How to plan a Campout

Pick the camp based on location, activities offered and space needed. Send in any necessary paperwork to Council to reserve the unit(s) needed. Be sure to review all Safety Activity Guidelines so that girl safety requirements are met for the campout and any activities selected. Also take note of any special requirements at the Council level to overnight with your troop (ie. Staying at a State Park campgrounds, etc would require permission via the Troop Activity Application).

One of the best ways to design a successful campout is to look over the Outdoor Badges/Journeys for the program level of your girls. In many cases, the activities needed to complete the badges will become the focus of your weekend and planning.

Once you have made these decisions, the rest of the planning should fall into place easily.

To ensure that your campout centers on the interest of your troop, allow the girls to assist in some of the planning. Girls can help plan out meals, Kapers and some of the outdoor activities. As you start your first journey into camping with your troop, also have the girl’s help with rules that everyone can agree on.

For your first time leading your troop into the outdoors, come up with an outline or timeline of how you would like to spend your day. Over planning is absolutely fine so that if an activity doesn’t take as long as planned, you have something else to fill in the space. It is also important to plan downtime so girls and adults can play and create sisterhood bonds.

Communication with the parents in your troop is also important. Relay the items needed for the girls comfort and safety based on location, accommodations and environment/season. Be sure to have permission forms (even if a parent or caregiver is attending), and health forms for everyone (including yourself!).

For your first campout, it would be ideal to have a meeting with the adult to cover expectations and what to do in case of an emergency. For example: Use of the Buddy System is for all campers. Girls and Adults should always have a buddy at camp and should always let a leader know where you are at all times. Another expectation would be to let the parents know that their girls are capable of great things! Camp should be the opportunity for girls to grow by cooking for their “guests”, cleaning up after themselves, becoming stewards for their camps, making decisions and becoming leaders in their own right. Parents are always welcome, but encourage them to step back and let the girls show you that “We’ve Got This”!

Ask most girls and adults about their favorite Girl Scout memories, and the vast majority will center on a camping/outdoor experience!