



Cadette Babysitter

The magic age for babysitting is 12! That's when most girls say they began sitting—and it's the youngest age at which most parents say they will allow someone to babysit for their children. Whether you're getting ready to babysit in the future or have already started, this badge will help you become the best babysitter you can be.

Steps

1. Get to know how kids develop
2. Prepare for challenges
3. Focus on play
4. Find potential employers
5. Practice your babysitting skills

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll be prepared to babysit and will have tried out my skills on the job.

Step 1 Get to know how kids develop.

Kids of different ages have different needs, desires, and behaviors. In this step, do one choice to find out more about three of these age groups: newborns, infants, toddlers, preschoolers, young kids (ages 5–7), and older kids (ages 8–10). Take notes on what you learn about these questions (you might turn them into a chart for easy reference!):

- What's important to know about these three age groups?
- What do kids this age look like?
- What do they act like?
- How do they interact with others?

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Observe kids in person for at least one hour. It could be at a day-care center, preschool, after-school program, or with an older girl who has a regular babysitting job. Act as a scientific researcher, and take notes about your observations. When you get home, do some research in books or online, and compare your observations with professional opinions on childhood development.

OR

Ask an expert. A school counselor, developmental psychologist, day-care professional, or health-care provider can provide you with valuable knowledge from their years of



Cadette Babysitter

experience. Before your interview, do some basic research on how kids in the three groups you're interested in act, so you can ask informed questions.

OR

Find information at the library or online. Watch videos that show kids in action. Then write a one-paragraph summary of your findings for each age level to help you remember what you've found out. (It's easier to cement information in your mind when you talk to professionals or see things firsthand.) You'll impress potential employers when you're able to share all you know!

Step 2 Prepare for challenges

The number-one rule of sitting is to keep kids safe! Babies and toddlers need diapering and toilet help. Temper tantrums, meltdowns, sibling rivalry, scrapes and tumbles, behavioral issues—it's all part of the day-to-day experience of dealing with kids. Learn crucial skills in one of the following ways.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Attend a babysitter training course. Many hospitals, colleges, and community centers offer these courses. Your Girl Scout council might as well. (If you attend a course that includes first aid training, that course completes both this step and step 1 of the Cadette First Aid badge.)

OR

Interview five moms about what they expect from a babysitter. What are the top-three behavioral, safety, and emergency situations they expect babysitters to be able to handle? If these are situations you aren't prepared for, find a way to prepare, and do so.

OR

Interview five experienced babysitters, nannies, or child-care specialists. Ask about behavioral challenges and emergency situations they've encountered on the job. What did they do? What would they suggest you do? How would you handle those situations? If you're missing important knowledge, find a way to get it, and go for it.

TIP:



Cadette Babysitter

Girl Scouts of the USA recommends that you learn first aid for children before babysitting alone. Try your Cadette First Aid badge to get these important skills, or choose a babysitter training course that includes first aid for children.

Step 3 Focus on play.

As you become familiar with playtime in one of these choices, take notes to use throughout your career as a babysitter! Be aware of safety concerns at playtime, too—review the sidebar for a list of safe toys for each age group.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Interview an educational toy or game creator. With an adult's help, find a staff member at a game or toy company who develops toys for kids. Prepare questions and ask for advice about how to best use the toys with kids of different ages.

OR

Observe kids at a toy store for two hours. First, speak with the store manager to make sure it's okay to spend time there. (You could spend two hours in one store, or do two one-hour sessions at different stores.) While you're there, take notes on what kinds of games and toys are most attractive to kids of various ages.

OR

Volunteer for at least two hours. It could be at a day-care center or preschool, an after-school program, or as an assistant to an older girl with a sitting job. As you watch kids play and interact, take note of the fun of active games and of quieter things like drawing and crafting. (If you chose this activity in step 1, do a separate visit for this step.)

TIP:

If you are passionate about an activity, the children you babysit are likely to be, too. Kids love older kids, and they love learning about things older kids love to do. As you're observing and interacting, think about what you love to do, and what you loved to do as a little girl, and how you might share it at your babysitting job in step 5.

SIDEBAR: Some Safe Toys

Infants (Newborn to 6 Months)

- Soft blocks
- Simple rattles
- Stuffed animals

Infants (7 to 12 Months)

- Large colored blocks made of rubber or soft material
- Large stacking boxes or rings
- Squeaky toys or bells
- Large balls
- Simple picture books or cloth books
- Push toys without rods
- Teethers

Toddlers (1- and 2-Year-Olds)

- Building blocks
- Large rubber toy people/animals
- Large crayons, markers, nontoxic finger paints and paper
- Simple puzzles with knobs
- Small hand puppets
- Ride-on transportation toys
- Cymbals, drums, xylophones, and other musical instruments

Preschoolers (3- and 4-Year-Olds)

- Simple board games
- Storybooks
- Balls
- Musical instruments
- Realistic dolls, stuffed animals, and sock or mitten puppets
- Tricycles and wagons
- Puzzles with large pieces

Younger School-Age Children (5-, 6- and 7-Year-Olds)

- Board games and puzzles
- Kits related to hobbies like science, arts, crafts and music
- Electronic games
- Dolls and action figures
- Bikes and scooters



Cadette Babysitter

Older School-Age Children (8-, 9- and 10-Year-Olds)

- Sports equipment
- Bikes
- Remote control cars
- Construction sets

Step 4 Find Potential Employers.

Now that you've observed and know what to expect from kids of different ages, think about how many kids and what ages you'd be comfortable babysitting. Review the "Market Prep" box for some tips before you begin this step. Then begin to search for a family whose needs match your desires and capabilities. Start with people you know well: family, friends, and neighbors. (If you already have a babysitting job, use this step to find a new employer for your job in step 5.)

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Market yourself. Have your introduction speech and your questions ready, and call around, keeping notes on who is interested and what they need, including if and when you should call back.

OR

Create a questionnaire to give to family, friends, and neighbors. On one side of a flyer, write your name, qualifications, and the type of babysitting job you're seeking. On the flip side, write a questionnaire for your potential employers to fill out—it might include number of children and their ages; when the family generally needs babysitting help; what, if any, household responsibilities they expect you to complete; their basic house rules; and if they have any pets.

OR

Conduct interviews with potential employers. Think about places where you might find possible customers. What about before a PTA meeting or after a worship service?

Parent's Form

Emergency numbers

Fire : _____

Police: _____



Cadette Babysitter

Ambulance: _____

Doctor: _____

Neighbor: _____

Family: _____

Address and phone number of house you are sitting at:

Phone numbers and addresses of all places the parents of the children you are babysitting will be:

House information

• If and how should you answer phone or door:

• How do locks and alarms work? _____

• Where are flashlights, candles and matches, first aid, cleaning items, fire escapes?

Special instructions for any appliances you will need to use: heat, air-conditioning, baby swings, television, stove, microwave, high chair, etc.

Pet needs _____

General house rules (watching TV, food from kitchen, etc.)

id info

• Meals/snacks expected/allowed _____

• Allergies/restrictions _____

If a child needs medication, when do they need it, and how much?

SAFETY TIP

When looking for jobs, DO NOT post your name, address, or phone number on the Internet. DO NOT place business cards or flyers in coffee shops, supermarkets, or other public places. It is unsafe to allow total strangers to get your personal information.

Step 5: Practice Your Babysitting Skills



Cadette Babysitter

For your first job, you could co-sit with a friend, be an apprentice to an older girl, or act as a parent's helper. Set up a job with the family you feel most comfortable sitting for. Know the information listed on the parent's form, or fill it out with the parents (see page 6). Then do one of the following to add a healthy dose of fun—for both you and the kids! Use what you've learned in previous steps as you pick the right kind of fun for you and your charges.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Come prepared for a game. You could plan a scavenger hunt, teach your favorite board game (or learn to play the kids' favorite before you arrive), or bring a great bedtime story to read using fun voices for each character.

For More FUN: Customize an existing toy or game.

OR

Make a tasty snack. Are the kids allowed snacks? Ask what foods, if any, will be available, and if it's okay to make a kid-friendly recipe. What about raisin faces on jelly toast, no-bake granola bars, or fruit smoothies? If the kids are old enough, let them help you make the recipe—it's a great chance to teach them about healthy living.

For More FUN: Find out the child's favorite foods, and create a great snack using them!

OR

Plan a fun craft. Find a simple recipe for play dough, bring paper bags to make puppets with, or ask about family art supplies and teach a little lesson about an art or craft you enjoy (or want to learn with the kids).

TIP:

If you're sitting for more than one child, or if you'll be dealing with bedtimes, naptimes, homework, or meals, you may want to make a schedule so you know what to do when. Of course, ask parents if the kids have a regular schedule and/or preferences—maybe their daughter needs her teddy bear and a cup of water when she goes to bed, or their son needs extra help brushing his teeth.

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

- Helping parents by watching their children while they focus on other things
- Volunteering at a day-care center or at after-school programs



Cadette Babysitter

- Creating fun and age-appropriate games and activities for Daisies and Brownies that I can also use with kids I babysit

All trademarks, trade names, or logos mentioned or used are the property of their respective owners.

TM ® & © 2023–2024 Girl Scouts of the United States of America. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical methods, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, now known or hereinafter invented, without the prior written permission of Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA), except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permissions requests, write to GSUSA at the address below or visit the www.girlscouts.org website to access permission request forms.