



Girl Scouts at Home Family and Troop CAMPING TOOLKIT



Camping is one of the most treasured Girl Scout traditions. Whether you're in the wilderness, at Girl Scout camp or in your own backyard, camping is a great way to connect to nature and to your Girl Scout sisters. This toolkit is designed to help families bring the Girl Scout camping experience home and to help troops and service units build a virtual group campout experience. In this toolkit, you'll find:

- How to Get Started
- 8 Steps to a Successful At-Home Campout
- For Troops and Service Units
- Potential Schedule
- Appendix – Activity Resources

When girls campout at home with their family or virtually with their troop, they'll **discover** new interests, **connect** with those closest to them, and learn new ways to **take action** in their community. Girls will participate in girl-led outdoor activities and camping activities. When girls help set up camp, meals, and do hands-on activities they will learn by doing.

Backyard camping can be a blast! Enjoy the camping atmosphere without having to pack and drive! Involve your Girl Scout in the backyard camping planning process.

HOW TO GET STARTED



Start with a family meeting: Share the idea of going on a backyard campout and get input from the rest of the family. Pick a day that works for everyone and talk about the different things you can do during your campout. Plan your meals, pick your activities and discuss what each person needs to do to get ready for the campout.

Before the campout, decide on your ground rules. For example:

- When you can go inside (to get food from the fridge, a jacket, something you forgot, etc.). Or decide whether you want to pretend like you're on a traditional campout where you can't go back for anything you forgot!
- If electronics are allowed
- What activities only adults can do and what kids can do with adult supervision

Safety:

- Please review the Safety Activity Checkpoints for [Camping](#) and [Outdoor Cooking](#).
- Please ensure that you have a first aid kit readily available.
- Check with your local fire department and neighborhood regarding open fires.
- Never cook or have a fire inside of the tent.
- Have a significant water source for emergencies.



8 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL AT-HOME CAMPOUT

1 SELECT YOUR METHOD OF CAMPING

To start off your camping adventure, you first need to select how you will be camping. There are three options below that we recommend. Whatever you choose, you are sure to have a night of adventure and fun!

- **If you have a tent:** create a space away from your house and set up your tent.

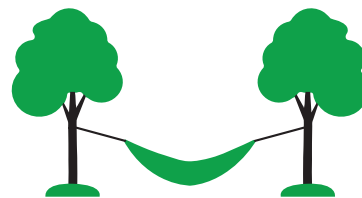
Find a smooth, flat surface to set up camp for the night.

- Place a tarp on the ground and then set up your tent on top of it.
- Lay out your bedding using sleeping bags, blanket, air mattresses, yoga mats, etc.



- **If you don't have a tent:** Make a shelter by tying rope or string around two trees and placing a tarp over the ropes to create a covering. You can tie the sides of the tarp down or weigh them down to give the tarp a tent shape. Make sure the tarp is secure, so it does not blow away.

- Place a tarp under the shelter and set up camp.
- Lay out your bedding using sleeping bags, blanket, air mattresses, yoga mats, etc.



- **Indoor camping:** Clear out a space in your living room or another open room in your house.
 - Build up your indoor camping space in any way you want—add blankets, pillows, couch cushions, use kitchen chairs and blankets to build a fort—the options are endless!
 - Spread your blankets and pillows out.

2 CREATE YOUR SUPPLY LIST

This section outlines the supplies that you may need for your backyard camping adventure. These supplies will help your adventure run smoothly!

Sleeping basics:

- Tent
- Ground cover/tarp
- Sleeping bags (or sheets and blankets)
- Sleeping pads or air mattresses
- Pillows



Helpful Equipment:

- Beach blanket to sit on outside of tent
- Flashlights/headlamps (one per person)
- Outdoor fire pit
- Fire starting materials
- Matches or lighter
- Insect repellent (if needed)
- Sunscreen
- Hygiene essentials

Cooking Supplies:

- Backyard grill or camp stove and propane
- Plates, cups and utensils
- Cooking utensils, pots and pans
- Cooler with ice
- Food for dinner and breakfast
- S'mores supplies (including marshmallow sticks)
- Water and other drinks of choice
- Paper towels
- Trash bags

Clothing:

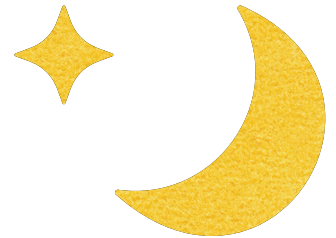
- Pajamas and a change of clothes
- Jackets and hats



3 SET UP THE ATMOSPHERE

Setting the scene will help make the campout feel special and different from other at-home activities. This will give your girl a sense of adventure and help her feel like she is camping in nature.

- Hang lights or lamps around your sleeping area or around trees nearby.
- Set up lawn chairs or patio chairs for everyone to sit around.
- If you can't have a real campfire, pull up some [campfire videos](#) on YouTube.

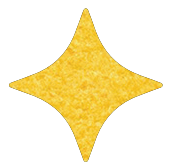
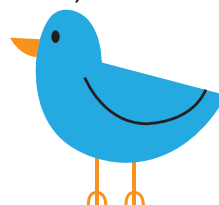


4 SELECT YOUR AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

When girls participate in outdoor activities, they benefit in multiple ways. Girls develop outdoor competence when they learn to engage safely and responsibly in a range of outdoor activities. Girls develop a love of nature and an interest in the natural world. Girls gain confidence in their ability to take on new challenges and learn from and succeed in them. Lastly, girls come to understand how their behaviors impact the environment and what they can do to protect the natural world.

Check out this list of fun outdoor activities!

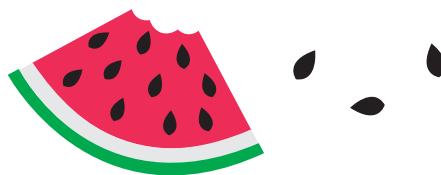
- Start off your afternoon with [these activities](#) from the one of the Girl Scout outdoor badges.
- Create a [leaf rubbing](#).
- Observe and document nature in your own way. Draw what you see, take notes, take pictures. Find different types of trees, flowers, bugs, birds, insects, etc.
- Create a nature scavenger hunt (see attached document).
- Create art using nature (leaves, rocks, sticks, etc.).
- Paint or draw your back yard.
- Create a yard map (see attached document).
- Play Camping Bingo (see attached document).
- Play Simon Says.
- **Other Resources:** [GSUSA knot tying videos](#), [Outdoor Activities](#), [Online Leave No Trace course](#)



5 SELECT YOUR COOKING METHOD AND MEAL

This section has several different meals and cooking methods to make your night full of new experiences. Be sure to try a new recipe! Don't forget to try a Girl Scout tradition—if you wish to say grace before your meal, there are Girl Scout graces to sing at the bottom of this section.

- **Identify cooking and campfire options:** Do you have a built-in firepit in your yard, a firepit table or another place where you could safely build a fire in your backyard? Do you have a barbecue grill or camp stove?
 - [Girl Scouts Campfire Safety](#)
 - [How to Build a Campfire](#)
 - Cooking with a [solar oven](#)
 - Can't build a campfire? Try making an [edible campfire](#).
 - You can also cook traditional camp meals inside (like baking foil packs in the oven).
- **Plan your meals:** If you have a firepit, grill or camp stove, you can plan meals to cook outside. If you don't have a fire, plan meals that don't have to be cooked: sandwiches for dinner, a no-cook dessert and granola/cereal or muffins/bagels for breakfast.
 - [Classic Outdoor Cooking Recipes – Girl Scouts](#)
 - [Easy Campfire Recipes](#)
 - [Ideas for Meals](#)
 - [Foil Packets](#)
- **Grace:** To incorporate a Girl Scout tradition into mealtime, you might sing a [Girl Scout grace](#) before your meal, such as [Johnny Appleseed!](#)



6 GIRL SCOUT TRADITIONS

Add a few Girl Scout traditions to your backyard adventure. This section has campfire songs and campfire traditions to make your campfire experience extra special! Whether you have a campfire, firepit, edible fire, or a fire made from art be sure to try one of the following!

- **Sing campfire songs:**
 - [Flicker](#)
 - [Brownie Smile Song](#)
 - [Hermie the Worm](#)
 - [I love the Mountains](#)
 - [Donkeys are in Love with Carrots](#)
 - [On My Honor](#)
 - [Make New Friends](#)
 - [Princess Pat](#)
 - [Sing Your Way Home](#)
 - [The Moose Song](#)
 - [The Milk Song](#)
 - [Icky Sticky Bubble Gum](#)
 - [Girl Scouts Together](#)
 - [Green Trees](#)
 - [Black Socks](#)
 - [White Coral Bells](#)
 - [Lollipop Song](#)
- **YouTube playlists:**
 - [Girl Scouts Songs, Lyrics, & MP3](#)
 - [Girl Scouts Songs YouTube Channel](#)
 - [Sing-Along Videos](#)
 - [Melinda Caroll](#)



● **Wish Sticks**

Each person brings a twig to the campfire. Holding it tightly in her hand, she makes a silent wish and adds her twig to the fire. - OR - Before the campfire, each girl finds a large stick. She must scrape off enough bark so that she can write a wish on it, using a magic marker. Or she can write the wish on a small piece of paper and tie it to the stick. The sticks are added to the fire during the evening. As the sticks burn, their wishes are going into the air and will come true.

- **A Girl Scout always leaves a place better than she found it!** Pack up all your supplies, put everything in its place, and do a trash sweep of your camping area to ensure no litter is left behind.

7 NIGHT ADVENTURES

Are you up for a nighttime adventure? Try out one of these activities to close out your night!

- Observe the night sky with [SkyView](#).
- Make shadow puppets.
- Read a book around the fire or lanterns.
- For the brave at heart, play spider eyes!
 - Have girls hold a flashlight at their temple, right next to their eyes. Then have them direct the flashlight (and their eyes) at the ground, moving very slowly. Spider eyes look like shiny specks of glitter! You will see them in the grass, bushes and tree trunks. Girls might have to practice a bit with this one until they realize what they are looking for.
- Make one of these [campfire desserts](#), like [Campfire Cone S'mores](#)!

8 BREAKFAST IDEAS

Tame your appetite and give your body fuel for the day! Try one of these [breakfast ideas](#) and [ideas for meals](#)!



FOR TROOPS AND SERVICE UNITS

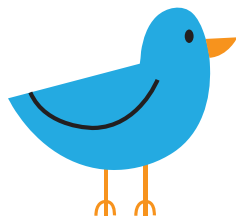
Volunteers, thank you for being go-getters and trying something new! Your girls and parents appreciate all your efforts during this period of “newness.” Please know that this event does not have to be perfect—your girls will love it either way!

The following section includes suggestions for the event and a template outline. Please do what works best for your troop! This toolkit was designed to serve girls in all living situations and levels of access to the outdoors and supplies. Please keep in mind what resources or outdoor space your girls may have and be flexible and proactive in letting families know that they can adapt the activities to accommodate their needs and unique circumstances. Lastly, please share any feedback you have from your experience by emailing us at info@girlscoutshs.org



SUGGESTIONS FOR PLANNING YOUR VIRTUAL CAMPOUT

- Review the Safety Activity Checkpoints for [Camping](#) and [Outdoor Cooking](#). Communicate these safety measures to parents.
- Create a schedule like the one below to keep the girls together and help them feel connected.
- Set times for girls to connect virtually. Include specific times in schedule sent to parents.
 - Check out the [Free and Low-cost Tools for Virtual Meetings](#) drop down for suggested virtual meeting tools
- Ways to bring your girls and families together
 - Incorporate a cook-off! Have the girls showcase their outdoor cooking meals.
 - Encourage families to rehearse and share [simple skits](#).
 - Plan to do a common day or night adventure together and to have girls share their experiences afterward.
 - Give each girl a virtual kaper—a responsibility for planning one aspect of the campout (which activities they’ll do, what songs they’ll sing, what grace they’ll use, promise and law leader, friendship circle leader, timekeeper, etc.).
- When communicating and scheduling with parents, you may include:
 - Date and time of event.
 - Final schedule (include virtual meeting times and any directions to help them get connected).
 - List of specific activities the girls will be doing.
 - Supplies needed.
 - The expectation for the parents: participation in certain activities or all activities, leading a virtual time, etc.



POTENTIAL SCHEDULE

Plan your outdoor adventure: dinner, sleeping arrangements, review Safety Activity Checkpoints, gather materials, etc.

- 3-4 PM** Select your method of camping and set it up
- 4-4:30 PM** Establish safety rules and rules for camping
- 4:30-4:45 PM** Connect with troop for activities kickoff! Start off with the Girl Scout Promise and Law and prepare for your outdoor activities.
- 4:45-5:45 PM** Outdoor activities
- 5:45-6:30 PM** Build fire (if applicable) and dinner time
- Virtually connect with your troop! Questions could include:
- What outdoor activities did you do?
 - How are you camping?
 - What food are you making for dinner?
- 6:30-6:45 PM** Clean up dinner
- 6:45 PM-Dark** Outdoor activities
- Dark-Bedtime** Campfire, songs, dessert and night adventures
- Connect virtually with your troop to sing camp songs!
 - Get things ready for bed, make sure fire is out, food is safely put away, etc.
- Wake-up** Breakfast by campfire
- Connect virtually with your troop to talk about how your camping experience went!
 - Close with a virtual friendship circle
 - Clean-up



CREATE A YARD MAP

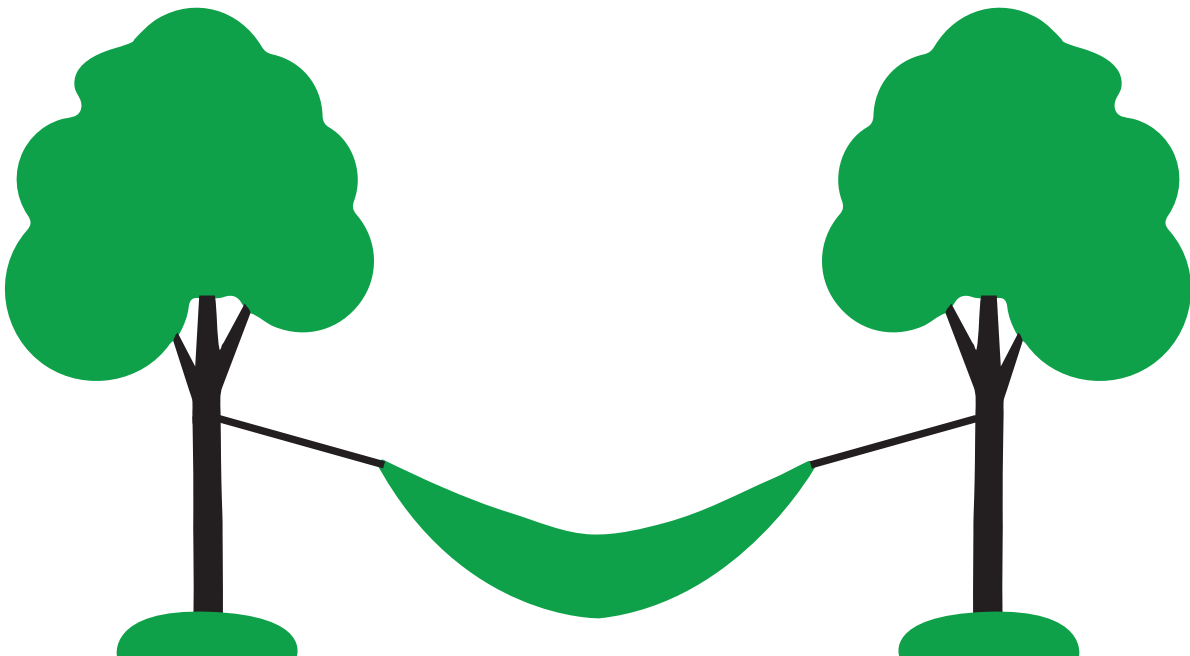
Perhaps you have always wanted your kids to grow a better understanding of the types of plants they see when out in the yard or on a hike but are not too confident in your own identification skills. Yard mapping STEM projects are a great way to use free plant identification apps to map out the species in your yard, local park, or other location. A great way to learn plant identification as a family!

You'll need the following materials to complete this project:

- Device to run the plant identification apps (i.e. smart phone or tablet)
- Plant Identification App (try: GardenAnswers, IdentifyTree Lite, TreeBook, Leafsnap, Pl@ntNet, and Google Goggles)
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Notebook
- Tape
- Clipboard
- Colored pencils

Learning to use a plant field guide is an important, yet sometimes frustrating skill to learn. In this project, one of many extremely valuable outdoor STEM activities, kids can use technology to get started and then double check their work using a traditional field guide.

- 1.** Choose an outdoor area that you would like to map. Your yard, local park or nature trail are excellent choices.
- 2.** Use the apps for phones or tablets indicated in the supply list to help identify the species of plants in the area.
- 3.** Double check your findings with a traditional plant field guide if you have one.
- 4.** Make notebook entries about the plants you find. Kids might even want to carefully collect a leaf sample and tape it into their notebook.
- 5.** Once you have identified several plant species, create a map that indicates where you found them.
- 6.** Include a key to the map. Older children may even want to draw their map to scale!



BACK YARD

SCAVENGER HUNT

ideas



- ant
- bugs
- clover
- grass
- leaves
- rocks
- bird
- sticks
- dog
- flower
- tree
- cloud
- pinecone
- mushroom
- acorn
- squirrel
- dandelion
- thorn
- caterpillar
- hole in a tree
- worm
- tree bark
- water
- spider web
- footprints



- something that moves
- something that smells.
- something that's square
[& other shapes].
- something that's red
[& other colors].



- something that starts with the
letter "A" [& other letters].
- You can also vary the amounts:
4 rocks, 3 leaves, etc.



camping

B I N G O

A TWIG	A BLADE OF GRASS	A PIECE OF BARK	A DRIED LEAF	A SMALL FLOWER
A PIECE OF GARBAGE	A PINECONE	A SMOOTH PEBBLE	A LITTLE GREEN LEAF	A ROUGH ROCK
A WEED	A ROCK THAT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING	FREE SPACE	A PIECE OF WOOD	DIRT
A SEED	(LOVER LEAVES	A BUG	A BLACK ROCK	A TWIG THAT LOOKS LIKE A "Y"
AN ACORN	A THORN	A DANDELION	A FLOWER PETAL	A BIG GREEN LEAF

INSTRUCTIONS: Use tape or strong glue dots to attach the object to its Bingo square. The first one to get 5 in a row gets "BINGO"