



Brownie Hiker

Girl Scouts love to sing hiking songs, pack fun and tasty snacks, and hunt for signs of animals and birds. Here's what you need to know to become a Brownie hiker—get ready for adventure!

Steps:

1. Decide where to go
2. Try out a hiking skill
3. Pick the right gear
4. Pack a snack for energy
5. Go on your hike!

Purpose:

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to hit the trail for a hike. Every trail leads to a new adventure. What will you and your Brownie friends do next?

Step 1: Decide where to go

Find out where you can hike in your area. Some distances look short on a map, but they are actually quite long. Work with an adult to choose a hike that's perfect for you.

CHOICES — DO ONE:

Find a trail. Team up with an adult to find a local trail online, or find a book of trails in your area.

OR

Ask an expert. Invite a park ranger or experienced hiker to talk to your group about local places to hike.

OR

Choose something to see. Do you have a favorite plant or animal you'd like to see? Is there a certain kind of tree you want to picnic under? Ask an experienced hiker to recommend a trail for you.

Sidebar: Story Hike

As Brownies did in 1963, use a story such as *Treasure Island*, *Peter Pan and Wendy*, or *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to illustrate a hike. Lay a trail using phrases and places from the story. The whole group should know the story, which may be read during group meetings beforehand.

Sidebar: Staying Safe on the Trail

- Get a buddy and stay with her at all times— this protects you and helps your group stay together.
- Talk about trail hazards, dos and don'ts, and what to do if you need help.
- Choose a hiking pace that's comfortable for everyone, so no one gets too far ahead or left behind.

Step 2: Try out a hiking skill

Get ready before you hit the trail. The more hiking skills you have, the more fun it will be.

CHOICES — DO ONE:

Learn to follow trail signs. Set up a mini trail with trail signs. Make it in your backyard, park, or school playground. Then ask your Brownie sisters to follow it. For More FUN: Decorate a walking stick. (What kind of tree did your stick come from?)

OR

Practice observation on a neighborhood safari. Before you go, make a simple map of your route. Then make three groups. One group will be "trailblazers." They're in charge of directions and will trace them on the map as you go. Another group will be "plant detectives." They'll write down all the plants they see. The third group will be "animal and bug detectives." They'll write down all the animals and bugs they see.

OR

Know the trail. Trace the trail you will hike on a new piece of paper. Then talk with your friends about where you might see hills, streams, trees, flowers, and animals. Sketch them on your map. For More FUN: Take your map with you on the hike. Were you right about what you would see?

STEP 3: Pick the right gear

Just like you can't play sports without the right equipment (playing soccer without a ball would be pretty tough!), you can't hike without the right gear. By the end of this step, you should have your hiker backpack ready.

CHOICES — DO ONE:

Visit an outdoor store. Ask a staff member to teach you about great hiking gear.

OR

Ask an older Girl Scout. What does she pack for a hike?

OR

Invite an experienced hiker to your meeting. Ask for gear tips.

Step 4: Pack a snack for energy

You'll need to keep up your energy on your hike. Pick your favorite healthy snack to take with you on the trail.

CHOICES — DO ONE:

GORP. Good Old Raisins and Peanuts taste great—and help keep your energy up! Pick your own ingredients, or invite your Brownie sisters to each contribute an ingredient. Try using nuts, dried fruit, chocolate chips, pretzels, or yogurt chips. Then mix it up in a big bowl and store in small zipper-close plastic bags.

OR

Make a "walking salad." A walking salad is one that is easy to carry and eat on a hike. You make up your own. Use any raw vegetables and fruits. How about celery or carrot sticks wrapped in a lettuce leaf?

OR

Bring a "nose-bag lunch"! These are named after the lunches horses carry around with them, hanging in a bag around their noses! Your bag can have whatever delicious lunch items you want, as long as they're easy to carry. Questions for Your Expert: • Clothes What

will I need for cool days? For warm days? For weather unique to my area? • Shoes What kind of shoes would be best for my hike? • Backpack It should fit me well and be big enough to fit my supplies. • First aid kit What should I put in it? • Water What will I carry it in? How will I keep it cool?

Step 5: Go on your hike!

You have your map, your backpack, and your new hiking skills. You're ready to go! Now choose a game to play as you hike along—and maybe even learn a new song.

CHOICES — DO ONE :

Have a scavenger hunt. Make a list of ten things you might find along your trail. It might be a smooth rock, a yellow leaf, an acorn, or a pinecone.

OR

Play "I Spy." Start with the rainbow and find something in each color. Or try to find things that start with each letter of the alphabet!

OR

Do a detective hike. Bring a guidebook and identify new leaves or tracks on the trail. For More FUN: Try to be totally silent for one minute on your hike. What new sounds can you hear?

Sidebar: Leave No Trace!

Before you go, pledge to "Leave No Trace!" Talk about these seven important tips that help you keep nature safe when you're exploring.

KEEP IN MIND:

1. Plan ahead.
2. Stay on the trail.
3. Carry out what you carry in.
4. Leave nature as you find it.
5. Be careful with fire.
6. Respect wildlife.
7. Be considerate of other visitors.



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Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Showing my friends how to get ready for a hike
- Making GORP for a healthy snack for my family
- Telling others why hiking is fun and in

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