

I can't wait to



Troop Start-Up Guide

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Welcome Leaders,

Thank you for your commitment to becoming an important person in the lives of girls. You are joining more than 7,000 adults who volunteer to provide the Girl Scout Leadership Experience for over 28,000 girls in southeastern Wisconsin.

For over 100 years, Girl Scout volunteers like you have engaged girls in discovering self, connecting with others and taking action to make the world a better place. We look forward to working with you.

This guide and the troop packet contain all the instructions and essential forms needed to successfully lead a Girl Scout troop.

Each Troop Should Receive the Following Materials from GSWISE:

Troop Registration

- *Adult Membership Forms*
- *Girl Membership Forms*
- *Membership Registration Summary Forms*

Troop Management

- *Health History Cards*
- *GSWISE Reference Cards*
 - *Emergency Procedure Cards*
 - *Tax Exempt Cards*

Resource Center

- *Starter Kit Flyer*

Troop Finance Booklet

- *Financial Institution Authorization Letter*
- *Troop-Service Area Account Information and ACH Form*
- *Annual Troop Cash Report*
- *Group Money-Earning Application*
- *Plan 2 Insurance Enrollment Form*
- *Financial Assistance Form*

Publications

- *Connections*
- *Volunteer Essentials*

Important Information

Troop Number

Service Area

Service Area Meeting Date, Time, Location

School/Site Organizer Name

School/Site Organizer Phone

School/Site Organizer Email

Service Area Coordinator Name

Service Area Coordinator Phone

Service Area Coordinator Email

Membership Manager Name

Membership Manager Phone

Membership Manager Email

If you have any questions, please call your local service center and ask for a membership manager.

Troop Forms

Membership Forms

- Parents must complete a **Girl Membership Form**, sign and return to the troop leader including the \$15 national membership dues.
- Adults who will work regularly with the troop need to complete an **Adult Membership Form** and submit \$15 for national membership dues.
- Every adult member must have a volunteer position code marked on their registration form. The most common codes are listed below. Please assist other adult members in choosing their volunteer position code. This can be a good opportunity to recruit a Troop Nut Manager or Troop Cookie Captain to help with troop product sales.
 - 01 Advisor or Leader for a Group/Troop
 - 02 Assistant Advisor/Leader (co-leader)
 - 03 Support Volunteer for a Group/Troop
 - Other: Troop Nut Manager
 - Other: Troop Cookie Captain

Registration materials can also be found at gswise.org

Health History Cards

- Every girl member must have a Health History Card on file with the troop. These are also available at gswise.org and can be emailed directly to the parent. Find a safe place to store the cards.

Once membership forms are completed and collected:

- Make sure forms are complete and signed by an adult
- Make sure each form is accompanied by payment or a request for financial assistance
- Fill out a Membership Registration Summary Form
- **Bring all forms to your local service center or mail to the Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast**

Troop Finance Forms

All troops are required to have their own bank account. All monies received in the name of the troop must be deposited in the troop account. Our council has established working relationships with several financial institutions, they are listed in the *Troop Finance Packet* and on the *Financial Institution Authorization Letter*. Follow the steps in the *Troop Finance Packet* to start your troop account.

The *Troop-Service Area Account Information and ACH Form* that is part of the *Troop Finance Packet* and a copy of the bank's signature card or other documentation showing: troop number, account number and signers needs to be returned to:

Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast, Inc.
Attn: Finance Department-Cindy Hemm
PO Box 14999
Milwaukee, WI 53214

Automated Clearing House

ACH, or Automated Clearing House, is an electronic network that efficiently and safely transfers funds between banks. All troops are required to establish a bank account in their name (not a personal account) and submit this completed form to the council by October 15, 2014. ACH works by allowing a troop to grant Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast, Inc. (GSWISE) authorization to issue ACH debits or credits to an account. Before any transactions can be processed, a signer on the troop or service area account must complete a *Troop-Service Area Account Information and ACH Form*. For more information on ACH and the *Troop-Service Area Account Information and ACH Form*, review the *Troop Finance Packet*.

Financial Assistance Form

Financial assistance is available for all girl members. Requests for assistance with GSUSA membership dues can be made by writing "FA" and the amount requested on the top of the membership registration form. Requests for Journey books and uniform components can be made by the troop leader by completing a *Financial Assistance Form – Journey Books and Uniform Components*. and returning it to GSWISE. Once approved, a resource center voucher will be mailed to the troop leader.

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The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience includes three keys to leadership:

Discover – Girls understand themselves and their values and use their knowledge and skills to explore their world.

Connect – Girls care about, inspire and team with others locally and globally.

Take Action – Girls act to make the world a better place.

These three keys to leadership are the focus of Girl Scout activities that will assist us in achieving our mission:

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.

Girl Scout grade levels:

Girl Scout Daisy, grades K-1

Girl Scout Brownie, grades 2-3

Girl Scout Junior, grades 4-5

Girl Scout Cadette, grades 6-8

Girl Scout Senior, grades 9-10

Girl Scout Ambassador, grades 11-12

Girls join Girl Scouts for the fun, friendship and belonging. To ensure that this happens, activities need to be girl-driven, involve learning by doing and encompass cooperative learning.

Girl-driven means just that—the girls are actively deciding the what, where, when, how and why of their activities.

Learning by doing gets girls actively engaged in what they do (i.e. planting a rain garden instead of watching a video on how to plant a rain garden) and evaluating and reflecting on what they did. It is important that girls have a chance to connect what they do in Girl Scouts with their own life.

When girls are learning cooperatively they come together to share ideas, knowledge and skills in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation. A girl does not learn something for just herself but also shares her new knowledge with others such as younger Girl Scouts, her family and possibly the community.

Before your first meeting

- Complete the online application and background check process, which is the quickest and safest way to apply to be a volunteer. For those that do not have access to a computer complete the *Volunteer Application and Background Check Authorization* and mail or drop off at any GSWISE service center.
- Contact your membership manager or school site organizer to acquire a troop number (if you do not already have one), and for assistance with recruitment and troop formation. The troop formation process will be reviewed during your Council 101 training. An outline can be found on the council website.
- Register girls and adults for membership in Girl Scouts of the USA.
- Complete *Council 101: Welcome to Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast*. Dates and locations are listed on the council website. An independent study option is available online.

Within 30 days

- Set up a troop checking account as soon as you and your co-leader have been appointed.
- Submit a *Troop-Service Area Account Information and ACH Form* to GSWISE.

Within 90 days

- Register and participate in *Leadership Essentials* training. Dates and locations are listed on the council website. An independent study option is also available online.

Items that Need to be Completed and Collected to Register the Troop:

- Adult Membership Forms for at least two registered leaders (may not be related).
- Girl and Adult Membership Forms for troop members. MUST have an adult signature on every form.
- Membership Registration Summary Form representing all girls and adults that are registering with the troop.
- Troop-Service Area Account Information and ACH Form*.
- Financial Assistance Form* (if applicable).
- Payment: checks payable to GSWISE for total membership dues and additional checks or credit card information for Family Giving contributions. MasterCard/Visa can be used.

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