



Camping

Council Approval: Required

Activity Permitted for: D B J C S A

Required: At least one adult must be trained in camping as required by your council.

About Camping

Camping, a great Girl Scout tradition, is one of the very first activities that Girl Scouts' founder Juliette Gordon Low encouraged. The key to an enjoyable camping experience is being prepared—by packing just enough gear, supplies, and weather-appropriate clothing. Girl Scouts advocate for the Leave No Trace method of camping, which involves leaving a campground the way it exists in nature, free of garbage and human impact.

You can add to the experience with a camp kaper chart, dividing up cooking duties and getting creative when preplanning outdoor meals. Also, be ready with camp entertainment. Before you go camping, read about camping stories, songs, activities, and games.

Note: When planning activities to do while camping, remember that Girl Scouts are never allowed to hunt, go on high altitude climbs, or ride all-terrain vehicles or motorized bikes.

For travel camping—camping as you travel—note the additional safety precautions listed.

Learn More

- [American Camp Association](#)
- [Reserve America](#)
- [Leave No Trace](#)

Camping with Daisies and Brownies

A Daisy troop may participate in an occasional overnight camping experience. Daisies who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in sleepaway camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Daisies who have completed first grade may independently participate in sleepaway camp experiences lasting four or more nights.

Travel camping is not recommended for Daisies and Brownies.

Know where to camp when camping with Daisies and Brownies, which includes Girl Scout camps; public, private, state, and national parks; and sites deemed appropriate by local and state authorities.



Connect with your Girl Scout council for site suggestions and for information on using a non-council-owned site. Search for campground locations at [Reserve America](#).

Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities. Talk to Girl Scout members with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Always be sure to check with the location in advance to ensure they are able to accommodate those with disabilities. Discover more about accessible campgrounds, services, and gear in this REI article: [Guide to Adaptive Camping](#).

Equity. Consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable and have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as proper equipment, prior experiences, and the skills needed to enjoy the activity. See the Equity section of the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for general advice about expense,

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before starting any activity and review it so all are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury, missing person, sudden illness, or sudden weather or water emergencies.

Camping Checkpoints

Safe camping locations. These are Girl Scout camps, public, private, state, and national parks, and sites deemed appropriate by local and state authorities. Connect with your Girl Scout council for site suggestions and for information on using a non-council-owned site. The campsite should be able to provide evidence of one million dollars General Liability insurance and instructor certifications upon request.

Verify leader/instructor knowledge, experience, judgment, and maturity. Ensure that at least one adult is trained or possesses knowledge, skills, and experience in the following areas:

- Outdoor program activities and leadership
- Emotional responses to trips, including homesickness
- Trip planning in a youth-led environment
- Safety management
- Program activities specific to the trip
- Group dynamics and management
- Outdoor cooking (if relevant)

Ensure that supervision of Girl Scouts and adults for travel camping includes at least two adults who are additionally trained, or have documented experience, in the following areas:

- Participation in similar trips



- Familiarity with the area in which the trip is conducted
- Physical fitness and skills necessary to support the group
- Chosen mode(s) of transportation
- Site orientation
- Emergency procedures
- Minor maintenance for equipment and vehicles, as appropriate

If travel camping (using campsites as a means of accommodations), verify the following adult certifications and standards:

- Review [Transporting Girl Scouts](#).
- Share the [Checklist for Drivers](#) with drivers.
- For trips by small craft, one adult is currently certified as required by the safety activity checkpoints for any vehicle or vessel being used (canoe or kayak, for instance).
- For trips that involve swimming, follow the [Swimming Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).
- If a trailer is used, make sure it complies with all state, local, and federal regulations for the areas of travel. The assigned driver is experienced in pulling a trailer. No one rides in the trailer.
- Ensure that participants receive information about first aid kit procedures, emergency and rescue procedures, environmental awareness, and program plans for mode of travel and geographic area, as well as operational procedures (water purification, food preparation, camping equipment, sanitation, and food storage procedures).

For sites without electric lights and toilet facilities (otherwise known as primitive campsites):

- Choose and set up your campsite well before dark.
- Use a previously established campsite if available.
- Make sure the campsite is level, below the tree line, and located at least 200 feet away from all water sources.
- Avoid fragile mountain meadows and areas with wet soil.
- Avoid camping under dead tree limbs.
- Use existing fire rings if a fire is necessary.
- If a latrine is not available, use individual cat holes—holes for human waste that are at least 200 feet away from the trail and known water sources—to dispose of human waste. **Note:** *Cat holes are not permitted in some areas, so follow local sanitary codes or alternative instructions in those areas.*
- Wash dishes and do personal bathing at least 200 feet away from water sources.
- Store food in a secure location away from tents and out of reach of animals.
- Where necessary, use a bearproof container to store food or, if allowed or appropriate, hang food at least 10 feet off the ground from a rope that's stretched



between two trees. If the site is in bear country, check with local authorities for additional precautions.

Privacy and Sleeping Arrangements

Always, keep these general guidelines in mind:

- An adult should never be alone with any child or children not their own. For general supervision, remain with either one adult and two children, or two adults and one child. See below for sleeping supervision.
- Maintain supervision of your Girl Scouts even when you are not in sight. Use regular check-ins, listening out, and being readily available if they need you.

Make sleeping arrangements with safety, respect, and inclusion in mind.

- Generally, separate sleeping areas should be arranged for:
 - Men (including volunteers who identify as men)
 - Non-member boys (including youth who identify as boys) attending family campouts
 - Girl Scouts and adult women (including those who identify as women)
- During family or “he and me” events (in which Girl Scouts share sleeping accommodations with men), ensure the sleeping details are clearly explained in a parent/guardian permission slip.
- More than one family may use a tent or single-room cabin during these events only if all families agree.
- Adult women may share sleeping areas with Girl Scouts, as long as there are at least two adult women who are unrelated. However, Girl Scout members may sleep separately from adults when they are developmentally ready. This applies to rooms, cabins, tents, etc. Adult supervision should be nearby and easy to contact.
- Girl Scouts sleeping in pairs—in a tent, for example—should not be more than two years apart in age, and should not be in a romantic relationship.
- Ask any Girl Scout or adult volunteer who has told you they are non-binary, intersex, or questioning their identity, what arrangements would make them most comfortable. Be considerate and caring. As you communicate arrangements to the group, do not share anyone’s private information or disclosures. Ask your troop support specialist for help navigating these conversations, if needed.
- Make use of tents that can be placed near (or even in) the cabin, to provide extra sleeping space that is more private.
- In public venue overnights, such as museums or at malls, ask if there are separate sleeping area and bathrooms for men. If no such areas exist, designate an area out of the way or off to the side so that men are not sleeping alongside the Girl Scouts.
- Get written parent/guardian permission before making arrangements for Girl Scouts to share beds, such as in hotels. Mothers and daughters may share a bed.

Restrooms and showers—make plans based on your accommodations and resources, and make sure everyone is informed.



- Privacy is valuable to many of our members. Whenever possible, plan for individual toilets, showers, and changing areas.
- If separate toilets, showers, or changing areas are not available, use locks or signage to ensure privacy of the person inside. Or, create a schedule that indicates when Girl Scouts and adults of varied genders have access.
- Avoid sleeping arrangements that must be traversed by those not in the sleeping group. Trips to the bathroom or other facilities by those not in the sleeping area should be limited.

Safety Gear

- Clothing, including a rain jacket or poncho that can be layered and is appropriate for the weather
- Socks with sturdy shoes, hiking boots, or sneakers (no sandals, clogs, flip-flops, or bare feet)
- A sleeping bag that is rated for the anticipated temperature
- A flashlight and other battery-powered lights for indoor use (no candles, kerosene lamps, portable cook stoves, heaters, or other open-flame devices are to be used inside tents)
- A first aid kit
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- A hat or bandana
- A hat, gloves, and thermal underwear for cool temperatures
- Flame-resistant tents or tarp (no plastic tents)
- A map and either a compass or a GPS
- Mosquito netting, where necessary
- Cooking supplies (pots, pans, utensils, mess kit, dunk bag, etc.)
- A cooler for food storage
- Portable cook stoves and fuel whenever possible (to reduce the use of firewood)
- A flashlight or propane-fueled lantern (for outdoor use)
- A water purification kit