



Girl Scout Bridging Guide

Bridging Basics

Moving on to New Adventures

Bridging is an important transition in a Girl Scout's life. It's a defining moment when a Girl Scout becomes aware of her achievements and is ready for new adventures and responsibilities.

Celebrating this change should be **fun, personalized, and memorable** for everyone involved. And most of all, it should be **designed by the girls** in true partnership with adults.

Bridging Levels

There are six levels of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience:

- Daisy Girl Scout (grades K-1)
- Brownie Girl Scout (grades 2-3)
- Junior Girl Scout (grades 4-5)
- Cadette Girl Scout (grades 6-8)
- Senior Girl Scout (grades 9-10)
- Ambassador Girl Scout (grades 11-12)

Five Opportunities to Bridge

1. Daisy to Brownie
2. Brownie to Junior
3. Junior to Cadette
4. Cadette to Senior
5. Senior to Ambassador
6. Ambassador to Adult



Bridging Awards

Most Girl Scouts choose to earn the bridging award for their level. Earning the award offers a chance to look back on what they've accomplished while looking to the future.

Each level of Girl Scouting has its own unique bridging award patch.

Bridging Ceremonies

Bridging ceremonies often utilize a bridge as girls take literal steps toward the future. For Girl Scouts, the act of crossing the bridge is both a physical and symbolic step.

Bridging ceremonies can:

- Include troops, groups, or individuals
- Be combined with other activities such as service unit celebrations or camp
- Provide a great way to reach out to individual Girl Scouts or troops from other levels
- Be a great time to present certificates (Check with your council shop or go online at girlscoutshop.com)

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Bridging Steps

1

Talk with Girls, Make a Plan

As girls get closer to moving up to another level, tell them what steps are needed to complete bridging, discuss which activities the troop wants to participate in, and how, and then work together to create a plan.

3

Plan the Bridging Ceremony

Bridging ceremonies usually take place at the beginning or end of the Girl Scout year and can have three parts:

Opening: Guests are welcomed and the tone is set with an activity such as a flag ceremony or reciting the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Main section: The ceremony is explained to guests and run by girls and co-leaders.

Closing: Guests are thanked and celebration ends with an activity such as a friendship circle or flag ceremony.

Each of the ceremony's parts offers plenty of room for the girls' creativity and individuality. Although bridging ceremonies are a good time to look back at what has been accomplished, **the ceremony should always focus on what girls will do as they move forward.**

2

Earn a Girl Scout Bridging Award

Although not required, completing the steps to earn Girl Scout Bridging Awards helps girls get a taste of what their experience will be like at the next level.

There are two steps:

Pass It On! Girls get the chance to look back at what they've accomplished and pass a bit of their knowledge on to younger Girl Scouts.

Look Ahead! Meet with Girl Scouts at the level they will be bridging to and learn about the exciting adventures that lie ahead.

4

Gather Materials

Outside of materials for the actual bridging ceremony, girls may also need a new vest or sash, membership stars, and new guide books.

Many council stores and the girlscoutshop.com sell Bridging Kits that contain the awards and insignia each girl receives as she crosses over to the next level in Girl Scouting. The kits are packed in a poly presentation bag and include a certificate that can be personalized.



5

Hold the Ceremony

Make sure girls take a leading role in planning and running the ceremony. As girls get older, their participation will increase.



Bridging Ceremonies



A bridging ceremony can be very simple or elaborate; remember, it is up to the group to plan the ceremony.

Most ceremonies include the following:

- A flag or opening ceremony
- Reciting of the Girl Scout Promise
- Reading or reciting of the Girl Scout Law
- Crossing a bridge
- The Girl Scout handshake
- Presentation of certificates, patches, and other awards
- Ending ceremony

Other popular additions include:

- Doing the friendship squeeze
- Singing a Girl Scout song
- Serving refreshments
- Sharing favorite Girl Scout memories or pictures
- Sharing plans for the next year

Suggestions for a successful ceremony:

- Make sure the girls are involved in the decision making and planning of the ceremony. As girls get older, let them take on more responsibility.
- If family and friends are invited, distribute invitations.
- Including another troop? Make sure they are informed of the date and time and their roles.
- Practice ahead of time so everyone knows their roles.
- Gather supplies well ahead of time.
- Remind girls, parents, and guardians that uniforms need to be ready for the ceremony.
- Make sure to have copies of speaking parts or song lyrics for girls, troops, and guests.
- Have busy bags available for young guests. They could include coloring sheets and Crayons.
- The internet is full of great ideas.
 - » www.girlscouts.org
 - » www.scoutingweb.com
 - » www.makingfriends.com

Insignia and Uniforms Needed for Bridging

Insignia Traditionally Presented to Girls as they Bridge

Age Level	Automatically Given	Earned
Daisy	Membership star with blue disc	Bridge to Brownie award
	Ending certificate	
	Brownie Girl Scout pin	
Brownie	Membership star with green disc	Bridge to Junior award
	Brownie Girl Scout Wings	
	Girl Scout pin	
Junior	Membership star with yellow disc	Bridge to Cadette award
Cadette	Membership star with white disc	Bridge to Senior award
Senior	Membership star with red disc	Bridge to Ambassador award
Ambassador	Membership star with navy disc	Bridge to Adult award

Should they Stay or Should they Go?

The chart below tells you which insignia belong on the current tunic, vest, or sash, and which move to the new one. All other insignia stay on the current tunic, vest, or sash.

From	To	Insignia
Daisy tunic or vest	Brownie sash or vest	World Association pin Membership stars
Brownie vest or sash	Junior sash or vest	World Association pin Membership stars
Junior vest or sash	Cadette vest or sash	World Association pin Membership stars Brownie Wings Girl Scout pin Bronze Award pin
Cadette vest or sash	Senior vest or sash	Keep using the same vest/sash; nothing is removed The Silver Award pin
Senior vest or sash	Ambassador vest or sash	Keep using the same vest/sash; nothing is removed Gold Award pin
Ambassador vest or sash	Adult uniform	World Association Pin Girl Scout pin Gold Award pin Bridge to Adult pin

Bridge to Junior Award



What do Junior Girl Scouts do?

Junior Girl Scouts can take part in cool new experiences like going on an overnight at a science museum, attending a baseball game, visiting a wildlife preserve, making a robot, or trying new sports like archery. They can earn Journey awards, leadership awards, and the Girl Scout Bronze Award.

Earning the Bridging Award

To earn the Bridge to Junior Award, complete one bridging activity from the two bridging steps: Pass It On! and Look Ahead! These steps can be found in the handbook section of the *Brownie Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*.

Bridging Step One: Pass It On!

Do one or more of the following or create your own:

- Teach a group of Daisy Girl Scouts a favorite song, game, or craft from a Brownie Journey.
- Have girls talk to Daisies about their favorite Brownie memories. Tell the Daisies what they have to look forward to. Show them what skills girls learned as Brownies or pictures of favorite trips.
- Help Daisies create and decorate small message books. Pass the books around and write messages to the Daisies, telling them what makes them special or what they can look forward to as Brownies. Make sure each Daisy writes her name on the cover of her book!
- Have girls share what they have learned about becoming Junior Girl Scouts and why they are excited to “fly up”.

Brownie Girl Scout Wings



All Brownie Girl Scouts who become Junior Girl Scouts “fly up.” Girl Scout Wings should be given to each Brownie when they bridge to Junior Girl Scouts.

Bridging Step Two: Look Ahead!

Spending some time with Junior Girl Scouts.

Do one or more of the following or create your own:

- Ask Junior Girl Scouts what activities they loved doing as Juniors and why. Ask them to share their favorite memories of working as a team. See if they are willing to teach a favorite game or special Girl Scout activity. If any of the girls were also Brownie Girl Scouts, ask them how being a Junior was different from being a Brownie.
- Talk to one or more Junior Girl Scouts who earned their Bronze Award. Wow! That is a big accomplishment. How did they choose their project? Who was on their team? What did they learn? What hints or tips can they share?
- Attend a council event for Juniors in the spring before fourth grade.

Plan a Ceremony

Celebrate earning the Bridge to Junior Award with a favorite ceremony from your Brownie Journey—or make up a new one. Then proudly add bridging patches to sashes or vests!

For more ideas, talk to other troops or go online. If girls are working online, remember to sign the *Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge*, found at girlscouts.org or in the *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*.



Bridge to Junior/Fly-Up Ceremony

Wings to Fly

- Flag or opening ceremony
- Recite Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Activity (see instructions/script)
- Present certificates and other awards
- Ending ceremony

Supplies:

- A large piece of cardboard for tree/nest
- Wings for each girl (cardboard, material, tape, etc.)
- Paint, markers, general craft supplies
- Bridge, stepping stones, or arch

Preparation:

- Have the troop come up with their own words to describe the letters of the word “Junior.”
- Invite a Junior Girl Scout troop or other helpers to assist during the bridging ceremony. Inform them of the time and date of the ceremony and confirm their attendance. Send them a copy of the script.
- **Make a tree and nest:** The design is up to the troop. Some groups have painted a big nest on a tree branch on one long side of a cardboard refrigerator box and braced the “nest” on the ends so it will stand up using a triangle of 2x4s. Others have built a bowl-like nest on the ground.
- **Make wings:**
 - » Draw an outline of a bird wing on heavy paper or cardboard. Wings should be about 4 to 6 feet long.
 - » Have each girl paint both sides of her wings.
 - » After the paint is dry, cover the underside of the wings (the side facing the girls’ back) with clear contact paper. This adds strength to the wings and keeps paint from rubbing off on clothing.
 - » Make handles (loop around arms) or straps (like a backpack) so girls can hold the wings.
- Ask girls to write down definitions of each letter of “Junior” (see sample).
- Make sure Junior Girl Scout vests are ready.
- Practice before the event (with your guests if possible).

Formation:

All the girls duck down behind the “nest” and one-by-one pop-up, say their letter lines, and pop down again.

Instructions/Script

Co-leader: *Today we are bridging from Brownie Girl Scouts to Junior Girl Scouts. In Girl Scouting that is called “flying up”. Let’s listen to the girls as they describe what they think Junior Girl Scouts are.*

Bridging girls:

J is for _____.

U is for _____.

N is for _____.

I is for _____.

O is for _____.

R is for _____.

All the girls stand together and say: *We are ready to fly up and become Junior Girl Scouts!*

Girls form a Brownie Ring behind the nest.

Co-leader:

*Two years have passed since you first stood,
By the magic pond and learned you could,
Do lots of things in a Girl Scout way,
And truly live by the words you say.
So Brownie Girl Scouts fly up and find,
That Junior Girl Scouts are true and kind.
And so we give you Brownie wings,
That you may fly to bigger things!*

All: *Now it is time to say goodbye. Break the ring and out you fly.*

- First girl is GENTLY pushed out of the nest by the second girl, then goes across the bridge and is met by one of her co-leaders and a Junior Girl Scout or parent who help her take off her wings and Brownie Girl Scout vest, and put on her Junior Girl Scout vest.
- The last girl in the nest can be pushed out by a co-leader OR she can “trip” out of the nest herself.

Bridging girls stand together in front of the nest.

Co-leader: *Please welcome Junior Girl Scout Troop _____!*

Service Unit or Multi-Troop Fly-Up and Bridging

Larger bridging ceremonies can be very moving and powerful. Pre-planning, communication, and organization are the keys to a successful event. Make sure to include a flag ceremony, the Girl Scout Promise, and some classic Girl Scout songs.

Planning Ahead will Lead to Success

When you plan an event for a large group you need to embrace the Girl Scout motto: “Be prepared!” Communicate with troop co-leaders ahead of time to make sure everyone knows their roles and responsibilities.

Who will you invite/where will you hold the ceremony?

Expect that each girl will invite three guests. Make sure that your event will be held in a space large enough to fit everyone and is accessible to those of all abilities. Reserve a space if necessary. If you choose an outdoor site consider setting a rain date or make sure there is a safe space indoors to hold the ceremony.

How will you invite attendees?

Will you use flyers and email, or mail invitations to each girl? Talk with troop co-leaders and discuss the best way to reach everyone. Combining methods is always a good idea to ensure that everyone gets the message.

When will you hand out certificates?

To save time, you might choose to have each troop hand out certificates separately after the bridging ceremony.

How will you handle handing out special awards?

You may want to save some time after the bridging ceremony to pay special attention to girls who have earned special awards such as leadership awards.

What about uniforms?

Can the entire group organize changing uniforms from one level to the next at the event, or should bridging girls show up wearing their just their new uniform?

Don't forget to assign kapers!

Decide who will be in charge of tasks such as setting up and tearing down, or organizing food and music.

Other things to consider:

- Assign an event leader/emcee (this is a great task for older Girl Scouts).
- Make programs or a slide show so attendees know the order of events.
- Think about the availability/need for electricity.
- Coordinate food collection and set up (if any).
- Coordinate a photo opp. Lots of people will want to take pictures or video. Try to keep this from detracting from the ceremony by making sure people can get close enough for photos/video, or by organizing a photo opp after each bridging session and letting the audience know ahead of time.



Service Unit or Multi-Troop Fly-Up and Bridging Ceremonies

Multi-Level Simple Ceremony

- Flag or opening ceremony
- Recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Bridging ceremony by level (see instructions/script)
- Present certificates and other awards
- Closing ceremony

Supplies:

- A bridge, stepping stones, or arch (made by girls of another level using arms or branches)

Preparation:

- Identify an event leader/emcee.
- Post one troop co-leader from each bridging troop at the start of the bridge ready to call out names
- Post a co-leader from the level girls are bridging to at the other end of the bridge, ready to give a Girl Scout welcome and handshake.

The formation:

For this ceremony troops and guests sit together in a large area. Bridging is held one troop and one level at a time. When troops are ready to bridge, they stand and go to the bridge. They return to their seats once they have bridged.

Instructions/Script

Event leader: *I'd like to invite **all bridging Daisy Girl Scout troops** and their co-leaders to the beginning of the bridge and a Brownie co-leader to the end of the bridge.*

(Daisy Girl Scouts bridge to Brownie Girl Scouts.)

Event leader: *And now I'd like to invite **all bridging Brownie Girl Scout troops** to the beginning of the bridge and a Junior co-leader to the end of the bridge.*

(Brownie Girl Scouts bridge to Junior Girl Scouts.)

Event leader: *And now I'd like to invite **all bridging Junior Girl Scout troops** to the beginning of the bridge and a Cadette co-leader to the end of the bridge.*

(Junior Girl Scouts bridge to Cadette Girl Scouts.)

Event leader: *And now I'd like to invite **all bridging Cadette Girl Scout troops** to the beginning of the bridge and a Senior co-leader to the end of the bridge.*

(Cadette Girl Scouts bridge to Senior Girl Scouts.)

Event leader: *And now I'd like to invite **all bridging Senior Girl Scout troops** to the beginning of the bridge and an Ambassador co-leader to the end of the bridge.*

(Senior Girl Scouts bridge to Ambassador Girl Scouts.)

Event leader: *And now I'd like to invite **all Ambassador Girl Scouts** that will be **bridging to adult Girl Scouts** to the beginning of the bridge and a Daisy co-leader to the end of the bridge.*

(Ambassador Girl Scouts bridge to adult Girl Scouts.)



Swap SWAPS!

Multi-level events are a great time to exchange SWAPS (Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere). How does it work? Each troop makes a little something to give to other girls that represents their troop, where they're from, or what they like to do in Girl Scouting. Go to [girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/traditions.html](https://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/traditions.html) for more information.



Service Unit or Multi-Troop Fly-Up and Bridging Ceremonies

Multi-Level Complex Ceremony

In this ceremony all groups start by standing around the bridge together (see diagram) while the audience watches from their seats. Girls ready to bridge to the next level are called to the bridge and then cross to join their Girl Scout sisters in the next level.

- The key to this ceremony is communication. Let all groups know necessary details well ahead of time.
- With large crowds you will want to remind people of the Girl Scout quiet sign. You may also want to find a voice amplifier so the emcee or co-leaders can be heard.

- You may want to set up chairs or tell girls they can sit after they bridge. Daisy and Brownie Scouts have a hard time sitting still for long periods of time.
- If groups are really large, you might want to skip saying each girl's name and simply announce troop numbers. If you can, list names in a program or slide show.
- Hand out certificates and awards AFTER the bridging ceremony. This ceremony is supposed to be symbolic and move fluidly from one level to the next.
- Organize your photo opps ahead of time.
- Schedule time to practice before the ceremony.

Multi-Level Bridging Ceremony Formation

