screenshots or other information about our meetings, except with my family.
- Consider earning Cybersecurity badges—they're available for every level!

Make sure each person is heard and seen

- Use video if at all possible—girls like (and need!) to see themselves and each other.
- Maintain "eye contact" by positioning your camera so you're looking at it as much as possible. Teach the girls to do the same.
- Use a list of participants and check them off as they participate.
  - o Don't rely on the thumbnail images you see—they move and are absent if video isn't working.
  - o If a girl doesn't speak up, call on her. Just like in a real meeting, quiet girls—or ones whose video or sound are lacking—can feel invisible.
  - o Make sure they know you see and hear them.
- Check the chat log often. If video or sound fail, this will be their only way to let you know.
- For groups of 10 or more, assign a helper to monitor the chat log and relay comments; it can be hard for the moderator to see.

Use breakout rooms for patrol or small group work

- Breakout rooms are easily set up as you go. Hover over "…" and the option will appear.
- Create groups of 2+ people. Assign names or let them be random.
- You can roam to any breakout group—click "join."
- Tip: give specific tasks, like, "make a list of three ways you can get moving tomorrow."
- When breakout time ends, have each group report back to the whole.

Use the whiteboard to collaborate

- Click Screen Share, and choose whiteboard. A blank screen will appear
- All participants can use the annotation tools to draw there.
- Disable annotation if you need to calm doodling down!

More: Badge Explorer | 13 Zoom Tips | Facebook group: Virtual Girl Scout Activities