

Camping



Council Approval: Not required

Activity Permitted For: D B J C S A

About Camping

Camping, a great Girl Scout tradition, is one of the very first activities that Girl Scouts' founder Juliette Gordon Low encouraged for girls. The key to an enjoyable camping experience is being prepared—by packing just enough gear, supplies, and weather-appropriate clothing. Girl Scouts advocate for the Leave No Trace method of camping, which involves leaving a campground the way it exists in nature, free of garbage and human impact.

You can add to the experience with a camp kaper chart. Divide up cooking duties and get creative about preplanning outdoor meals. Be ready with camp entertainment. Before you go camping, read about camping stories, songs, activities, and games.

Note: When planning activities to do while camping, remember that girls are never allowed to hunt, go on high altitude climbs, or ride all-terrain vehicles or motor bikes.

For travel camping—camping as you travel—note the additional safety precautions listed.

Learn More:

- [American Camp Association](#)
- [Go Camping America](#)
- [Leave No Trace](#)

Camping with Daisies and Brownies

A Daisy troop may participate in an occasional overnight camping experience. Daisies who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in resident camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Daisies who have completed first grade may independently participate in resident camp experiences lasting four or more nights.

Travel camping is not recommended for Daisies and Brownies.

Know where to camp when camping with Daisies and Brownies, which includes Girl Scout camps; public, private, state, and national parks; and sites deemed appropriate by local and state authorities.

Connect with your Girl Scout council for site suggestions and for information on using a non-council-owned site. Search for campground locations at [Reserve America](#).

Include Girls with Disabilities

Communicate with girls of various abilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations. Learn more about adapting camping activities at [Disabled Sports USA](#).

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Safe camping locations are Girl Scout camps; public, private, state, and national parks; and sites deemed appropriate by local and state authorities. Connect with your Girl Scout council for site suggestions and for information on using a non-council-owned site. The campsite should be able to provide evidence of \$1 million liability insurance and instructor certifications upon request.

Verify leader/instructor knowledge, experience, judgment, and maturity. Ensure that at least one adult is trained or possesses knowledge, skills, and experience in the following areas:

- Outdoor program activities and leadership
- Girls' emotional responses to trips, including homesickness
- Trip planning in a girl-led environment
- Safety management
- Program activities specific to the trip
- Group dynamics and management
- Outdoor cooking (if relevant)

Ensure that supervision of girls and adults for travel camping include at least two adults who are additionally trained, or have documented experience, in the following areas:

- Participation in similar trips
- Familiarity with the area in which the trip is conducted
- Physical fitness and skills necessary to support the group
- Chosen mode(s) of transportation
- Site orientation
- Emergency procedures
- Minor maintenance for equipment and vehicles, as appropriate

If travel camping (using campsites as a means of accommodations), verify the following adult certifications and standards:

- For trips by small craft, one adult is currently certified as required by the safety activity checkpoints for the particular mode of transportation being used (canoe or kayak, for instance).
- For trips that involve swimming, one adult who is present is currently certified in basic lifeguarding.
- Each driver of motorized transportation is at least 21 years old and holds a valid license appropriate to the vehicle.

- No adult drives more than six hours per day, with rest breaks every two hours.
- If a trailer is used, it is in compliance with all state, local, and federal regulations for the areas of travel. The assigned driver is experienced in pulling a trailer. No girls or adult leaders ride in the trailer.
- No caravanning (cars following closely together, with the lead vehicle in charge) is allowed. Each driver must have information about route and destination in addition to the cell phone numbers of other drivers.
- Ensure that girl and adult participants receive information about first-aid procedures, emergency and rescue procedures, environmental awareness, and program plans for mode of travel and geographic area, as well as operational procedures (water purification, food preparation, camping equipment, sanitation, and food storage procedures).

Sleeping Arrangements

Male volunteers may not sleep in the same space as girls. During indoor camping overnights, men must sleep in another activity area or a room that's separate from girls, or (if the weather permits) in a tent outside. If possible, men should have their own designated bathroom. If a unisex bathroom is used the door must have a working lock, or a system for notifying others that the bathroom is in use. This system should be reviewed and understood by all girls and adults.

Men should not have to walk through the girls' sleeping area to get to the bathroom. When camping in tents or single room cabins, men must stay in a tent or a cabin that's separate from the girls or women.

During family or "he and me" events (in which girls share sleeping accommodations with men), ensure the sleeping details are clearly explained in a parent/guardian permission slip.

More than one family may use a tent or single-room cabin during these events only if both families agree.

In public venue overnights, such as museums or at malls, ask if there is a separate sleeping area and bathrooms for men. If no such area exists, designate an area out of the way or off to the side so that men are not sleeping alongside the girls.

For long-distance travel, men must have separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms away from girls. Each participant should have her own bed. If girls want to share a bed, they must obtain parent/guardian permission. Girls and adults may not share a bed, however, though some councils may make exceptions for mothers and daughters.

Women are not required to sleep in the sleeping area (for example, a tent or cabin) with girls, but if a woman does share the sleeping area, two unrelated women must always be present.

For sites without electric lights and toilet facilities (otherwise known as primitive campsites):

- Choose and set up your campsite well before dark.
- Use a previously established campsite if available.
- Make sure the campsite is level, below tree line, and located at least 200 feet away from all water sources and.

- Avoid fragile mountain meadows and areas with wet soil.
- Avoid camping under dead tree limbs.
- Use existing fire rings if a fire is necessary.
- If a latrine is not available, use individual cat holes—holes for human waste that are at least 200 feet away from the trail and known water sources—to dispose of human waste. *Note:* Cat holes are not permitted in some areas, so follow local sanitary codes or alternative instructions in those areas.
- Wash dishes and do personal bathing at least 200 feet away from water sources.
- Store food in a secure location away from tents and out of reach of animals.
- Where necessary, use a bear-proof container to store food or, if allowed or appropriate, hang food at least ten (10) feet off the ground from a rope that's stretched between two trees. If the site is in bear country, check with local authorities for additional precautions.

Safety Gear

- Clothing, including a rain jacket or poncho that can be layered and is appropriate for the weather
- Socks with sturdy shoes, hiking boots, or sneakers (no sandals, clogs, flip-flops, or bare feet)
- A sleeping bag that's rated for the anticipated temperature
- A flashlight and other battery-powered lights for indoor use (no candles, kerosene lamps, portable cook stoves, heaters, or other open-flame devices are to be used inside tents)
- A first-aid kit
- Insect repellent
- A hat or bandana
- A hat, gloves, and thermal underwear for cool temperatures
- Flame-resistant tents or tarp (no plastic tents)
- A map and either a compass or a GPS
- Mosquito netting, where necessary
- Cooking supplies (pots, pans, utensils, mess kit, dunk bag, etc.)
- A cooler for food storage
- Portable cook stoves and fuel whenever possible (to reduce the use of firewood)
- A flashlight or propane-fueled lantern (for outdoor use)
- A water purification kit

These checkpoints should be reviewed with camps, facilities, or with your council when appropriate.