gscb

Travel Guidelines

girl scouts
of the chesapeake bay

Table of Contents

Travel Planning Resources 3
Planning and Preparation 4
Adult Volunteer-to-Youth Ratios 5
Information on Travel/Activity Applications and Insurance 6
- GSCB Travel and Activity Application 6
- Certificate of Insurance 6
- Activity Accident Insurance 6

Travel Progression and Requirements 7
- Day Trips with no high-risk activities 8
  - Requirements 8
- Day Trips with high-risk activity 9
  - Requirements 9
  - Recommended Timeline for Day trips with high-risk activity 9
- Overnight Trips 10
  - Requirements 10
  - Recommended Timeline for Overnight Trips 10
- Extended Overnight Trips- 3 nights or more 11
  - Requirements 11
  - Recommended Timeline for Extended Overnight Trips 11
- National Trips 12
  - Requirements 12
  - Recommended Timeline for National Trips 13
- International Trips 13
  - Requirements 13
  - Recommended Timeline for International Trips 14
- Individual Activities/Travel 15
  - Requirements: 15
  - Suggested Timeline for Individual Travel 15

Thank You 16

Travel Planning Resources

Travel offers Girl Scouts an exciting opportunity to plan and lead their own adventures while exploring the world. This creates a safe space for taking risks, building confidence, and developing new skills. Through researching, planning, teamwork, goal setting, budgeting, and more, they'll develop essential leadership skills while gaining a broader perspective on the world around them.

These are resources available for travel planning:

- GSCB Travel Support and Resources
- GSCB Program Guide and Event Calendar
- GSCB Property Reservations
- GSUSA's Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel
- GSUSA's Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel
- GSCB Travel Guidelines (this document)
- Birthplace Bound Troop Travel Planner
- Group Travel and Getaways
- WAGGGS Travel Centers
- GSCB Safety and Activity Checkpoints
- GSCB Money Earning Activity Policy and Guidance

Visit www.gscb.org to reserve a property through CampSpot and find council-sponsored events on our Events Calendar or the GSCB program guide.

GSUSA's resources offer valuable guidance on all aspects of travel, including travel progression, readiness quizzes, Girl Scout-led planning, roles of parents/guardians and troop leaders, engaging Girl Scouts in exploring their interests, trip planning details, cultural awareness, and more.

GSCB's Travel Guidelines accompany both GSUSA's travel guides and provide information regarding safety, required forms, travel planning, and more. These guides can be used as tools for planning a safe and successful experience. Keep in mind that Girl Scouts should participate in trip planning in a way that is appropriate for their grade level.

The Birthplace Bound Troop Travel Planner can be found on the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace Museum website. It is your one-stop resource for streamlining trip planning, ensuring a fun Savannah experience, and creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Getaways or ready-made experiences can be found on the GSUSA website under Group Travel. These are curated events hosted by Girl Scout Councils and partners.

As a Girl Scout, you're automatically a member of WAGGGS, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, which means you can visit the WAGGGS World Centers. These five incredible destinations—created just for Girl Scouts like you—are fun, affordable, and safe places to stay while you broaden your horizons and make new friends. Girl Scout members, troops, volunteers, and families are invited to join us for adventures in Mexico, Switzerland, England, India, and across the African continent.

Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC) provide the standard safety guidelines for Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) and Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay-approved activities. Leaders should review the Safety and Activity Checkpoints to ensure they are meeting requirements for the activities they plan throughout the year.

The GSCB Money Earning Activity Policy and Guidance outlines rules for Girl Scout troops and members in the Chesapeake Bay Council to earn extra funds beyond council-sponsored programs. It covers eligibility, approved activities, safety guidelines, and the approval process for fundraising efforts.

Planning and Preparation

The leader assumes the responsibility of keeping parents/guardians informed of the itinerary, costs, and program activities. Activities should be planned with consideration for the physical and mental abilities, physical condition, and endurance of all members based on previous progressive troop experiences. Let's get you ready for your next adventure! When a group of Girl Scouts commits to partaking in a travel experience, it creates excitement and anticipation for all. Whether they are going to the Museum across town or traveling halfway across the world, we want to make sure you are prepared.

As you begin planning and preparing for the trip ahead, there are a number of items that need to be taken into consideration.

Timing of trip

- School schedule, weather patterns of the region, tourist season, etc.

Budget

- How much are those involved willing to pay for the experience?
- What are the primary expense items?
- What type of experience does the group want?
- Is the expectation of a 4-star hotel or a cabin at a campground?

Financing the Trip

- How will those involved pay for the trip?
- What are the opportunities to engage in additional money-earning activities?

Transportation

- What modes of transportation will you take?
- Are contracts or certificates of insurance required?

Itinerary

- What are your travel dates, and do they include travel time?
- How will the group decide on the activities they participate in?
- How will you document the itinerary and how will you provide it to caregivers/guardians?

Participants and Requirements

- How many adults and youths will participate?
- What are the requirements to participate?
- What forms will be required?

Adult Volunteer-to-Youth Ratios

Chaperones are the most important component of your trip. All adults who attend Travel Experiences must be registered and background-checked members of Girl Scouts.

Girl Scout to Adult ratios are different for events, travel and camping. They are as follows:

Group Meetings		
Girl Scout Program Level	**Two unrelated adult volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for up to this number of youths:**	**One additional adult volunteer to each additional**
Daisy (K-1)	12	1-6
Brownie (2-3)	20	1-8
Junior (4-5)	25	1-10
Cadette (6-8)	25	1-12
Senior (9-10)	30	1-15
Ambassador (11-12)	30	1-15

Events, Travel, and Camping		
Girl Scout Program Level	**Two unrelated adult volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for up to this number of youths:**	**One additional adult volunteer to each additional**
Daisy (K-1)	6	1-4
Brownie (2-3)	12	1-6
Junior (4-5)	16	1-8
Cadette (6-8)	20	1-10
Senior (9-10)	24	1-12
Ambassador (11-12)	24	1-12

Access the Background Checks portal.

Travel/Activity Applications and Insurance

GSCB Travel and Activity Application

This form is not required for any day or overnight trips to GSCB properties.
This form is required for activities that must receive GSCB approval, these include:

- Overnight trips
- High-risk activities as defined by the GSCB Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Air travel
- International travel
- Girl, Troop, or Service Unit is partaking in a trip organized by another council or by GSUSA
- Local or Domestic Travel must be submitted 90 days in advance of the trip.
- International Travel must be submitted at least 12 months in advance of the scheduled trip.

Note: If a trip does not follow the Travel Progression chart, is not girl-led, or does not adhere to the Safety Activity Checkpoints, the trip will be rejected and must be amended and resubmitted. For these reasons, reservations should not be made prior to receiving approval.

Certificate of Insurance

This form is not required for any day or overnight rentals of GSCB properties.
This form is required for any of the following reasons:

- High Risk Activities
- Third Party Rental and/or when a usage agreement is in place
- Facility rental/usage, equipment, etc.
- Chartering a motorized vehicle.
- Whenever possible GSCB should be listed as the additional insured.
- Companies should have a minimum of $1,000,000 liability coverage to be considered as the location for your activity.

Note: a company/organization may in turn request that you provide a COI from GSCB that names the organization as an additional insured. Volunteers can view all current COIs that GSCB has on file here, both collected from vendors as well as provided to vendors.

Activity Accident Insurance

Girl Scouts provides Activity Accident Insurance underwritten by Mutual of Omaha to support Girl Scouts participating in Girl Scout approved and supervised activities and events. Activity Accident insurance is automatic upon membership registration and applies to all adult and youth members who may become injured during a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity. This coverage works like supplemental medical/health coverage and is intended to help with out-of-pocket medical expenses that may not be covered by personal insurance.

Activity Accident insurance extends to non-members who are invited to participate in a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity, whether an adult volunteer for the day, or a friend of a Girl Scout who is joining along to try out scouting.

Activity Accident coverage applies to day events, overnight trips (including camp), and international travel. A summary of these coverage types for each category can be found here.

Need proof of insurance? Click here to download.

girl scouts

Travel Progression

Local Field Trip

Visit a nearby spot, possibly during your regular meeting time.

Recommended for: Daisy, Brownie

Minimum age: Daisy

Day Trip

Plan an all-day trip. Try a council event or local attraction.

Recommended for: Daisy, Brownie, Junior

Minimum age: Daisy

Overnight

Help Girl Scouts plan their first single overnight—maybe at a council event, camp, or nearby attraction.

Recommended for: Brownie, Junior

Minimum age: Daisy (with Day Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

Short Trip

Spend two to three nights in your region, up to a six-hour drive away from home. Girl Scouts plan budget and schedule.

Recommended for: Junior, Cadette

Minimum age: Brownie (with Overnight experience in Girl Scouting)

Extended Trip

Travel the country! Extended trips last four or more nights OR take place more than a six-hour drive from home.

Recommended for: Cadette, Senior, Ambassador

Minimum age: Junior (with Short Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

International Trip

Travel the world! These life-changing trips usually take two to three years to save for, plan, and prepare.

Recommended for: Senior, Ambassador

Minimum age: Cadette (with Extended Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

Individual Travel

Individual Girl Scouts can sign up for independent travel and meet new Girl Scout friends through council-offered travel opportunities or GSUSA's Destinations program.

Recommended for: Senior, Ambassador

Minimum age: Cadette (with Extended Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

When moving up to the next step, consider each Girl Scout's independence, ability to work well in groups, flexibility, and experience with cultures other than their own.

Through progression, Girl Scouts build skills to become lifelong travelers and global citizens. Girl Scouts take the lead in planning a new adventure at every level.

Day Trips with No High-Risk Activities

Visit www.gscb.org for council events and programs. You can also plan a visit to any of the GSCB camps!

Short trips to local points of interest (Daisies and older):
Daisies may need to take small steps to increase their confidence and comfort in traveling with the Troop. A walk to the nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to the firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies. You can then graduate to day trips to local sights, for example in Baltimore, D.C., or Philadelphia.

All-day visit (Daisies and older):
An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a day-long trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal)—younger girls can select locations and do much of the trip planning while never being too far from home.

Note: Full-day trips may be very challenging for Daisies, especially for kindergarteners who have not experienced short trips. Make sure girls take some short trips before they progress to a full-day trip.

Requirements:

Requirement	Girl Scout	Adult Participant	Due to Troop	Due to GSCB
Health History Form for Youth and Adults	X	X	X	
Travel Roster	X	X	X	
Permission Waiver Form for Activities and Trips	X	X	X	
GSCB Background Check		X	X	X

Recommended Timeline for Day Trips with No High-Risk Activities:

2-3 Months Pre-Travel
- Discuss previous travel experiences
- Determine the purpose of the trip
- Choose destination/activity
- Review Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Develop your budget
- Start planning logistics
- Begin to develop an itinerary
- Inform caregivers of the trip/activity
- Develop itinerary
- Inform caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates

3 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Collect paperwork from participants
- Assign roles and responsibilities to participants

During the Trip
- Journal about the experience
- Take photos

After the Trip
- Complete Girls in Action Form

Day Trips with High-Risk Activities

Brownies and older:
Day trips that involve high-risk activities—such as horseback riding, zip lining, climbing walls, or waterfront activities—require additional planning and support. These trips typically take place at program centers, camps, or outdoor facilities with trained instructors and proper safety equipment. Check what activities are considered high-risk on the GSCB Safety Activities Checkpoint.

Requirements:

Requirement	Girl Scout	Adult Participant	Due to Troop	Due to GSCB
Travel and Activity Application				Submit to GSCB at least 90 days in advance of travel
Health History Form for Youth and Adults	X	X	X	
Travel Roster	X	X	X	
Permission Waiver Form for Activities and Trips	X	X	X	
GSCB Background Check		X	X	X

Recommended Timeline for Day Trips with High-Risk Activities:

6 Months Pre-Travel
- Discuss previous travel experiences
- Determine the purpose of the trip
- Choose destination/activity
- Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for required training/certifications or instructor(s)
- Develop your budget
- Start planning logistics
- Begin to develop an itinerary
- Inform caregivers of the trip/activity
- Inform caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates

3 Months Pre-Travel
- Finalize itinerary
- Finalize budget
- Submit Travel and Activity Application
- Once approved, remind caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates.

3 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Collect paperwork from participants
- Assign roles and responsibilities to participants

During the Trip
- Journal about the experience
- Take photos

After the Trip
- Reflect on your experience
- Complete Girls in Action Form

Overnight Trips

Daisies and older:
A trip of one (or possibly two) nights away could start with one-night camping or staying at a Girl Scout property and progress to a visit to a state or national park or nearby city for sightseeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground—or even an overnight at a large museum! These short trips are just long enough to whet their appetites but not long enough to generate homesickness. A Daisy troop may participate in an overnight experience if the girls are ready. Brownie troops can participate in trips for up to two nights. There are exceptions for camp. Utilize the girls' interest in determining where to visit to make the trip educational and outside what the girl's parents may plan for a family vacation. Visit the GSCB website for GSCB property reservations, council-sponsored events, and to view the current GSCB Program Guide. Check what activities are considered high-risk on the GSCB Safety Activities Checkpoint.

Requirements:

Requirement	Girl Scout	Adult Participant	Due to Troop	Due to GSCB
Travel and Activity Application				Submit to GSCB at least 90 days in advance of travel
Health History Form for Youth and Adults	X	X	X	
Travel Roster	X	X	X	
Medical Form	X		X	
Permission Waiver Form for Activities and Trips	X	X	X	
GSCB Background Check		X	X	X

Recommended Timeline for Overnight Trips:

6 Months Pre-Travel
- Discuss previous travel experiences
- Determine the purpose of the trip
- Choose destination/activity
- Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for required training/certifications
- Develop your budget
- Start planning logistics
- Begin to develop an itinerary
- Inform caregivers of the trip/activity
- Inform caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates

3 Months Pre-Travel
- Finalize itinerary and budget
- Submit Travel and Activity Application
- Once approved, remind caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates.
- Confirm reservations

3 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Finalize packing list
- Collect paperwork from participants
- Assign roles and responsibilities to participants

During the Trip
- Journal about the experience
- Take photos

After the Trip
- Reflect on your experience
- Complete Girls in Action Form

Extended Overnight Trips: 3 Nights or More

Juniors and older:
Three or four nights camping or staying in a hotel or motel within the girls' home region—up to a few hours away from home. Utilize the girls' interest in determining historical sights and museums to visit to make the trip educational and outside what the girl's parents may plan for a family vacation. The Girl Scout Ranger Program is a great thing to consider when planning a trip to a national park. Visit the GSCB website for council-sponsored events and check out the current GSCB Program Guide. Check what activities are considered high-risk on the GSCB Safety Activities Checkpoint.

Requirements:

Requirement	Girl Scout	Adult Participant	Due to Troop	Due to GSCB
Travel and Activity Application				Submit to GSCB at least 90 days in advance of travel
Health History Form for Youth and Adults	X	X	X	
Travel Roster	X	X	X	
Medical Form	X		X	
Permission Waiver Form for Activities and Trips	X	X	X	
GSCB Background Check		X	X	X

Recommended Timeline for Extended Overnight Trips:

6 Months Pre-Travel
- Discuss previous travel experiences
- Determine the purpose of the trip
- Choose destination/activity
- Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for required training/certifications
- Develop your budget
- Start planning logistics
- Begin to develop an itinerary
- Inform caregivers of the trip/activity
- Inform caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates

3-4 Months Pre-Travel
- Finalize itinerary and budget
- Submit Travel and Activity Application
- Once approved, remind caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates.
- Confirm reservations

3 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Finalize packing list
- Collect paperwork from participants
- Assign roles and responsibilities to participants

During the Trip
- Journal about the experience
- Take photos

After the Trip
- Reflect on your experience
- Complete Girls in Action Form

National Trips

Cadettes and older:
Cadettes and older can travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Try to steer clear of recreational trips they might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component, such as incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country. Perhaps the girls want to plan a trip to a national park as part of the Girl Scout Ranger Program. When Girl Scout groups are traveling within the United States, it is valuable to reference the GSUSA United States Travel Guide. Check what activities are considered high-risk on the GSCB Safety Activities Checkpoint.

Requirements:

Requirement	Girl Scout	Adult Participant	Due to Troop	Due to GSCB
Travel and Activity Application				Submit to GSCB at least 90 days in advance of travel
Health History Form for Youth and Adults	X	X	X	
Travel Roster	X	X	X	
Medical Form	X		X	
Permission Waiver Form for Activities and Trips	X	X	X	
GSCB Background Check		X	X	X

Recommended Timeline for National Trips:

1 Year Pre-Travel
- Discuss previous travel experiences
- Determine the purpose of the trip
- Choose destination/activity
- Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for required training/certifications
- Develop your budget
- Start planning logistics
- Inform caregivers of the trip/activity
- Inform caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates

9 Months Pre-Travel
- Research location online
- Build a travel itinerary
- Finalize budget and continue raising funds
- Conduct team-building games
- Present proposal at a meeting with families

6 Months Pre-Travel
- Research weather conditions
- Research the culture and local customs
- Talk about health and fitness - what can you do to get physically ready?
- Go over/create group agreement
- Leaders: check requirement deadlines

3-4 Months Pre-Travel
- Finalize itinerary
- Submit Travel and Activity Application
- Once approved, remind caregivers of the requirements to attend for participants and due dates.
- Confirm reservations

3 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Finalize packing list
- Collect paperwork from participants
- Assign roles and responsibilities to participants

During the Trip
- Journal about the experience
- Take photos

After the Trip
- Reflect on your experience
- Complete Girls in Action Form

International Trips

Cadettes and older:
International trips are available to Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors but only to those who have successfully participated in the progression of overnight and extended trips within Girl Scouting. Travel around the world, often requires two or three years of preparation. WAGGGS World Centers may have additional or different guidelines regarding age requirements for international travel. Always consider the girls' readiness for the next step in the travel progression, particularly for an international trip. When Girl Scout groups are traveling internationally, it is valuable to reference the GSUSA's Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel. Check what activities are considered high-risk on the GSCB Safety Activities Checkpoint.

Requirements:

Requirement	Girl Scout	Adult Participant	Due to Troop	Due to GSCB
Travel and Activity Application				Submit to GSCB at least 12 months in advance of travel
Health History Form for Youth and Adults	X	X	X	
International Travel Health History Form	X	X	X	
Travel Roster	X	X	X	X
Medical Form	X		X	
Permission Waiver Form for Activities and Trips	X	X	X	
Permission to Travel Interntionally for Minors	X		X	
GSCB Background Check		X	X	X
Copies of Passports	X	X	X	

Recommended Timeline for International Trips:

24-18 Months Pre-Travel
- Determine the purpose of the trip
- Choose destination/activity
- Brainstorm trip details and activities
- Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for required training/certifications
- Discuss previous travel experiences
- Check for any travel restrictions
- Inform caregivers of the trip/activity

16-12 Months Pre-Travel
- Start planning logistics
- Develop a budget
- Plan money-earning activities
- Continue to develop itinerary
- Present proposal at a meeting with families
- Determine who will be attending and how many chaperones are required
- Those without passports should be applying for one
- Submit Travel and Activity Application
- Download proof of insurance and keep for your records

12-8 Months Pre-Travel
- Once the trip is approved by council, inform caregivers of the requirements to attend and due dates
- Continue developing itinerary
- Continue to develop budget and raise funds
- Begin making reservations

8-3 Months Pre-Travel
- Finalize itinerary
- Finalize budget
- Research weather conditions
- Research the culture and local customs of your destination
- Talk about health and fitness - what can you do to get physically ready?
- Go over/create group agreement
- Conduct team-building games

12-6 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Remind caregivers and participants of due dates and try to collect all paperwork except for those that need to be notarized
- Finalize and confirm reservations
- Collect all remaining funds

6-4 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Collect remaining paperwork from participants (Note: notarized documents must be completed within 30 days of travel or less)
- Finalize packing list for participants
- Assign roles and responsibilites to participants
- Finalize accomodations and travel tickets
- Confirm all safety guidelines are being met
- Confirm/go over itinerary with participants and caregivers
- Leaders should keep all required documentation in a folder or binder and must take it on the trip

During the Trip
- Journal about the experience
- Take photos
- Daily reflections

After the Trip
- Reflect on your experience
- Complete Girls in Action Form

Individual Trips

Daisies and older:
Visit the GSCB website for council-sponsored events and check out the current GSCB Program Guide.

For individual Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador Girl Scouts:
Girl Scout Destinations are the ultimate adventure. Push past your comfort zone by applying for a trip on your own, and make friends from all over the country as you travel with new Girl Scout friends. There's a unique, life-changing experience for everyone. Destinations are posted annually on August 1st for the following year. Visit the Girl Scouts Destinations page to view the events calendar and start exploring!

Requirements:
Once you choose your adventure, you will be prompted to:
- Download the Destinations Information and Application Worksheet
- Complete the required Girl Scout Destinations Application
- Requirements will vary vased on the event host/destination

Recommended Timeline for Individual Travel:

1 Year Pre-Travel
- Consider previous travel experiences
- Deteremine the purpose of the trip
- Choose destination/activity
- Review the reqiurements and deadlines
- Develop your budget and start raising funds

6 Months Pre-Travel
- Research weather conditions
- Research the culture and local customs of your destination
- Think about health and fitness - what can you do to get physically ready?
- Review the budget and continue raising funds

3-4 Months Pre-Travel
- Confirm reservations/requirements

3 Weeks Pre-Travel
- Finalize packing list

During the Trip
- Journal about the experience
- Take photos
- Daily reflections

After the Trip
- Reflect on your experience
- Complete Girls in Action Form

Thank You

We hope this guidebook serves as a helpful resource as you plan and embark on your Girl Scout travel adventures. Whether you're exploring a new city, attending a special event, or camping under the stars, these guidelines are here to support you in having a safe, fun, and enriching experience.

As you embark on your Girl Scout travel experience, remember that preparation, teamwork, and respect for others will make your journey safe, fun, and memorable. By following these guidelines, you'll ensure a smooth trip while embracing new experiences and growing as a leader. Always stay curious, support your fellow scouts, and represent the Girl Scout values wherever you go.

We also encourage you to share your adventures! Capture your experiences and submit a Girls in Action Form to showcase your photos, events, and stories of Girl Scouts in action. Your journey can inspire others and highlight the impact of Girl Scouting in our community.

Remember to always follow the GSCB Emergency Procedures when traveling. For any questions or additional guidance, refer to the volunteer essentials resources on the GSCB website, the resources provided for you in this guidebook, and your volunteer support specialist or member care at MemberCare@cbgsc.org or 800-341-4007.

Safe Travels!