



Girl Scout Silver Award

Adult Guide

As a Girl Scout volunteer, you are using your time and experience to help girls learn about themselves and the world around them, gain new skills, overcome challenges, and make a difference in their community. You are preparing them for a lifetime of caring about others in their community and the world. You will guide girls and make going for their Girl Scout Silver Award a fun and fulfilling experience. Plus, girls earn the highest award for a Girl Scout Cadette.

Your primary role as a volunteer is to support Girl Scout Cadettes as they complete a Girl Scout Cadette Journey and create a Girl Scout Silver Award project that improves their neighborhood or local community. After girls complete the Girl Scout Cadette Journey, including the Take Action project, the suggested minimum time for earning their Girl Scout Silver Award is 50 hours for an individual girl or each girl on the small team. Girls earn the award by focusing on an issue they care about; building a team; exploring their community; picking, planning, and putting their Girl Scout Silver Award project into action; demonstrating an understanding of sustainability and the wider world; and sharing what they have learned with others.

Here are the steps that Girl Scout Cadettes will complete to earn the Girl Scout Silver Award:

1. Go on a Girl Scout Cadette Journey (pre-requisite requirement).
2. Identify issues you care about.
3. Build your Girl Scout Silver Award team, or decide to go solo.
4. Explore your community.
5. Choose your Girl Scout Silver Award project.
6. Develop your project.
7. Submit your ***Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal*** to the council.
8. Make a plan and put it into motion.
9. Reflect, share your story, and celebrate.
10. Submit your ***Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report*** to the council.

Silver Award Training is available for Girl Scouts, adult volunteers, and parents/guardians to learn more about the award guidelines and processes. Silver Award Training is strongly encouraged and can be completed either in person or by watching the video training at [gswise.org>About Girl Scouts>Our Program>Highest Awards>Silver Award](https://gswise.org/About-Girl-Scouts/Our-Program/Highest-Awards/Silver-Award).

Step 1

Tips for Volunteers

The following are the steps Girl Scout Cadettes will complete to earn the Girl Scout Silver Award, along with tips for how you can help. Use these along with the girl guidelines for the Girl Scout Silver Award, which can be found at [gswise.org](https://www.gswise.org)>*About Girl Scouts*>*Our Program*>*Highest Awards*>*Silver Award*.

Step 1: Go on a Girl Scout Cadette Journey

What girls do:

- Get a full experience, using the three keys to leadership: discover, connect, and take action.
- Gain skills from the Girl Scout Cadette Journey that will help them create, plan, and develop their award project.

Why they do it:

- Girls gain the skills they need to create a Girl Scout Silver Award project that is based on an issue they care about in their neighborhood or local community.
- Girls apply the Girl Scout Promise and Law, which ensures they are honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong; that they respect themselves, others, and authority; and that they use resources wisely and take responsibility for what they say and do.

Coaching tips:

- Encourage girls to talk about what they learned by completing a Journey. Use the tips in the Journey adult guides.
- Suggest they reflect and share where and how they applied the Girl Scout Promise and Law as they completed the Journey.

Step 2

Step 2: Identify Issues You Care About

What girls do:

- Explore their interests and how those relate to issues that concern them.

Why they do it:

- This step lays the foundation for girls to imagine new solutions for the issues that interest them.

Coaching tips:

- Help girls explore their interests using the Issues Chart in the girl guidelines.
- Create an open, comfortable environment where girls (whether one girl or a group) can share their thoughts and ideas.
- Encourage girls to take time to think about what really matters to them. When something matters, it becomes a fun challenge to think of different solutions.
- Guide girls as they fill out their Issues Chart.

Step 3

Step 3: Build Your Girl Scout Cadette Team

What girls do:

- Form a team of Girl Scouts (two to four Girl Scout Cadettes), non-Girl Scouts, or a combination of both. If other Girl Scout Cadettes are on the team, they can also earn the Girl Scout Silver Award. Each Girl Scout Cadette going for the Girl Scout Silver Award needs to play an active role in choosing, planning, and developing the team's Girl Scout Silver Award project.
- If working solo, independently connect with people in the community.
- Develop teambuilding skills.

Why they do it:

- Cooperative learning encourages team building, trust building, and problem solving.

Coaching tips:

- Encourage girls to demonstrate being a friend to every Girl Scout as they build their team.
- Work with girls to locate people in the community who might be able to help with their project.
- Use games and activities to promote team building.
- Use the following tips to help girls create and maintain a strong team at each step.

Traits of a Good Team	Coaching Tips
Respect different points of view and ways of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage girls to promote an inclusive environment as they work on their project. • Discuss ways that team members can respect each other and the diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and life experiences of the girls on the team.
Contribute to the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage girls to make a task list for each girl on the team and how they can participate in putting the project into motion.
Accept constructive suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk to girls about the differences between constructive suggestions, criticizing, and attacking. For example, if an idea is criticized, ask the girl who gave the feedback whether she has any suggestions that might help make the idea better. • Encourage girls to be courteous, considerate, and respectful of fellow teammates by living the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
Work together to create and develop a plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage girls to use their knowledge and skills to locate tools and resources they need, and also to know when, where, and how to enlist the help of others.
Solve problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how problem solving skills contribute to effective leadership. • Discuss some of the obstacles that may come up during their Girl Scout Silver Award project and how the team can work together to overcome them.

Step 4

Step 4: Explore Your Community

What girls do:

- By exploring their community, girls find out what their community needs are and where their areas of interest and community needs overlap. Girls move from thinking about issues they care about in general to finding specific problems, opportunities, or solutions they want to address.

Why they do it:

- Getting to know their community is a learning experience in which girls take the time to see the world around them from different perspectives and to get ideas about what is needed and what is possible.

Coaching tips:

Observation and Exploration

- Encourage girls to take time to explore their neighborhood and local community in a new way. Doing so will help them develop a new understanding of local issues, how issues are tackled, and how improvements are made.
- Encourage girls to have fun while they are out and about talking with people and exploring their community.
- If working with a small group of girls, encourage the group to share their individual observations from their community exploration and brainstorm ways that they can make a difference.

Community Map

- Guide girls as they draw a community map. Creating the map allows girls to observe different aspects of their community and look for what people need and what could improve their lives. By exploring and observing their community, girls connect with people who may help them with their Girl Scout Silver Award project.
- An example of a community map can be found at [gswise.org>About Girl Scouts>Our Program>Highest Awards>Silver Award](https://www.girlscouts.org/en/footer/help/internet-safety-pledge.html).

Connecting with the Community

- Guide girls as they interview people in the community. By interviewing people they meet, girls improve their communication skills and begin to see how their time and talents can make an impact.
- Encourage girls to build a network of contacts they can reach out to later as they work on their Girl Scout Silver Award project.
- As girls meet and talk with new people, remind them to be safe and make sure adults know who they are meeting with, when they will return home, and which adults or other girls are accompanying them.

Note: Girls are likely to research information online for their project, so discuss the *Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge* (<https://www.girlscouts.org/en/footer/help/internet-safety-pledge.html>) and encourage girls to commit to the pledge.

Step 5

Step 5: Choose Your Silver Award Project

What girls do:

- Decide, as an individual or a small team, which issue they would like to address and identify the root cause or underlying reason for the issue that their project will address.

Why they do it:

- Girls will have a better chance of ensuring that the solution they come up with works and is long lasting if they address the root cause of the problem.
- If the girls care about the issues they have chosen, they will be engaged and enjoy working on the Girl Scout Silver Award project.

Coaching tips:

- Guide girls as they review their Issues Chart, community map, and interview notes.
- Help them understand that a Girl Scout Silver Award project is a project that addresses the root cause of a problem in the local neighborhood or community and brings about lasting change. Use the examples in the Girl Guidelines.
- Encourage girls to choose a project that is either based on what matters most to them or based on where they think they can create the most positive change. Making a pro/con list is helpful.
- Encourage girls to think about the leadership skills they will use during the course of their Girl Scout Silver Award project and how these skills can help them understand what they are capable of accomplishing.
- Some projects will require money earning. Girls may need to come up with ideas for how they can cover expenses. Encourage girls to complete the **budget sheet**, included in the Girl Guidelines. All money-earning projects need to be approved by the council. Follow the money-earning guidelines available at [gswise.org](https://www.gswise.org).
- Remind girls to be realistic about their project choice. Encourage them to think about the greatest good they can bring about based on their available time and resources.
- Girls may need the help of an expert who can act as a project advisor. This is optional and depends on the project.
- To ensure everyone is clear about what they want to do and why, after girls choose their project, ask them to answer the following questions: What is the project? Why does it matter? Who will it help?
- Remember that Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of other organizations.

Step 6

Step 6: Develop Your Project

What girls do:

- Develop a plan for creating measurable and sustainable impact in the neighborhood or local community.

Why they do it:

- Girls learn through taking the initiative on their own and engaging in hands-on activities that help them gain new skills.

Coaching tips:

- Before girls start developing their project, encourage them to answer the questions in their guidelines.
- Discuss what the girls hope to accomplish with this project and why it matters to them.
- Partner with girls to create a timeline, set up a budget, and locate resources for their project.
- Pose the following questions to help girls think about sustainability:
 - Does the issue that was chosen address a need in the neighborhood or local community?
 - Has the root cause of the problem been identified?
 - How have other people addressed this issue in a different place or a different situation?
 - Can the solution last after you have earned your award?
 - Do you know who might be able to continue your project in the future?
 - Can the project be expanded later?
 - How would you share your project so other people can be inspired to get involved after you earn your award?
- Help girls ensure sustainability in their project by encouraging them to:
 - Focus on ways that others can keep the project going.
 - Partner with people in the community who can carry the project into the future. Community groups, civic associations, non-profit agencies, local government, and religious organizations make great partners.

Refer to the two examples of Girl Scout Silver Award projects that are sustainable in the Girl Guidelines.

Finding a Project Advisor

Although this is not required as part of the Girl Scout Silver Award, some girls might want to enlist the help of an expert who can answer specific questions about their issue. This person can be the team or individual girl's project advisor.

If girls choose to work with a project advisor, guide them as they make their decision. Discuss who might work best. This could be someone they met while researching issues or someone they have not yet met, but who is familiar with their issue. Offer suggestions: a local business owner, an official at City Hall, a teacher?

Follow the guidelines set by Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast. Project advisors need to complete a Criminal Background Check at [gswise.org](https://www.gswise.org)> **Volunteer**>**Volunteer Today**.

Making a Global Connection

Encourage girls to research how others around the globe deal with their issue. Encourage girls to consider how they might be able to extend the reach of their project into other communities besides their own. Are there ways to share their plan with other communities who are facing the same issue? Can the girls create a plan that other people could use to replicate their project in other communities?

Through connecting with new friends outside of their immediate community, girls learn how others have solved similar issues and determine if the ideas of others can help with their plan.

Girl Scout Silver Award projects are approved at the troop level, you do not need council permission. After your Girl Scout volunteer has approved your project, girls should submit a **Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal** to the council, in their own words, at least two weeks before they wish to begin their project. Girls submit one proposal per project.



Step 7

Step 7: Make a Plan and Put it Into Motion

What girls do:

- Write a list of what they need to accomplish, who will be doing which tasks, and when tasks need to be completed using their Planning Chart, included in the Girl Guidelines.

Why they do it:

- Girls build critical thinking skills and become creative problem solvers as they address challenges, work cooperatively with their team, and stay open to new ways of work.
- Girls use their leadership skills to create a project in their community that has measurable and sustainable impact.

Coaching tips:

- Let girls take the lead to plan and implement their project.
- Guide girls as they fill out their Planning Chart.
- Encourage girls to keep a to-do list of what they would like to accomplish with their project.

This can be the most fun and rewarding step in earning the award. Seeing the project happen can be very exciting! Keep in mind things sometimes do not go exactly as planned and help girls persevere through challenging times.

Have fun! Keep things light-hearted. Take a team picture, encourage girls to come up with a fun name for their team, and be creative!



Step 8

Step 8: Reflect, Share Your Story, and Celebrate

What girls do:

- Reflect on what they have achieved.
- Share their experiences to educate and inspire others to act.
- Discuss the impact the project made on themselves and their community.
- Celebrate their accomplishment.

Why they do it:

- Reflection promotes critical thinking and helps broaden girls' perspectives about the world and how they can help.
- Through reflection, girls understand the impact of their project on the community and how it might relate to others in other communities.
- Demonstrating to an audience what girls have learned sets the stage for even broader impact.
- Spreading the word encourages girls to think about what they have learned and helps them inspire others to make things better.
- Sharing and demonstrating their project achievements helps girls see what they learned and sets the stage for even broader impact.

Celebration:

Girls earn their Silver Award at the time the project is completed and approved by the co-leaders. An optional Highest Award Celebration event is held annually for girls who have earned this award. Girls must be current members during the membership year of the council's celebration to attend. Final Reports are due March 1 to be recognized at that year's celebration.

Coaching tips:

- Guide girls as they use the insight they gained from answering the reflection questions in their Girl Guide to spread the word and inspire others to act.
- Discuss the impact the experience had on girls, their team, and their community.
- Help girls share their experience and efforts with a wider audience. Remind them about the Girl Scouts' Internet safety pledge, and encourage them to visit the following web sites to share their stories:
 - Girl Scouts of the USA:
forgirls.girlscouts.org/map-it-girls-changing-the-world/
 - World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts:
waggg.org/en/projectsTaking it Global: tigweb.org
 - Global Youth Service Day: ***globalyouthserviceday.org***
- Make the sharing experience fun and honor the achievement by encouraging the girls to be creative in how they capture others' imaginations. Girls can make a video, write an essay, or organize a fun event where they can present to the community what their project is about and what they have learned.
- Use the Leadership Outcomes/Possible Indicators Chart at the end of this guide to help girls reflect on their experience.

Your hard work and dedication has helped an individual Girl Scout Cadette or team of Girl Scout Cadettes become leaders who used their talents to positively impact their community. Congratulations! **Celebrate the accomplishment!**

Project Tips

Before you begin your project

- ❑ **Girl Scout Membership:** Ensure girls' Girl Scout memberships remain current while they are working on all steps of the Girl Scout Silver Award.
- ❑ **Submitting a Project Proposal:** Submit a *Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal* two weeks before beginning the project.
- ❑ **The online form for each project is available at gswise.org>About Girl Scouts>Our Program>Highest Awards>Silver Award**

During your project

- ❑ **Safety:** Consult *Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints* for potential safety issues and program standards regarding every aspect of the project including, but not limited to, adult/child ratios, first aid or CPR-certified adults, and money earning.
- ❑ **Money matters:** All money-earning projects need to have approval from the Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast. For council money earning guidelines, refer to gswise.org. For approval, complete the *Group Money Earning Application* form, available at gswise.org.
- ❑ **Grants:** If interested in funding your project through a community grant, contact the council first at **800-565-4475** or customercare@gswise.org to be connected to our Philanthropy team who will work with girls on the application and reporting process.
- ❑ **Pictures:** Don't forget to take pictures throughout your project. **You must collect completed Photo Release Forms from everyone in the photo.**
- ❑ **Working with the press:** Inform Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast (GSWISE) before seeking attention from the media and work with GSWISE regarding press releases.
- ❑ **Contracts:** Only the CEO or designee can sign agreements or contracts on behalf of GSWISE.
- ❑ **Insurance:** You need to purchase Plan 2 Insurance for non-registered Girl Scouts involved in your project. Complete the *Mutual of Omaha Plan 2 Enrollment Form* and submit with payment at least two weeks prior to your event or activity.

When you complete your project

- ❑ **Submit your final report:** Submit a *Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report* found at gswise.org>About Girl Scouts>Our Program>Highest Awards>Silver Award.
- ❑ **Get recognized at the council-wide Highest Awards Celebration!** To attend and receive your recognitions, your report needs to be received by **March 1**.

When your Girl Scout Silver Award project is complete, submit your Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report to the council.

The Girl Scout Difference

Girl Scouts is the best girl leadership experience in the world, period.

Girl Scouts unleashes the G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)TM in every girl, preparing her for a lifetime of trying new things, developing a range of skills, taking the lead, and just being herself.

Our Girl Scout Leadership Experience is a one-of-a-kind development program for girls, with proven results. It is based on time-tested methods and research-backed programming that help girls take the lead, in their own lives and in the world.

Girl Scouts is proven to help girls thrive in five key ways as they:

- Develop a strong sense of self
- Display positive values
- Seek challenges and learn from setbacks
- Form and maintain healthy relationships
- Identify and solve problems in the community

Help girls reflect on their Silver Award experience, the impact they have had, and how the experience has helped to strengthen their leadership skills.

Leadership Outcomes

Use the chart below to help guide girls as they reflect on what they have learned and how they used their leadership skills to make a difference in the world. The leadership outcomes will show girls how they developed, while the possible indicators will show you how those outcomes are exhibited.

Leadership Outcomes	Possible Indicators (When the outcome is achieved...)