



Outdoor Skills

Patch Program



Table of Contents

Overview	3
Training & General Tips	4
First Aid	5
Leave No Trace & Environmental Stewardship	6
Fire Building	7
Outdoor Safety & Survival Skills	8
Knife Safety	9
Outdoor Cooking	10
Knots & Lashing	11
Navigation	12
Girl Scout Traditions	13

Overview

The Outdoor Skills Patch Program is a progressive, five-level program to help Girl Scouts learn and become proficient in outdoor skills. Through this patch program, girls explore leadership, build skills, and develop a deep appreciation for nature. The program is intended to supplement the existing Girl Scout program. It is not meant to replace working on Journeys, badges or other outdoor programming.

This patch program will focus on the following categories:

- First Aid
- Leave No Trace & Environmental Stewardship
- Fire Building
- Outdoor Safety & Survival Skills
- Knife Safety
- Outdoor Cooking
- Knots & Lashing
- Navigation
- Girl Scout Traditions



Earn your Outdoor Skills Patches!

Move through each outdoor skill's steps sequentially and at your own pace. Girl Scouts should progress through the program according to their needs and abilities and based on the Safety Activity Checkpoint guidelines.

Daisies complete steps 1-3

Brownies complete steps 1-6

Juniors complete steps 1-9

Cadettes complete steps 1-12

Seniors complete steps 1-15

Ambassadors complete steps 1-15



Training Tricks & Tips

Activities should be taught by adults (or supervised by older Girl Scouts) who possess the appropriate skills and experience for the activities.

Troop Volunteers who would like to prepare ahead of time should search "Outdoor" in their gsLearn training library to find a variety of trainings including Outdoor Basics, Knot Tying, and more.

DEVELOP SKILLS

These activities need to be done more than once. Many activities are similar to those included in some outdoor badge requirements. Badge links have been noted throughout the patch requirements. For Girl Scouts to truly master each skill, they must practice each skill repeatedly, rather than double-dipping. In addition, make sure Girl Scouts are learning by doing, not just listening.

KEEP THE TIMELINE FLEXIBLE

Take the time needed for Girl Scouts to learn, become proficient, and confident in the skill. Whatever your timeline, make it work best for your group.

USE RESOURCES

Remember, your local community may have additional resources. People who can help you include a trained/certified First Aider or medical professional, older Girl Scouts, parents, neighbors, leaders of other troops, etc.

COMPLETE THE LEVELS AS OUTLINED

If girls have already learned some of the skills, it may be tempting to skip levels. However, it is important for girls to practice skills repeatedly in order to become proficient. Girls who have already learned these skills should progress quickly through the levels with skill reviews.





First Aid

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



1) Talk about the importance of preventing accidents. For example, running can lead to skinned knees and disturbing bees can lead to getting stung.

2) Learn simple first aid for cuts, insect bites (including tick bites) and skinned knees.

3) Make an individual mini first aid kit and learn how to use the items in it. Learn what the troop/group first aid kit looks like and where it is kept.

RELATED BADGES: *Daisy Buddy Camper*

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



4) Learn how to handle urgent first aid issues, such as allergic reactions, asthma attacks and animal bites.

5) Learn how to care for burns.

6) Review your troop/group's first aid kit and show how to use the items in it. Is there anything else that should be added for outdoor adventures?

RELATED BADGES: *Brownie Cabin Camper & Brownie First Aid*

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



7) Learn first aid to stop bleeding.

8) Practice tying a triangle bandage for an arm sling and for a scalp/forehead injury. Discuss other uses for a triangle bandage.

9) Learn to prevent and treat injuries that occur due to extreme weather. Learn the signs of a heatstroke, frostbite, hypothermia, hyperthermia and how to treat them.

RELATED BADGES: *Junior First Aid*

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



10) Learn how to use everyday objects to make splints. Research how to use common materials that can be used to make splints, then practice with a variety of options. Notice which ones are the easiest to make into splints and which ones are the hardest.

11) Learn how to care for sudden illnesses like seizures, strokes, diabetic emergencies and fainting.

12) Learn the signs and symptoms of shock and how to treat shock.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette First Aid, Cadette Trailblazing & Cadette Trail Adventure*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



13) Become First Aid/CPR certified if you have not done so already.

14) Create an emergency plan for a camping trip. Include evacuation procedures, first aid, and individual and group supplies for a 2-night primitive trip. Reevaluate your first aid kits. Include a plan B.

15) Create a communication plan. Don't assume you will have cell service where you are going. Look into cell service in the area you will be camping. If you are camping for several days, think about how you will charge your battery if you do not have access to electricity, or have a plan B for how you will communicate with others outside of your group in case of emergency. Do you need any extra gear? Create a communication plan and have emergency contact numbers with you at all times.

RELATED BADGES: *Senior Trail Adventure, Senior First Aid, Ambassador Survival Camper and Ambassador First Aid*



Leave No Trace & Environmental Awareness

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



- 1) Investigate the Seven Principles of Leave No Trace.
- 2) Play a Leave No Trace game, such as: Surface Hopscotch, On Display, Tip Toe through the Crypto or another similar game.
- 3) Decide on one thing that you could do to start practicing leaving no trace at your meetings and at your home.

RELATED BADGES: *Daisy Buddy Camper & Daisy Eco Camper*

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



- 4) Learn the Seven Principles of Leave No Trace along with the hand signs too.
- 5) In your troop, create short skits based on each of the seven principles.
- 6) Find out about different animal tracks. Make a chart showing their prints. Can you identify four prints for animals that live in your area? Find out what you should do if you encounter any of these animals when outdoors.

RELATED BADGES: *Brownie Cabin Camper & Brownie Eco Friend*

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



- 7) Investigate disposing of waste properly by learning about the impact common camping items (such as soap, bug spray, sunscreen and oils) have on local water.
- 8) Discuss the difference between high and low impact campsites. What can you do to practice low impact camping? Make a plan for your next camping trip.
- 9) Explore the forest life cycle. Find out what roles fires play in a healthy forest. How can you ensure a healthy forest?

RELATED BADGES: *Junior Eco Camper*

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



- 10) Learn about the magical number 200 when we talk about Leave No Trace. Discuss the importance of 200 feet when it comes to your campsite, cooking area and cathole choice. Learn how far 200 feet is and how to count paces to measure the distance while outdoors.
- 11) Research edible plants and learn how to correctly identify at least three of them. How many can you find on a hike?
- 12) What evidence proves people have been in your area? Explain how litter can damage your environment. Make a list of things you can do on a camping trip that will reduce the impact of your group.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette Primitive Camper Badge*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



- 13) Discuss wilderness/outdoor ethics and why it is important to respect how different people have different reactions to various impacts they may find outdoors.
- 14) Learn how to constructively offer suggestions against negative habits such as playing loud music, carving names in trees, feeding wildlife, picking flowers and having your dog off a leash.
- 15) Learn about potentially dangerous animals for your area. Know what to do if you encounter these animals. Know what to do to reduce the risks of these animals entering your campsite. Share your knowledge with others.

RELATED BADGES: *Senior Adventure Camper & Senior Adventurer*



Fire Building

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



- 1) Learn what safety precautions to take before starting a fire. Be able to explain why hair should be tied up when working near fires. Discuss clothing worn near the fire and any necessary precautions needed.
- 2) Learn about the three sizes of wood used in fire building (tinder, kindling & fuel).
- 3) Make an edible campfire.

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



- 4) Review fire safety. Make a list of tools and equipment needed at a fire site and ensure they are nearby before starting fires. Safety equipment includes a bucket of water, a shovel and a rake.
- 5) Make fire starters. Learn what a charcoal chimney is and how to correctly start a charcoal fire.
- 6) Practice lighting matches and dropping them into a pail of water before trying to light a fire.

RELATED BADGES: *Brownie Cabin Camper & Brownie Outdoor Adventurer*

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



- 7) Build an A-frame fire, light it and put it out safely.
- 8) Learn how to build a log cabin fire. Light it and put it out safely.
- 9) Learn how to use and light a propane stove or portable camp stove. What are the benefits of using these? How does this cooking method help contribute to a low impact campsite?

RELATED BADGES: *Junior Camper & Junior Eco Camper*

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



- 10) Research different fire frames, talk about the best uses for each and any specific safety information. Experiment building a variety of frame options.
- 11) Practice fire building so you can reach the level of skill and confidence that only comes from doing it yourself a number of times. Think about what the fire will be used for so you can decide what kind of fire to build and how large it needs to be. Can you start a one-match fire?
- 12) Learn how to waterproof your matches.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette Primitive Camper & Cadette Trailblazing*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



- 13) Practice starting a campfire using non-traditional methods. Methods could include steel and flint, using a mirror/magnifying glass and more! Try at least two different methods.
- 14) Learn how to build a trench fire, crisscross fire, or reflector fire against a rock.
- 15) Teach fire building to younger Girl Scouts.

RELATED BADGES: *Senior Adventure Camper & Ambassador Survival Camper*



Outdoor Safety & Survival Skills

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



1) Demonstrate or explain how to dress for different weather situations in your area. What does it mean to dress in layers and why is it important? Learn how to dress for a variety of outdoor excursions in different kinds of weather. Keep health and safety in mind when discussing and don't forget about sunscreen, proper shoes, sleeve length and hats.

2) Review the buddy system and how it adds safety to trail hiking and swimming. Learn precautions to take to keep from getting lost on a hike. Learn what to do if you become lost or separated from the group. Practice the buddy system on a short hike or around your campsite.

3) Discuss why a whistle is always part of your outdoors packing list. How is it used?

RELATED BADGES: *Daisy Buddy Camper*

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



4) Review how to dress for the expected weather and what to bring along for the unexpected. Learn what clouds and winds mean to the weather and how you can prepare for unexpected weather.

5) Talk about the 10 essentials and create a "never go without it" kit. How do different hike lengths or camping trips change what should be taken with you?

6) Learn a variety of ways to signal for help in emergency situations and useful items to pack on your hike (mirror, bandana, etc.)

RELATED BADGES: *Brownie Cabin Camper & Brownie Outdoor Adventurer*

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



7) Learn about Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints. Select an outdoor activity and look up the equipment needed, procedures you need to follow and safety guidelines for that activity. Report back to the troop.

8) Learn and demonstrate first aid for sprains, fainting, blisters and rashes. Discuss ways to prevent these injuries.

9) List personal equipment and group equipment for a two-night campout. Be prepared for changes in the weather.

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



10) Research how toilet practices would be different in at least two other environments. Be sure to cover feminine hygiene in the outdoors as well.

11) Learn and demonstrate how to rig a simple shelter.

12) Learn how to storm lash a tent. Be able to explain when and where storm lashing is used. Practice storm lashing your tent.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette Primitive Camper, Cadette Trailblazing*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



13) Create a communication plan and have emergency contact numbers with you at all times.

14) Become a weather expert for your trip. Prior to your trip, chart the weather where you will be and what temperatures are expected. Learn about weather patterns for your area. What equipment will you need for hot or cold weather? Brush up on safety procedures for rain, lightning, high winds and tornadoes.

15) You should always carry the 10 essential items you learned about in Level 2, but what happens when you find yourself in need of an emergency shelter? Build an emergency shelter using things found in nature and what you have on your outdoor adventure (BESIDES a tent).

RELATED BADGES: *Senior Train Adventurer, Senior Adventure Camper, Ambassador Survival Camper*



Knife Safety

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



- 1) An "arc of safety" is keeping an arm's length away from anyone or anything. Measure this arc before having a knife in hand.
- 2) Learn how to open, close and pass a knife using a paper folding knife. [{Template}](#)
- 3) Discuss how and when to use a knife.

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



- 4) Review the "arc of safety" before using knives and the responsibilities that go along with the privilege of having a knife. Review and sign the GSCB Pocket Knife Safety Pledge.
- 5) Talk about the multiple reasons sharp knives are safer to use.
- 6) Whittle or carve a soft medium (bar of soap, candle, etc.) with CLOSE supervision.

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



- 7) Discuss the selection and care of a pocket knife.
- 8) Learn and demonstrate how to correctly sharpen, properly clean and store your knife.
- 9) Practice and demonstrate your ability to use a pocket knife for cutting, paring and whittling.

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



- 10) Learn how to use a saw.
- 11) Learn how to hold, carry, and pass a hatchet safely.
- 12) Plan the tools needed for your trip. Demonstrate their use, care, safety, and storage. Explain their impact on the environment.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette Primitive Camper*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



- 13) Learn how to hold and pass an axe safely.
- 14) Learn how to chop with an ax. Learn how to sharpen an axe.
- 15) Put your new skills to work! You might split larger pieces of wood into kindling for a campfire, or help clear wood and brush from trails and campsites.



Outdoor Cooking

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



- 1) Learn and establish a good habit of properly washing your hands before meal preparation.
- 2) Prepare a no-cook meal or snack for your group. Remember to practice safety in the kitchen when using kitchen utensils.
- 3) Learn how to clean your dishes after cooking outdoors using the three sink method.

RELATED BADGES: *Daisy Buddy Camper*

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



- 4) Find out about food safety while camping, such as packing food, storing food, etc. Create a kaper chart for cookouts.
- 5) Create a menu for a cookout. Don't forget the basics, like oil, butter and salt. Cook your meal using a one-pot, foil or stick method.
- 6) Plan and cook a simple meal, snack or dessert using a solar oven.

RELATED BADGES: *Brownie Eco Friend & Brownie Cabin Camper*

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



- 7) Research menus for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Remember to discuss allergies. Complete a menu for 1-2 days overnight camping.
- 8) Prepare a meal over a camp stove.
- 9) Demonstrate methods for care, storage and protection of food items from insects, animals and spoilage.

RELATED BADGES: *Junior Eco Camper*

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



- 10) Prepare a Dutch Oven meal using a charcoal fire.
- 11) Review different methods for water purification that are available. Demonstrate purifying water for drinking and cooking; include ways that will make water safe from Giardia. Research portable water filters/purifiers. What is the best method for your group to use?
- 12) Plan the tools needed for your trip. Demonstrate their use, care, safety, and storage. Explain their impact on the environment.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette Eco Trekker & Cadette Primitive Camper*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



- 13) Plan at least six meals you can cook while camping. Try to use 2-3 different types of cooking, including minimal impact cooking techniques. Create a plan for your garbage, recycling and protecting food from wildlife.
- 14) Teach younger girls how to cook using one of the following methods: Stick cooking, foil cooking, or Dutch Oven.
- 15) Research other outdoor cooking methods or food strategies to use on outdoor adventures. Maybe you create a meal using a large tin can, or maybe you'll create an ultra-lightweight meal. Cook two meals using these new techniques and strategies.

RELATED BADGES: *Senior Adventure Camper, Ambassador Survival Camper & Ambassador Trail Adventure*



Knots

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



- 1) Learn and practice tying an overhand knot. Explain and demonstrate the use of this knot.
- 2) Learn and practice tying a square knot. Explain and demonstrate the use of this knot.
- 3) Learn how to store your ropes after use to keep them from getting tangled.

RELATED BADGES: *Daisy Buddy Camper*

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



- 4) Learn the difference between a knot and a hitch.
- 5) Learn to tie a clove hitch and round turn with two half hitches. The clove hitch is used to help hold up one end of a clothesline. This is also the knot used to start any lashing project. The round turn with two half hitches is very useful for attaching a rope to a ring, bar or pole.
- 6) Use the clove hitch and round turn with two half hitches to demonstrate hanging a dunk bag line.

RELATED BADGES: *Brownie Cabin Camper & Brownie Outdoor Adventurer*

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



- 7) Review and demonstrate the overhand knot, square knot and clove hitch.
- 8) Learn how to tie a bowline, tautline and a sheet bend knot. Explain and demonstrate the uses for these knots.
- 9) Learn square lashing and make something using square lashing.

RELATED BADGES: *Junior Camper*

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



- 10) Review the overhand, square, clove, bowline, tautline and sheet bend knot. Learn and demonstrate a slip knot, lark's head and sheepshank knot.
- 11) Research other knots that will be helpful on your outdoor adventures and their different uses. Learn AT LEAST FIVE new knots through your research. To get you started, maybe you'll learn the quick release knot if you're going horseback riding. Alternatively, if you're going boating, you could learn the cleat hitch!
- 12) Explain the different kinds and sizes of rope and give examples of how each is used. Demonstrate the proper care and storage of the rope you are using.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette Primitive Camper & Cadette Trailblazer*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



- 13) Review and demonstrate all knots learned. Learn to tie a figure 8 knot and trucker's hitch.
- 14) Build a knot board with at least 10 knots to be used for display and teaching, showing the knots you have learned. Label each knot and include directions for completing each knot.
- 15) Build a lashing display showing examples of four types of lashing.

RELATED BADGES: *Senior Adventure Camper & Ambassador Survival Camper*



Navigation

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



- 1) Learn parts of a map and practice what you learn by making your own map of your neighborhood.
- 2) Locate where you are on a highway map of your area.
- 3) Learn how to follow trailblazers, trail signs or cairns. Learn why they are made and who makes them.

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



- 4) Set up a trail using a minimum of seven trail signs. Learn trail etiquette when following trail signs.
- 5) Learn to recognize North, East, South and West on a map. Learn the points on a compass.
- 6) Practice using a map and compass to get from point A to point B or practice using a compass to navigate through an orienteering course.

RELATED BADGES: *Brownie Hiker*

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



- 7) Learn the basics of using a GPS. How does a GPS know where you are? How can you find your location using a GPS and map? How can you mark points on a GPS?
- 8) Learn the difference between a step and a pace. Determine the length of your pace.
- 9) Learn how to use a compass (sight a landmark, follow a direction, know about declination).

RELATED BADGES: *Junior Camper & Junior Geocacher*

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



- 10) Find East by using the sun and knowing the time of day. Show where North, South, and West are. Learn how to estimate distance without using manufactured tools.
- 11) Learn how to read a topographical map. Trace out a hiking route on a topographical map. Describe what you would see along the way by visualizing the terrain from the map symbols and decide where you'll take rest breaks based on the topography.
- 12) Find the North Star by using the Big Dipper.

RELATED BADGES: *Cadette Eco Trekker*

LEVEL 5: MASTER



- 13) Build a trail sign board with a minimum of fifteen trail signs. Label each sign.
- 14) Set up a wide game incorporating trail signs and compass to move people through the game.
- 15) Using a topographical map, select a starting point. With a compass orient the map and figure the bearings and distances to at least three points.

RELATED BADGES: *Senior Adventure Camper & Ambassador Survival Camper*



Girl Scout Traditions

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER



1) Make a camping or outdoor Kaper Chart and use it at your next outdoor activity. Make a list of all the things that need to be done on a camping trip and create a fun way to display these jobs/chores.

2) On your own, or with the help of an older girl troop/group, learn a poem or a song for an outdoor ceremony.

3) Singing around the campfire is a Girl Scout tradition. Learn a campfire song!

RELATED BADGES: *Daisy Buddy Camper*

LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE



4) Investigate, plan and complete an outdoor flag ceremony.

5) Make a Sit Upon.

6) What are SWAPs? Make some with your troop to give to another.

LEVEL 3: ADVANCED



7) The Girl Scout slogan is "Do a good turn daily." Do an outdoor good turn.

8) Learn about Campfire Ash Ceremonies. What is their purpose?

9) The Girl Scout motto is "Be prepared." List several ways Girl Scouts can be prepared for the outdoors and prepared to help others in the outdoors.

RELATED BADGES: *Junior Eco Camper*

LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE



10) Plan and participate in a "Scout's Own".

11) Discuss the symbols of Girl Scouting and their meaning: Membership Pin, World Trefoil Pin, Trefoil Shape and World Thinking Day symbol.

12) Discuss with your troop what it means to live the Girl Scout Law when in the outdoors.

LEVEL 5: MASTER



13) Teach a younger Girl Scout or troop an outdoor flag ceremony.

14) Reminisce and share your top five outdoor memories as a Girl Scout.

15) Girl Scouts leave a place better than they found it. Talk with a park/camp ranger about how you can help clean a local camping area, park or hiking trail. Find out what work needs to be done and then set off to make the world a better place!



“I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery—air, mountains, trees, people. I thought, ‘This is what it is to be happy’”

-Sylvia Plath

girl scouts 
of the chesapeake bay

www.gscb.org | 800-341-4007