



Junior Camper

An overnight trip in the great outdoors brings you closer to nature—and to your Girl Scout sisters. In this badge, plan a camping adventure! You might watch a sky full of stars, cook a meal on a stick, or share silly stories around the campfire. And you'll definitely learn some new outdoor skills as you take part in this favorite Girl Scout tradition.

Steps:

1. Start planning your adventure
2. Gain a new camping skill
3. Find your inner camp chef
4. Try a new activity
5. Head out on your trip—and have some nighttime fun!

Purpose:

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to have a great overnight camping trip at a campsite or cabin.

Step 1 Start planning your adventure

Camping out is the perfect adventure. You get to spend the night surrounded by the great outdoors and do fun activities like canoeing, hiking, and singing. You might even go to your favorite Girl Scout camp! Do one of the choices below to help you start planning a fantastic trip.

CHOICES – DO ONE :

Talk to an experienced camper. This might be a parent, a neighbor, or an older Girl Scout who has been camping in your area.

OR

Go to an outdoor store. Ask a staff member about favorite local camping spots and what supplies they recommend.

OR

Look at campsite maps for your local area. Pick a campsite with the help of your Girl Scout volunteer. Keep the activities you want to do and your budget in mind

Sidebar: Tips Before Takeoff

Before you head out on your trip, you'll need to make decisions about everything on this list. Use the steps to guide you!

- Where to go.
- Who will help you. Which adults will come along? You'll need a permission slip.
- What to bring. You need supplies for yourself and your group. Make a list of what to bring and who'll bring it. In larger groups, you can share items.
- What you'll eat. Plan your menu—including the recipe you'll cook for step 3. Who will shop for it?
- Transportation. How will you get there?
- What you'll do. What activities will you do at camp? The equipment might be available, or maybe you need to bring your own. What will you need for steps 4 and 5?
- Where you'll get water. You'll need clean water for cooking, drinking, and washing (your dishes and you!). If there's no water faucet available at the campsite, ask an expert to help you learn how to purify water.
- How to budget. What will your trip cost? How will you pay for it?

How you'll "be prepared." You'll need to plan for first aid and emergencies. What will you bring?

Sidebar: Items to Pack in Your Duffel for an Overnight Camping Trip

- Sleeping bag/bedroll
- Rain or snow gear
- Change of clothes
- Extra socks
- Sweater or hoodie/ sweatshirt
- PJs
- Camper care kit (towel, toothbrush, toothpaste, lotion, washcloth, etc.)
- Water bottle
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Whistle
- Mess kit: plate, cup, bowl, eating utensils in a net bag (dunk bag)
- Notebook and pen or pencil
- Miscellaneous (such as money, maps, insect repellent, games)

Sidebar: More to explore

Camp Fashion Show. To learn what kinds of clothes to bring with you, have a fashion show. Make a pile of all kinds of clothes and pick the best and worst ones for camping! Then show them off to your Junior friends or family, and see if they can tell which is which, and why. Or, work in teams, and have one team put together as many great camping outfits and the other put together as many poor camping outfits as they can in three minutes. Discuss what makes each wrong and right.

Step 2 Gain a new camping skill

Whether you'll be hiking, boating, or getting to know your friends around the campfire, learn more about special skills that might come in handy at camp. Plan a way to use the skill on your camping trip.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Tie useful knots. Knots can be used to hang up gear, tie tent flaps, connect a boat to a dock, and for lots of cool crafts. Ask an older Girl Scout or other expert to teach you some basic knots, including the square knot, the clove hitch, and the bowline. For More FUN: Have a knot-tying relay! See the next page for directions.

OR

Use a map and compass or GPS. A compass is a tool that helps you find north, south, east, and west. A GPS is like a digital compass. Learn to adjust a map according to the difference between true and magnetic north, take a compass bearing from a map and follow it, and sight an object, walk to it, and return to your starting point. For a challenge, learn to find your pace as well. For More FUN: Learn to use a topographical map.

OR

Build a campfire. Know the safety precautions for setting up and putting out fires before you begin, as well as local rules about fires. Then learn how to build at least one kind of fire— and when to make it—from an older Girl Scout or camping expert. For More FUN: Learn ways to make your own fire starters

Sidebar: Knot Tying Relay

Divide into teams. Each team gets two pieces of cord. Each team member in turn selects a piece of paper with the name of a knot written on it from a bag. The first person pulls out the name of a type of knot, ties it, and passes the cord and bag to the second person. That person unties the knot, picks out the name of another knot, and ties that knot. The game continues until each team member has tied a knot correctly.

Sidebar: Fire

Knowing how to make a fire is one of the oldest—and most valuable—Girl Scout survival skills. Fire gives you the power to stay warm on a cold night, to cook outdoors, and to bring people together for songs and s'mores. Even if your campsite or park doesn't allow fires, you can still learn how to make one as part of your Camper badge, so you'll have the skill when you do need it. TINDER is thin material that burns as soon as it is lit with a match. Tinder could be tiny dry twigs, dry leaves, or wood shavings. KINDLING is larger in diameter than tinder, thin enough to catch fire before the tinder burns out, and large enough to help the fuel to light. Kindling is about the same diameter as your thumb and should be dry enough to snap when you bend it. FUEL is thicker pieces of wood that keep a fire going. Fuel should be dry, seasoned wood found on the ground or in a woodpile. Have enough tinder, kindling, and fuel so you don't have to leave your fire once you start it.

Building a campfire

Make an "A" frame with three pieces of kindling, leaving an air space under the crossbar. Lay a handful of tinder against the crossbar on the inside. Lean tinder toward the center, upright. (You can also use a combination of tinder and a fire starter.) Strike a wooden match close to the tinder and away from your body. Hold the match under the crossbar and tinder at ground level so the flame burns upward. As the tinder catches, add additional tinder carefully, then begin placing kindling so it leans against the crossbar above the flaming tinder. Continue adding kindling, building a teepee. Add fuel (large pieces of wood) to the fire so the kindling can ignite it. Leave air spaces, and use only the amount of fuel you need. Keep your fire small. Conserve fuel, and avoid creating too much smoke. If you need a concentrated heat source (to boil water, for example), continue making the teepee, and cook over the flames. You might also use a grate to support your cooking pots. As the fire burns down, it forms coals. That's the best heat to cook on (and coals are great for making s'mores).

Safety Tips

Always check fire-making rules of the area, and follow these safety tips:

- Tie back your hair and wear long pants.
- Have a bucket of water and a shovel ready before building your fire. You might need to smother the fire with dirt, or to stir wet coals when you put it out. Let the fire die down until only ashes are left.
- Then use a long stick or shovel to stir the ashes.
- Sprinkle the ashes with water, and then stir them again. Continue until there is no gray ash and the fire bed is cool.

- Be careful when you pour water on a fire—it will become steam, which can burn your face and hands. Pouring water on hot rocks might cause them to crack or explode.

Step 3 Find your inner camp chef

First, make sure you know how to pack food to keep it fresh, and how to store it to keep bugs and animals away. Then choose one of these ideas for a great camp meal. Pack all the equipment and ingredients to enjoy it on your trip.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Make a one-pot meal. Find a recipe or combine two or three of your favorite ingredients to make a delicious stew.

OR

Cook in foil. When using a campfire as your stove, cooking with foil is a great way to keep food from falling into the fire. Lots of things can be cooked in foil—from corn to pizza to campfire chicken stew.

OR

Cook a meal on a stick. Try grilled cheese in a hot dog bun, delicious roasted bananas to top pancakes, or sausages.

Sidebar: Leave no trace

Good campers try to leave a campsite looking exactly the same as when they arrived—or better! Pledge to protect nature and “Leave No Trace” on your camping trip. These seven important tips show you how.

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

Sidebar: Clean up

- Put out your fire and remove the ashes.
- Extinguish the camp stove.

- Wash, sanitize, and store the dishes.
- Pack up and pack out trash, wet garbage, tin cans, and glass without endangering or damaging the environment.
- Clean up your campsite or cabin. Remember, a Girl Scout always leaves a place better than she found it. Tip: If you soap the outside of a pot before using it to cook on a fire, it will be much easier to clean later.

Step 4 Try a new activity

Camp is a great place to try new activities and discover your new favorite thing to do. Choose one of these extra adventures to try on your trip. You might need to plan for additional equipment, find adult experts, or gather more information to make the most of your choice!

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Have some Leave No Trace fun. Make up a fun skit, game, or activity about one of the principles of Leave No Trace (see page 9). Or create a special LNT ceremony.

OR

Be a scientist—and keep a journal. You could try being a botanist, and identify different kinds of trees and flowers. A geologist might classify rocks. An ornithologist would try to identify different birds and the sounds they make.

OR

Try a new adventure! Perhaps a hike you’ve never done to a scenic overlook or waterfall? How about boating, snowshoeing, bird-watching, or horseback riding? For More FUN: Take your camera or a sketch pad, and record your experiences to share!

Step 5 Head out on your trip and have some nighttime fun!

The fun doesn’t end once the sun goes down. When you’re on your trip, after you’ve eaten your delicious meal and used your new camping skill, settle down to enjoy the magic of camp at night. Do one of these great nighttime activities.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Gather around the campfire. If you can’t have a fire, place your flashlights in a circle. Tell your favorite stories, gaze at the stars, sing your favorite Girl Scout songs, and play games!



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OR

Do a night watch. Team up with an adult to choose a special spot outdoors. Arrange for one-hour shifts through the night, signing up in pairs. Let yourself become part of the outdoors at night by keeping silent. How is the night world different from the day? What happens to your senses? Record or log what you see and hear during your shift, and have everyone report back over breakfast.

OR

Have fun with flashlights. You could play a game of flashlight tag. (First, make sure you discuss with an adult where it's safe to play.) Or you might go on a night hike.

Sidebar:

Keep shoelaces in repair, to avoid breaks while on the trail. If you tie them Girl Scout fashion, by slipping one loop of the bow through the knot a second time just before pulling it tight, the knot will not come untied. —Girl Scout Handbook, 1933

Sidebar: Camp Game from 1953

Buzz

Equipment: None.

Method: The group sits in a circle. Each girl counts off a number in turn. When the number seven is reached, the girl must say "Buzz" instead of the number. Every time the number is a multiple of seven or has a seven in it, such as 14, 17, 21, and 27, the player must say "Buzz." If she fails, she drops out of the game. The last people left in are the winners.

Sidebar: Potentially Perilous Plants

The four plants on the right can all cause an itchy rash. Can you match each with its name below? 1) Poison ivy; 2) Poison Answers: sumac; 3) Poisonwood; 4) Poison oak Poison Sumac Poisonwood Poison Ivy Poison Oak

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