

Outdoor Skills Patch Program

Overview

The Outdoor Skills Patch Program is a progressive, six-level program to help Girl Scout Daisies through Ambassadors learn and become proficient in outdoor skills. Through this patch program, girls explore leadership, build skills, and develop a deep appreciation for nature. The program is intended to supplement the existing Girl Scout program. It is not meant to replace working on Journeys, badges, or outdoor programming at camp. Once you have completed the requirements for a level, you can purchase the main patch and level patch at any of our council stores.

Levels

All Girl Scouts begin with the beginner level and continue sequentially, at their own pace, to complete any or all levels. Girls may start at a higher level if all the skills for the previous levels have been mastered. Girls should progress through the program according to their Girl Scout grade levels, needs, and abilities, and based on the Safety Activity Checkpoint guidelines.

A general progression guideline is:

- Beginner- Daisies and up
- Intermediate- Brownies and up
- Advanced- Juniors and up
- Apprentice- Cadettes and up
- Experts – Seniors and up
- Master- Ambassadors



General Tips

- Develop skills. These activities need to be done more than once. Many activities are like those included in the Proficiency Badge requirements. For the girls to truly master each skill, please practice each skill repeatedly. In addition, make sure the girls are learning by doing, not just by listening.
- Keep the timeline flexible. Take the time the girls need to learn the skills.
- Use resources from Girl Scouts of the USA: Girl Scout University, Volunteer Toolkit, Outdoor Education in Girl Scouting book
- Use resources from Girl Scouts of the Missouri Heartland: outdoor check-out kits, patch programs, videos on our website, and books in our council store.
- To prepare to work with the girls, and help them develop their skills, sign up for GSMH's Outdoor Level trainings.

Outdoor Skills Patch Program

Beginner

Complete all requirements.

- Make a Kaper Chart and use it during your next outdoor activity. Create a fun way to list all the tasks and assign who will be responsible for each.
- Learn a song to sing around a campfire.
- Understand the importance of the buddy system and learn what to do in case you get lost. Practice the buddy system on a short hike or other activity.
- Learn simple first aid for cuts and insect bites. Make your own small first aid kit and know how to use each item.
- Learn about fire safety. Understand why loose clothing and long hair needs to be secured, what steps are needed to select a place to build a fire, and why only designated people should be within the fire circle.
- Plan and prepare a non-cooked meal or snack for the group.
- Plan a simple menu that could be used for a camping trip.
- Pack a bag for a short camping trip or other outdoor activity. Make sure you can carry everything you need!
- Learn how to tie an overhand knot and a square knot.
- Learn how to recognize North, South, East, and West on a map.

Outdoor Skills Patch Program

Intermediate

Complete all requirements.

- Learn, plan, and hold an outdoor flag ceremony.
- Leave a place better than when you found it. Go out and clean up an outdoor area. You could pick up trash at a park, help clear a trail, or clear the sidewalks in front of a public building. Understand why Girl Scouts want to Leave No Trace.
- Learn how to dress for many types of weather and how to prepare for unexpected weather. Understand the importance of layering and the differences between fabrics.
- Make a list of essential items that you should always have while camping. This should include a whistle. *How could a whistle help if you are lost or hurt?* Discuss why each item is needed and when you would want to pack each. *Do you need every item for every hike?*
- Learn how to set up a campsite. Learn how to set up a hand washing station and how to wash dishes. Make a bed roll and practice rolling and tying a sleeping bag.
- Learn how to handle urgent first aid issues like bites, burns, asthma attacks, and allergic reactions. Look through your troops complete first aid kit and learn the purpose of each item.
- Learn knife safety. Demonstrate how to open, close, and pass a paper folding knife. Explain safety zones or safety circles and practice using one. When using a knife, always cut down and away from you.
- Review fire safety and make a list of tools needed at a fire. Also learn how to prepare a site, make a fire circle, and put out a fire. Make fire starters that could be used on a camping trip.
- Learn about trail signs and follow a trail sign course.
- Plan and cook a simple meal or snack using buddy burners or stick cooking.

Outdoor Skills Patch Program

Advanced

Complete all requirements.

- Learn the seven principles of Leave No Trace and investigate how to properly dispose of all types of waste.
- Be able to identify at least four different animal tracks that could be found in your area. Learn what to do if you encounter any of these animals in nature.
- Learn about Girl Scout *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. Select an outdoor activity and look through the safety guidelines for that activity. Share with a group.
- Learn how to care for and prevent sprains, blisters, dehydration, and rashes.
- Learn about fuel, tinder, and kindling. Demonstrate how to build an A-frame and log cabin fire. Build a fire and put it out safely (*remember to sprinkle and stir!*).
- Cook a well-balanced meal using a skillet or Dutch oven on a fire. Discuss the benefits of using a portable camp stove and the impacts on Leave No Trace.
- Demonstrate how to properly store food to protect it from animals, insects, and spoilage.
- Review how to tie an overhand knot and square knot. Learn how to tie a clove hitch, taut line and bowline knot. Explain the potential uses for each knot.
- Learn how to put up a tent and review how to set up a campsite. *How could you create a shelter without a tent?*
- Learn why a sharp knife is safer than a dull knife. Practice sharpening a knife. Review knife safety.

Outdoor Skills Patch Program

Apprentice

Complete all requirements.

- Plan and participate in a Scout's Own Ceremony.
- Learn how to use a compass, then make an orienteering course for others to follow!
- Learn basic first aid. Or even take a first aid and CPR course and become certified!
- Practice making splints out of everyday objects.
- Learn methods of purifying water and how to find a water source in the wilderness.
- Review how to tie clove hitch, taut line, and bowline knots. Learn how to whip a rope and prevent a rope from unraveling.
- Learn how to lash and practice crossing sticks and connecting parallel sticks.
- Make a meal using a backpacking stove or reflector oven.
- Build a shelter with non-traditional supplies like a poncho, shoe laces, or other oddities you may carry.
- Learn the Leave No Trace rule of 200. Learn how to measure approximately 200 feet using pacing and practice disposing of waste, setting up a campsite, and using a cathole. Brainstorm ways to reduce your impact on the environment while camping.

Outdoor Skills Patch Program

Expert

Complete all requirements.

- Practice reading a topographical map. Learn about elevations and their effects on pacing.
- Learn how to navigate at night using constellations.
- Learn how to build a trench fire and how to properly dispose of ashes.
- Make a meal with a box oven and solar cooking.
- Learn about several types of saws that could be useful while camping. Practice safely using a saw.
- Review lashing and then lash a raft. Try it out!
- While practicing knife safety, whittle something. Be as creative as you would like!
- Learn how to identify all forms of poison oak, poison ivy, and poison sumac, and what to do if you touch any of them.
- Research potentially dangerous animals in your area. Learn what to do if you encounter these animals and how to minimize the potential of these animals entering your campsite. Practice hanging your food storage to protect it from bears and other animals.
- Create an emergency plan for a camping trip. Include a communication plan, evacuation procedures, emergency supplies, first aid materials, and anything else you may need to be prepared for an emergency.

Outdoor Skills Patch Program

Master

Complete all requirements.

- Make dehydrated food to take while backpacking.
- Practice using a hatchet safely.
- Learn basic wilderness first aid. Demonstrate how to inspect an injured victim, transport a victim in several ways, and create a splint with resources you would carry while hiking. Also learn the signs of temperature related illnesses and how to treat them.
- Make your own knot board displaying at least ten different knots.
- Identify at least ten different edible plants that are native to your area. Go out and find some!
- Build a fire without any matches or lighter. Try using a jackknife, flint and steel, a magnesium striker, or a mirror.
- Demonstrate how to make a Leave No Trace fire.
- Make your own compass using shadows from the sun. Be able to approximate time of day based on sun placement and learn the “rule of thumb” of how long until the sun sets.
- Create your own map of an outdoor area. Be as detailed as possible.
- Review lashing and then lash a table, chair, or tripod.