



NEW LEADER CHECKLIST

FORMING YOUR TROOP

New leaders:

- Register as a volunteer** at sdgirlscouts.org.
- Complete a background check.** You will receive an email from our background screening company Asurint to complete your screening online.
- Connect with a co-leader.** Your regional recruitment specialist can help.
- Invite girls to join the troop.** You'll need at least 5 girls to launch your troop.

Girl Scouts San Diego support staff:

- Your regional recruitment specialist will help you make a plan for recruiting the girls and adults needed to launch a troop and can help with recruitment materials or meetings.
- We will remind you to pay your annual membership fee and complete your online background check.

IN THE FIRST 30 DAYS AFTER YOUR TROOP HAS LAUNCHED

New leaders:

- Check out the Volunteer Toolkit.** Read about the [Volunteer Toolkit](#) and give it a try. It's a lifesaver for busy troop leaders!
- Welcome new families as they join your troop.** Your troop will stay open on the Opportunity Catalog for new girls to join until you reach the troop standard size of 12 girls. Want more girls? Contact membership@sdgirlscouts.org for help.
- Begin online training by logging in to gsLearn** ([see how](#)). Select the New Leader Learning Path and complete Getting Started with Your Troop. See sdgirlscouts.org/training to learn more about training. Questions? Contact training@sdgirlscouts.org.
- Connect with your service unit** to find out about meetings for leaders in your community.
- Ensure that an adult member of your troop is trained in first aid.** See sdgirlscouts.org/training to learn about options.

Girl Scouts San Diego support staff:

- Your new troop specialist will send a welcome email with next steps and your service unit information.
- Girl Scouts San Diego will email to let you know when girls have been added to your troop's roster.
- Your service unit will contact you with a welcome and meeting information. You can contact your service unit directly too.
- You will begin receiving our monthly *Volunteer Voice* email. Be sure to look for the grade-level icon for your troop to see age-appropriate activities and events. Make sure you've opted-in to email communications by logging into your MyGS and checking under the My Profile tab.
- Your new troop specialist will check in with you after 30 days to see what support we can provide you.

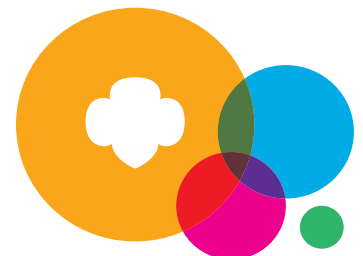
IN THE FIRST 3 MONTHS AFTER YOUR TROOP HAS LAUNCHED

New leaders:

- Host your first parent meeting.** Use the [parent meeting packet](#) to guide you.
- Plan your first troop meeting** on the Volunteer Toolkit.
- Log into My GS/VTK** at sdgirlscouts.org. Choose My GS to update your troop meeting info or check your troop roster.
- Attend your first service unit meeting** and take your co-leader along for the ride.
- Hold your first-ever Girl Scout troop meeting!**
- Open your Girl Scout bank account** when you have \$50 in troop funds or within 60 days of starting the troop. Make sure you have a registered, background checked volunteer in the Troop Treasurer role and that they have completed the Troop Treasurer training in gsLearn. When ready, [click here](#) to request to open your bank account.
- Take Intro to Girl Scouts.** Log in to gsLearn to continue this next training in your New Leader Learning path ([see how](#)).

Girl Scouts San Diego support staff:

- We'll remind you to open your Girl Scout bank account.
- Your new troop specialist will check in after the first 3 months to see what support we can provide you, but **you can contact your new troop specialist anytime!** Email your new troop specialist at their direct email address or contact troopsupport@sdgirlscouts.org and they will connect you with your specialist.





NEW LEADER CHECKLIST

Let's go! Your first troop meetings

Your first few troop meetings are a great chance to get to know the girls and brainstorm all the exciting things they want to do in the year to come. If you're feeling a little nervous about leading troop meetings and experiences with your girls, that's OK! Just remember that:

It doesn't need to be perfect. Did an activity run over time? Or maybe a field trip didn't go according to plan? Take a deep breath, roll with the changes, and have fun! The girls aren't expecting perfection from you: your time, attention, and guidance are the best part of your leadership.

Learn with your girls. Keeping activities girl-led also means that at some point, the girls will want to earn a badge or complete a project in a subject unfamiliar to you. But don't let that hold you back! Be open with the girls when you don't know something and become their partner in learning more. You'll show them that learning is a lifelong process and that with an open mind, they can overcome any challenges that come their way.

Six Elements of a Great Troop Meeting

The only requirement for your meeting? That you and your girls are making new friends and learning about being Girl Scouts!

- 1. Pre-Meeting Activity.** Plan activities for the girls on arrival at the meeting so they have something to do until the meeting begins. This could be as simple as coloring pages, journaling, or talking with one another. (5 minutes)
- 2. Opening.** Each troop decides how to open its meetings—most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story, or other activity designed by the girls. (5–10 minutes)
- 3. Troop business.** Collect dues and make announcements, or plan an upcoming event or trip while families are present. (5 minutes)
- 4. Main Activity.** Use the meeting plans found in the Volunteer Toolkit! Activities are already designed to fit easily into this part of your meeting as you help your troop earn badges and complete Journeys. (30–45 minutes)
- 5. Clean up.** Because Girl Scouts should always leave a place cleaner than they found it! (5 minutes)
- 6. Closing.** Just like the opening, each troop can decide how to close—with a song, a game, a story, a friendship circle, or pretty much anything else! (5–10 minutes)

Volunteer Resources for Getting Started

Training boosts confidence! Log in to [gsLearn](https://gsLearn.org), our online learning platform, anytime to learn about leading girls, Girl Scout ceremonies, traditions, product programs, taking girls outdoors, and more. Or, join us for one of our engaging in-person courses. Learn more at sdgirlscouts.org/training. Questions? Contact training@sdgirlscouts.org.

What's New: Girl Scouts is dynamic—there's always something new! Be in the know about new resources and program updates by visiting sdgirlscouts.org/whatsnew.

Volunteer Voice: Our volunteers are important! Volunteer Voice helps us stay connected. You'll receive this newsletter in your inbox monthly. Learn about exciting program activities for your troop, new resources, and other helpful volunteer news.

Social Media Resources: New leaders appreciate connecting with others. Join the GSSD Leaders and Volunteers Facebook page to start. It's run by volunteers and is a great community where you can learn and ask questions. Follow Girl Scouts San Diego on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest too!

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is your official source for delivering easy, fun troop meetings year-round! This fully customizable digital planning tool provides you with Girl Scout program content, award requirements, and other resources, so you can keep your Girl Scout year running smoothly.

Your service unit is a group of Girl Scout volunteers working to support troops in your neighborhood. Service unit volunteers act as mentors, answer questions, and provide learning and troop activities. Monthly meetings are a great place to connect.

Remember! It takes a village to lift up the next generation of leaders; you don't have to embark on your troop leader journey alone! Set the stage for a successful troop year by tapping into the people and resources already at your fingertips. Caregivers and other family members, friends, and members of the community have their own unique strengths and can provide troops with time, experience, and ideas. Get them involved from the very beginning as part of your troop volunteer team!