



Girl Scouts of North Central Alabama Outdoor Skills Patch

GSNCA Outdoor Skills Levels

Girl Scouts begin with Level 1 and continue sequentially, at their own pace. Girls may begin at a higher level if all skills for the previous level have been mastered. Girls should progress through the program according to their needs and abilities, and based on the Safety Activity Checkpoint guidelines: www.girlscoutsnca.org

A general progression guideline is:
Level 1 Beginner-Daisies and up
Level 2 Intermediate-Brownies and up
Level 3 Advanced-Juniors and up
Level 4 Apprentice-Cadettes and up
Level 5 Master-Cadettes and up

Overview

The Outdoor Skills Patch Program (OSPP) is a progressive, five-level program to help Girl Scout Daisies to Ambassadors learn and become proficient in outdoor skills. OSPP will allow girls to explore leadership, build skills, and develop an appreciation for nature.

Each Level progresses through 6 categories:

- Girl Scout Traditions
- Leave No Trace/Environmental Awareness
- First Aid and Safety
- Fire Building
- Outdoor cooking
- Knots and Knives
- Camping/Survival skills
- Navigation



girl scouts 
of north-central
alabama

LEVEL 1: BEGINNER - Daisy

Complete all requirements

Note: Troop camp training is required for adults to start a fire, cook outdoors, and/or to camp with Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Traditions - Center Patch

- Make a camping or outdoor Kaper Chart and use it at your next outdoor activity. Make a list of all the things that need to be done on a camping trip and create a fun way to display these jobs/chores. *(Relates to Daisy Buddy Camper Badge)*
- On your own, or with the help of an older girl troop/group, learn a poem or song for an outdoor ceremony.
- Singing around the campfire is a Girl Scout tradition. Learn a campfire song.

Leave No Trace and Environmental Awareness - Foot Charm

- Investigate the seven Leave No Trace principles. Play a Leave No Trace game, such as Surface Hopscotch, On Display, Tip Toe Through the Crypto, or other similar game. Decide on one thing you could do to start practicing leaving no trace at meetings and/or at home. *(Relates to the Daisy Buddy Camper Badge)*

First Aid and Safety - First Aid Charm

- Learn how to dress for the weather in your area. What does it mean to dress in layers, and why is it important? Learn how to dress for a variety of outdoor excursions in different kinds of weather. Keep health and safety in mind when discussing sunscreen, proper shoes, sleeve lengths, hats, and bandanas. *(Relates to the Daisy Buddy Camper Badge)*
- Review the Buddy/Truddy System, and how it adds safety to trail hiking and swimming. Learn precautions to take to keep from getting lost on a hike. Learn what to do if you become lost or separated from your group. Practice the buddy system on a short hike or around your campsite.
- Learn simple first aid for cuts, insect bites (including tick bites), and skinned knees. Make an individual mini first aid kit and learn how to use the items in it. Learn what the troop/group first aid kit looks like and where it is kept.



Fire Building and Outdoor Cooking - Dutch Oven Charm

- Learn what safety precautions to take before starting a fire. Explain why hair should be tied up when working near fires. Discuss clothing worn near the fire and any necessary precautions needed. Be prepared to show these skills at a pretend fire or one started by an adult.
- Prepare a non-cooked meal or snack for your group. Remember to practice safety in the kitchen and when using kitchen utensils.
- Plan and prepare a simple meal or snack you cook over a charcoal or wood fire (started by an adult). This could be stick cooking, which can take some practice. *(Relates to the Daisy Buddy Camper Badge)*
- Discuss fire safety items. These include a bucket of water, a shovel, and a rake. Hair should be pulled back with an elastic, scarf, or bandana. This also helps keep hair out of the food. Be aware that nylon windbreakers and fleece melt if touched by embers or fire. Girls should ask permission to enter the fire circle unless they are assigned to the fire patrol.



Knots, Knives, and Camping/Survival Skills - Knot Charm

- Learn the overhand knot and the square knot. Explain and demonstrate the use of these two knots. *(Relates to the Daisy Buddy Camper Badge)*
- Demonstrate how to open, close, and pass a paper or plastic folding knife. Explain what is meant by the safety zone or safety circle. Practice using a knife. *(Relates to GSNCA Pocket Knife Safety Certification - Level 1)*
- Practice using a vegetable peeler or kitchen knife to help prepare a simple meal or snack.
- Pack a bag - Make a list of the items you will need for a simple camping trip or outdoor adventure. Collect the items and practice packing them in a bag. Make sure you can carry all of the items you need. *(Relates to the Daisy Buddy Camper Badge)*





Navigation - Boot Charm

- Using a simple map, discuss how to get from point A to point B. Where possible, follow the map for a short walk.
- Learn how to follow trail blazes or cairns. Learn why they are made and who makes them. Practice following a trail with either blazes and/or cairns or make your own trail for a friend to follow. *(Be sure to remove your markers when you are done.)*

Show and Evaluate Your Skills



- Help plan and carry out an outdoor event for your group which includes a short walk or hike, a snack, and an opening and closing. Remember to check the weather and dress appropriately. If there is a park ranger available, ask about your impact and what you can do to lessen it.
- Evaluate your event. What did you like, not like, want to do again, etc.
- **Date completed:**_____

More to Explore



Did you like these activities? Continue to practice your outdoor skills with the It's Your Planet, Love It! Journey, Think Like A Citizen Scientist Journey, Outdoor Journey, GSNCA Pocket Knife Safety Certification, and the following badges:

- First Aid
- Girl Scout Way
- Naturalist - Bugs, Flowers, Trees, Sky, and Water
- Snacks
- Outdoors - Hiker, Camper, Trailblazing, and Adventurer
- Animals - Animal Habitats, Animal Helper
- Outdoor Art - Badges for all levels
- Troop Camping



LEVEL 2: INTERMEDIATE - Brownie

Complete all requirements

Note: Troop camp training is required for adults to start a fire, cook outdoors, and/or to camp with Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Traditions - Center Patch

- Investigate, plan, and complete an outdoor flag ceremony.

Leave No Trace and Environmental Awareness - Foot Charm

- Learn the 7 Leave No Trace principles. In your troop, create short skits based on each of the 7 principles. (*Relates to the Junior Eco Badge*)

First Aid and Safety - First Aid Charm

- Review how to dress for the weather in your area and what to bring along for the unexpected. Learn what clouds and wind mean to the weather and how you can prepare for unexpected weather.
- Learn how to handle urgent first aid issues such as allergic reactions, asthma attacks, and animal/snakebites. Learn how to care for burns. Review your troop/group's first aid kit and show how to use the items in it.
- Create a personal "never do without it" kit. This should include a good plastic whistle. Learn why a whistle is helpful if you are lost or injured. Discuss why these things are needed and when you would want to pack each item. Do you need all items for all hikes? Why or why not?

Other items might include the following.

- Whistle
- Pocket knife (if you know how to use it safely)
- Reusable water bottle
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Long-sleeve jacket
- Sun protections: hat, sunscreen, lip balm, sunglasses
- Individual first aid kit, card with name, allergies, emergency numbers, and any medications (e.g. an inhaler)
- Snacks
- Bug spray
- Trowel, plastic bags that zip, and toilet paper (to make a portable toilet if needed)
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Map of the area
- Compass (if you know how to use it)





- Extra socks
- Brightly colored bandana
- clothes for cold weather: winter hat and gloves
- Rain poncho or jacket
- Sweater or fleece
- Emergency blanket
- Glow stick or two
- 1 or 2 garbage bags (emergency shelter)
- Paper and pencil

Fire Building and Outdoor Cooking - Dutch Oven Charm



- Review Fire Safety. Make a list of tools needed at a fire site and where you can get them. Learn how to choose a site and prepare it for a fire ring. Learn how to build an A-frame fire, light it, and put it out safely. *(Relates to the Brownie Cabin Camping and Junior Eco Camper badges)*

Knots, Knives, and Camping/Survival Skills - Knot Charm



- Learn the clove hitch and taut line hitch Using both hitches, demonstrate hanging a dunk line. *(Relates to the Brownie Cabin Camper Badge)*
- Demonstrate how to open, close, and pass a pocketknife or kitchen knife safety. Working with your safety circle, practice whittling or carving something such as a soap sculpture (Ivory soap works well). When using a knife, always use “pushing” strokes away from your body. Never cut towards you. Cut a slant. Do not “saw” with a knife. *(Relates to GSNCA Pocket Knife Safety Certification Level 2)*

- Learn how to set up your campsite, *(Relates to the Brownie Cabin Camper Badge and the Junior Eco Camper Badges)*



- Learn how to make a “piddle” jug and use it to wash hands in the outdoors. Learn how to wash dishes outdoors, roll and tie a sleeping bag, what a bedroll is and create one. Try using it at home or at a sleep over.
- Learn to set up a recycling station at your campsite.

Navigation - Boot Charm

- Learn to recognize North, East, South, and West on a map and how to use a compass. Practice using a map and compass to get from point A to point B.

Show and Evaluate Your Skills

- Help plan and carry out an outdoor event for your group which includes setting up your camp site, simple charcoal cooking, clean-up, practicing Leave No Trace principles, and an opening and closing flag ceremony.
- Evaluate your event. What did you like, not like, want to do again, etc.
- **Date completed:**_____

More to Explore

Did you like these activities? Continue to practice your outdoor skills with the It's Your Planet, Love It! Journey, Think Like A Citizen Scientist Journey, Outdoor Journey, GSNCA Pocket Knife Safety Certification, and the following badges:

- First Aid
- Girl Scout Way
- Naturalist - Bugs, Flowers, Trees, Sky, and Water
- Snacks
- Outdoors - Hiker, Camper, Trailblazing, and Adventurer
- Animals
- Troop Camping
- Outdoor Art
- Geocacher
- Make fire starters, learn what a charcoal chimney is and how to correctly start a charcoal fire.
- Plan a meal or snack and cook it over charcoal fire using a Dutch oven or stick cooking. *(Relates to the Junior Eco Camper Badge)*
- Plan and cook a simple meal, snack, or dessert using a box oven. *(Relates to the Junior Eco Camper Badge)*
- Learn how to connect and light a propane stove.





LEVEL 3: ADVANCED - Junior

Complete all requirements

Note: Troop camp training is required for adults to start a fire, cook outdoors, and/or to camp with Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Traditions - Center Patch

- Girl Scouts leave a place better than they found it. Talk to a park/camp ranger about how you can help clean a local camping area, park, or hiking trail. Find out what work needs to be done and then set off to make the world a better place! *(relates to the Junior Eco Camper Badge)*



Leave No Trace and Environmental Awareness - Foot Charm

- Enhance your Leave No Trace knowledge. Select AT LEAST one of the following: *(Relates to the Junior Eco Badge)*
- Teach Leave No Trace Principles to younger girls.
- Investigate disposing of waste properly by learning about the impact common camping items (such as soap, bug spray, sunscreen, and oils) have on local water
- Discuss the difference between high and low impact camping. What can you do to practice low-impact camping? Plan for your next camping trip.

Select AT LEAST one of the following:

- Explore the forest life cycle. Find out what role fires play in a healthy forest. How can you ensure a healthy forest?
- Find out about different animal tracks. Make a chart showing their prints.
- Be able to identify at least four prints for animals that live in your area.
- Find out what you should do if you encounter any of these animals when outdoors.



First Aid and Safety - First Aid Charm

- Learn about Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints. Select an outdoor activity and look up the equipment needed, procedures you need to follow, and safety guidelines for that activity. Repost back to your group.
- Learn and demonstrate first aid for sprains, fainting, blisters, and rashes. Discuss ways to prevent these accidents.
- Learn first aid to stop bleeding.



Select AT LEAST one of the following:

- Practice tying a triangle bandage for an arm sling and for a scalp/forehead injury. Discuss other uses for a triangle bandage.
- Learn to prevent and treat injuries due to weather. Learn the signs of heat stroke, frostbite, hypothermia, and hyperthermia, and how to treat them.
- Name at least 3 problems campers might have to face in your area that are caused by weather conditions, altitude changes, or land and water movement. Identify warning signs of these environmental forces. Demonstrate how you can be prepared for them, no matter where you are.

Fire Building and Outdoor Cooking - Dutch Oven Charm

- Research menus for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Remember to discuss allergies. Complete a menu for 1-2 days of overnight camping. Practice some of the cooking prior to camping.
- Learn how to build a log cabin fire, light it, and put it out safely.
- Learn how to use skillet cooking over charcoal or wood fire and cook a well-balanced meal using this method.
- Learn the benefits of using a propane stove or portable camp stove. How does this cooking method help contribute to low-impact camping? *(Relates to the Junior Eco Badge)*



Knots, Knives, and Camping/Survival Skills - Knot Charm

- Review the overhand knot, square knot, clove hitch and taut line. Learn the bowline knot. Explain and demonstrate the uses for all of the above knots.
- Learn why a sharp knife is better than a dull one. Learn how to correctly sharpen your knife and how to properly clean it. *(Relates to GSNCA Pocket Knife Certification Level 3)*
- Find out where there is safe drinking water and if there is water that is unsafe for drinking. Learn about methods of purifying water and practice at least one. *(Relates to the Cadette Primitive Camper Badge)*
- Learn how to put up two different types of tents and demonstrate how to set up an organized camp area.





Navigation - Boot Charm

- Find East by using the sun and knowing the time of day. Show where North, South, East and West are.
- Learn how to read a topographical map. Trace out a hiking route on a topographical map. Describe what you would see along the way by visualizing the terrain from the map symbols and decide where you'll take rest breaks based on the topography.

Show and Evaluate Your Skills



- Plan and carry out an all-day hike or overnight camping trip to show the skills and knowledge you have learned thus far. Ensure you always follow safety guidelines.
- Evaluate your event. What did you like, not like, want to do again, etc.

More to Explore

Did you like these activities? Continue to practice your outdoor skills with the It's Your Planet, Love It! Journey, Think Like A Citizen Scientist Journey, Outdoor Journey, GSNCA Pocket Knife Safety Certification, and the following badges:



- First Aid
- Girl Scout Way
- Naturalist - Bugs, Flowers, Trees, Sky, and Water
- Snacks
- Outdoors - Hiker, Camper, Trailblazing, and Adventurer
- Animals
- Troop Camping
- Outdoor Art
- Geocacher
- Learn the laws regulating open fires in your area and what permits required. Demonstrate you know the safe use of a shovel and rake and how to store each one properly. Know how to waterproof your matches. (*Relates to the Junior Eco Camper Badge*)
- Demonstrate methods for care, storage, and protections of food from insects, animals, and spoilage.



LEVEL 4: APPRENTICE - Cadette

Complete all requirements

Note: Troop camp training is required for adults to start a fire, cook outdoors, and/or to camp with Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Traditions - Center Patch

- Plan and participate in a “Scout’s Own”

Leave No Trace and Environmental Awareness - Foot Charm

Select AT LEAST one of the following:

- What evidence proves people have been in your area? Explain how litter can damage your environment. Make a list of things you can do on a camping trip that will reduce the impact of your group.
- Research edible plants and learn how to correctly identify at least 3 of them. See how many edible plants you can find on a hike. *(Relates to the Cadette Primitive Camper Badge)*
- Enhance your Leave No Trace knowledge. **Select AT LEAST one of the following:**
- Teach Leave No Trace to younger girls. *(Relates to the Senior Adventure Camper Badge)*
- Learn about the magical number, 200, when we talk about Leave No Trace. Discuss the importance of 200 feet when it comes to your campsite, cooking area, and cathole choice. Learn how far 200 feet is and how to count pace to measure 200 feet while you are outdoors.
- Learn how to continuously offer suggestions against negative habits such as playing loud music, carving names in trees, feeding wildlife, picking a wildflower, and having your dog off leash.

First Aid and Safety - First Aid Charm

- Become First Aid/CPR Certified if you have not done so already.
- Learn how to use everyday objects to make splints. Research how to use common materials to make splints, then practice making splints using some of these items. Notice which objects are easiest to make into splints and which ones are the hardest.





Fire Building and Outdoor Cooking - Dutch Oven Charm

- Learn how to build a trench fire, crisscross fire, or reflector fire against a rock. Discuss conservation of fuel.
- Use at least 3 of the following cooking methods to cook well-balanced meals: reflector oven, dutch oven, skillet, solar cooking, box oven, or backpacker stove. (*Relates to the Senior Adventure Camper and Ambassador Survival Camper Badges*)
- Make dehydrated food. Research food dehydration and practice doing it at home. Once you find something you like, make enough for everyone for your next outdoor adventure. (*Relates to the Cadette Primitive Camper Badge*)



Knots, Knives, and Camping/Survival Skills - Knot Charm

- Learn how to hold, carry, and use a bow saw, hand axe, and hatchet safely. Learn how to sharpen them and store them properly. (*Relates to Cadette Primitive Camper Badge*)
- Demonstrate how to prevent a rope from becoming unraveled. Learn how to whip a rope.



Select AT LEAST one of the following:

- Explain the different kinds and sizes of rope and give examples of how each is used. Demonstrate the proper care and storage of the rope you are using.
- Make an article using three tries of lashing (square, sheer, triangular, continuous, cross)

Navigation - Boot Charm



- Learn to estimate heights and distance without using manufactured tools. Measure 100 yards by pacing.
- Count the number of paces between two points 100 ft. apart and compare with others in your group. Do it for 50 yards and 100 yards. Find the average length of your pace.

Show and Evaluate Your Skills

- Use all you have learned, plan and carry out a two-night campout. Pack your own personal equipment. Help gather and pack your group's equipment. Try one cooking method not used in Level I, II, or III. consider how much and what type of food and storage you will need for your trip. Try packing lighter than you have in the past. Help clean and store items after the trip.
- Evaluate your event.



More to Explore

Did you like these activities? Continue to practice your outdoor skills with the It's Your Planet, Love It! Journey, Think Like A Citizen Scientist Journey, Outdoor Journey, GSNCA Pocket Knife Safety Certification, and the following badges:

- First Aid
- Girl Scout Way
- Naturalist - Bugs, Flowers, Trees, Sky, and Water
- Snacks
- Outdoors - Hiker, Camper, Trailblazing, and Adventurer
- Animals
- Troop Camping
- Outdoor Art
- Learn and demonstrate how to rig a simple shelter.
- Learn how to storm lash a tent. Be able to explain when and where storm lashing is used. Practice storm lashing your tent.





LEVEL 5: MASTER - Senior & Ambassador

Complete all requirements

Note: Troop camp training is required for adults to start a fire, cook outdoors, and/or to camp with Girl Scouts

Girl Scout Traditions - Center Patch

- Teach younger Girl Scouts, or troop, one of the following: a campfire song, an outdoor flag ceremony, or what it means to live the Girl Scout Law when in the outdoors.



Leave No Trace and Environmental Awareness - Foot Charm

- Learn about potentially dangerous animals in your area. Know what to do if you encounter these animals. Know what to do to lessen the risk of these animals entering your campsite. Share your knowledge with others.
- Enhance your Leave No Trace skills by teaching younger girls about Leave No Trace.

Select AT LEAST ONE of the following:



- Learn about the magical number, 200, when we talk about Leave No Trace. Discuss the importance of 200 feet when it comes to your campsite, cooking area, and cathole choice. Learn how far 200 feet is and how to count pace to measure 200 feet while you are outdoors.
- Discuss wilderness/outdoor ethics and why it is important to respect how different people have different reactions to various impacts they may find outdoors.
- Learn how to constructively offer suggestions against negative habits such as cutting switchbacks, starting a new fire ring, camping on lake shore, throwing food scraps to decompose, and not washing equipment between trips.



First Aid and Safety - First Aid Charm

- Create an emergency plan for a camping trip: Include evacuation procedures, first aid and individual and group supplies for a two-night primitive trip. Reevaluate your first aid kits. Repack and update if needed. Include a plan B.
- Create a communication plan. Do not assume you will have cell service where you are going. Look into cell service in the area you will be camping. If you are camping for several days, think about

how you will charge your batteries. If you do not have access to electricity, or have a plan B for how you will communicate with others outside of your group in the case of an emergency. Create a communication plan by making sure you can access a place where you can make a call. Always have emergency contact numbers with you. *(Relates to Ambassador Survival Camper Badge)*

- Become a weather expert for your trip. Prior to your trip, chart the weather where you will be and what temperatures are expected. Learn about weather patterns for your area. What equipment will you need for hot or cold weather? If weather patterns in your area indicate a possibility of any of the following and brush up on procedures for: flash flood, rain, lightning strike, high winds, wildfire, and tornadoes. *(Relates to Senior Adventure Camper Badge)*.

Select ONE of the following:

- Become First Aid and CPR certified if you have not already done so.
- Take a Wilderness First Aid course. *(Relates to Cadette Primitive Camper Badge)*

Fire Building and Outdoor Cooking - Dutch Oven Charm

- Practice starting a campfire with only your jackknife, steel and flint, and a mirror. *(Relates to Ambassador Survival Camper Badge)*
- Plan at least 6 meals you can cook while camping. Consider using minimal impact cooking techniques. Create a plan for your garbage, recycling, and protecting food from wildlife.
- Teach younger girls how to cook using one of the following methods: reflector oven, dutch oven, box oven, or stick cooking.

Knots, Knives, and Camping/Survival Skills - Knot Charm

- Discuss and demonstrate appropriate toilet practices for the environments that you will be camping in.
- Review the different methods for water purification that are available. Demonstrate purifying water for drinking and cooking; include ways that will make water safe from giardia. Research portable water filters/purifiers. What is the best method for your group to use? What is a solar still and could you use it? *(Relates to the Cadette Primitive Camper Badge)*
- In groups of two or more, pitch a tarp shelter for sleeping. Pitch tents you will be using on your trip. Investigate tent etiquette. Research light weight tents. Look at the pros and cons of each





tent and explain which tent you would choose and why. (*Relates to Ambassador Survival Camper Badge*)

Select AT LEAST one of the following:

- Make one item with lashing to be used at your campsite (for example, a flagpole). After completion, use Leave No Trace for your lashing item(s). (*Relates to Cadette Primitive Camper and Ambassador Survival Camper Badges*)
- Build a knot board to be used for display and teaching, showing the knots you have learned. Label each knot and include directions for completing each knot.



Navigation - Boot Charm

- Find your way using only landmarks and the sun. Research different methods for navigation, then practice your skills with a buddy. You don't want to get lost, though. Always bring a map, compass, and cell phone for back up. (*Relates to Ambassador Survival Camper Badge*)

Show and Evaluate Your Skills

- Plan a two-night primitive camping trip. Plan to cook at least 6 meals in camp. Make a list of personal and group equipment needed.
- Go on the trip you have planned. After the trip clean all equipment properly.
- Evaluate your trip.



More to Explore

Did you like these activities? Continue to practice your outdoor skills with the It's Your Planet, Love It! Journey, Think Like A Citizen Scientist Journey, Outdoor Journey, GSNCA Pocket Knife Safety Certification, and the following badges:

- First Aid
- Girl Scout Way
- Naturalist - Bugs, Flowers, Trees, Sky, and Water
- Snacks
- Outdoors - Hiker, Camper, Trailblazing, and Adventurer
- Animals
- Troop Camping
- Outdoor Art



RESOURCES

Here are some great resources you can use across levels for the Outdoor Skills Patch. There are additional resources, specific to the activities, within each level. For each activity, refer to the Safety Activity Checkpoints, which can be found on GSNCA's website at girlscoutsnca.org. Include the girls in the discussion of the Safety Activity Checkpoints.

GSLearn has some valuable resources and camping training for Volunteers. Check them out on your volunteer dashboard at www.girlscoutsnca.org/volunteers.

Outdoor Education in Girl Scouting is a perfect guide to learn outdoor skills and can be purchased at girlscoutshop.com

TrailblazerTV.org is GSNCA's home for videos and tutorials online, including outdoor skills information.

Girl Scout Traditions

Songs

Learn Girl Scout songs in the Brownie Girl Scout Songbook or the Pocket Songbook:

- girlscoutshop.com
- scoutsongs.com

Flag Ceremony

- girlscoutsnca.org
- scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/SubPages/FlagCeremonyOutdoor.html

Leave No Trace

- girlscoutsnca.org
- lnt.org
- smokeybear.com

Environmental awareness

- Birds audubon.org
- Trees fs.usda.gov or nationalgeographic.com
- Animals nationalwildlifefederation

First Aid and Safety

- redcross.org





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