

Girl Scouts of Florida Fun Patch Challenge

1. Learn three facts about the State of Florida
2. Discover the uniqueness of each of the six Girl Scout councils in Florida
3. Complete a service project that educates others on the states natural resources, environmental issues or Girl Scouting in your area



Florida, the Sunshine State, is the flattest state in the USA. Most know it as a vacation destination state known for great weather, theme parks and beautiful beaches and parks that are great for swimming, fishing and birdwatching.

Fun Facts about Florida

- Florida has the most gulf courses of any other state in America
- Florida's official state reptile is the alligator
- Florida produces the most oranges in America
- Nickname: The Sunshine State
- State Bird: mockingbird
- State Flower: orange blossom
- Florida is a peninsula, which means all sides of the state but one are surrounded by water
- Florida's wildlife includes armadillos, black bears, the Florida panther, owls, cranes and mockingbirds
- Reptiles found in Florida include alligators and snakes
- Sea life you see in Florida include manatees, sea turtles and dolphins
- Florida has 29 lighthouses
- Florida has 6 great Girl Scout Councils

Girl Scouts of Florida councils

Citrus

- Orlando was once the main hub of Florida's citrus industry. A deep freeze in the late 1800s caused farms to move their citrus crops further south.
- Before being known by its current name, Orlando was called Jernigan after the first permanent settler in the area.
- There is no official documentation of how Orlando received its name. Four known stories of its inception exist, but no conclusion has ever been reached.
- The Orlando Public Library is the largest public library building in the state of Florida at 290,000 square feet.
- Disney world is actually its own city and part of Reedy Creek Improvement District. A special district that acts with the same authority and responsibility as a county government, complete with its own contracts for fire, law and traffic protection.

Gateway

- St. Augustine is the oldest continuously occupied city in the US
- St. Augustine has the narrowest street in the US as well as the oldest wooden schoolhouse.
- Our council includes the capitol of the state, Tallahassee
- We also have two of the major college football rivals in our jurisdiction, Florida Gators and Florida State Seminoles.

Gulfcoast

- GSGCF campus sits on a 12 acre wooded parcel with 6.5 acres of natural wetlands complete with winding boardwalk for tranquil and scenic walks.
- There are two buildings on the campus.
 - Council Headquarters that houses the administrative offices and Girl Scout Shop.
 - Gulfcoast Event and Conference Center is a 4,500 sq. foot facility that features a main auditorium and breakout rooms.
- The council encompasses 10 counties in Florida and has two camps. Each camp is beautiful and offers many interesting and exciting activities. Whether you like nature trails, kayaking, canoeing, swimming, archery, or environmental education programs, our camps are great for your next outdoor adventure.
- Sarasota County has 13 public beaches and over 35 miles of powder-soft quartz sand.
- Sarasota's famous Siesta Key Beach has been consistently named one of the top beaches in the United States.
- The city of Venice is known as the "Shark Tooth Capital of the World." The best spot to hunt for shark's teeth is on Venice's Caspersen Beach. Sharks teeth are dark gray or black and are anywhere from 1/8 to 3 ½ inches long.
- Sarasota is home to Nikolas Wallenda, an American acrobat, high wire artist and author. He is known for his performances on the high wire without a safety net. He is the first person to walk over Niagara Falls on a tightrope. Nik's various acrobatic feats have garnered him eleven Guinness World Records. On March 4, 2020, he walked a steel cable over an active volcano Masaya in Nicaragua. The walk was 1,800 feet long.

Southeast Florida

- GSSEF has the only drive through safari, Lion Country Safari, which boasts over 800 animals.
- There are several lighthouses in our area but only one allows guests to walk up to the top. The Jupiter Lighthouse was built in 1860, the same year Juliette Gordon Low was born.

- Fun fact about our Camp Welaka's name. It was originally named Camp Shumahatchee and donated to Girl Scouts in 1928, the same year a hurricane destroyed the camp. A new building was donated and the name changed to Camp Margery Daniels (1929-1956). In 1958 a better site opened up nearby so they moved the camp and renamed it Camp Welaka, "Chain of Lakes". It is located next to Jonathan Dickinson State Park.

Tropical

- The first Troop in Dade County was formed in 1923 in Coconut Grove and was called Alligator Troop 1.
- The first GSTF cookie sale was in 1934.
- The Florida Keys Council and Miami-Dade Council merged in 1963 and became Girl Scout Council of Tropical Florida.
- "305" is a current hip nickname for Miami. Another nickname for Miami is "Magic City" that came from the 1940's because winter visitors were amazed as how much our city grew each year.

West Central Florida

- The GSWCF Leadership Center located in Tampa houses the administrative offices and Girl Scout Store for Girl Scouts of West Central Florida.
- GSWCF encompasses eight counties in Florida and has four camps: Wildwood, Dorothy Thomas, Wai Lani and Indian Echo.
- The founding of the 2nd Girl Scout Troop who were known as the "Magnolia Troop" began in 1913 at Hyde Park Methodist Church in Tampa. Jassmine Flowers Link was the troop leader.
- The first Girl Scout handbook, How Girls Can Help Their Country, was written by Professor Walter J. Hoxie who was a well know naturalist resident of Pinellas County.
- Fun things to do: go to the beach, pick strawberries and blueberries, visit the Clearwater or Florida Aquarium, manatee or dolphin watching, visit the mermaids at Weeki Wachee Springs
- Amusement attractions include: Busch Gardens, LEGOLAND, Dinosaur World and Bok Tower.

The patch for this challenge can purchased [online](#) or at our Tampa Girl Scout Store: Tampa Leadership Center, 4610 Eisenhower Blvd, Tampa