



## Outdoor Essentials Progressive Patch Program

### Overview:

Outdoor Essentials is a progressive patch program designed to guide each age-level, from Daisies to Adults, to develop increasingly more advanced skills and proficiency in the outdoors. The program is intended to supplement and enhance the existing Girl Scout program of badgework, Journeys and programs at camp. All will build skills in leadership and a passion for lifelong learning.

The categories in the Outdoor Essentials include Girl Scout traditions and eight basic camping skills. Each level builds upon the one before it to keep the program interesting, increasingly more challenging, and fun for all participants. Girl Scout Daisies – Adults begin with Level 1.

<u>Progression Levels:</u>	<u>Content in each level:</u>
<p>All age-level Girl Scouts start by earning the Main Patch with Level 1 Star.</p> <p><b>Level 1 - Blue Star – Daisies and up</b></p> <p><b>Level 2 - Pink Star – Brownies and up</b></p> <p><b>Level 3 - Purple Star – Juniors and up</b></p> <p><b>Level 4 - Red Star – Cadettes and up</b></p> <p><b>Level 5 - Orange Star – Seniors and up</b></p> <p><b>Level 6 - Gold Star – Ambassadors and up</b></p> <p><b>Level 7 - White Star – Adults</b></p>	<p><b>Girl Scout Traditions</b></p> <p><b>Be Prepared</b></p> <p><b>Campfires</b></p> <p><b>Cooking Outdoors</b></p> <p><b>First Aid &amp; Safety</b></p> <p><b>Knife Safety</b></p> <p><b>Knots</b></p> <p><b>Minimal Impact</b></p> <p><b>Navigation</b></p>

### LEAVE NO TRACE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plan Ahead and Prepare</li> <li>2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces</li> <li>3. Dispose of Waste Properly</li> <li>4. Leave What You Find</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Minimize Campfire Impacts</li> <li>6. Respect Wildlife</li> <li>7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors</li> </ol> |
|---|--|

## Key Reminders:

### DEVELOP SKILLS

For the girls to truly master each skill, girls need to be practice ALL of the skills more than once.

Badge requirements may be similar so make sure you plan multiple opportunities for girls to practice these skills to avoid “double-dipping.”

### BE FLEXIBLE

Don't rush the girls. Allow girls to work at their own pace. Make sure the girls are learning by doing, not just listening.

Some girls will need to spend more time and practice the skills repeatedly, to really learn them. Some age levels can accomplish many skills during a day camp or a weekend campout. Others may need to spread the activities out over several months, or even longer.

## Progression Levels 1-7:

All age-level Girl Scouts start at Level 1 to earn the Main Patch and Level 1 Star.

Each Level must be completed before the next level is begun.

**Level 1 - Light Blue Star** – Daisies and up, who have mastered skills from this level

**Level 2 - Pink Star** – Brownies and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels

**Level 3 - Purple Star** – Juniors and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels

**Level 4 - Red Star** – Cadettes and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels

**Level 5 - Orange Star** – Seniors and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels

**Level 6 - Gold Star** – Ambassadors and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels

**Level 7 - White Star** – Adults who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels

## Content:

- ▶ **Girl Scout Traditions**
  - kaper charts, ceremonies, camp songs & graces, buddy system, SACs
- ▶ **Be Prepared**
  - organize, plan, select appropriate clothing, gear, destinations, tent/shelter sites, etc.
- ▶ **Campfires**
  - safe practices to clear, lay, light, keep & extinguish fires and use camp tools
- ▶ **Cooking Outdoors**
  - plan menus, learn cooking methods, practice food safety, try new things
- ▶ **First Aid & Safety**
  - become proficient, pack essentials, learn to avoid and treat injuries and illness
- ▶ **Knife Safety**
  - learn proper use, care and safety with skill-appropriate knives, saws, hatchets
- ▶ **Knots**
  - learn knots for friendship bracelets, securing gear, lashing projects, rescue & survival
- ▶ **Minimal Impact**
  - learn environmental awareness
- ▶ **Navigation**
  - learn directions, read maps, trail signs, animal tracks, stars, a compass, etc.

## RESOURCES

1. **Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual** –  
This is your primary resource with tons of website links and CAMPING TIPS!
2. **SACs (Safety Activity Checkpoints)** –  
Required safety guidelines to minimize liability.
3. **GSSA Policies & Procedures** –  
Policies specific to our Council - Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama
4. **Troop Camping Pre-Course** –  
Required to take girls on overnights

**BEGIN HERE** → <https://www.girlscoutssa.org/en/for-volunteers/volunteer-resources.html>

The **Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual** is your **PRIMARY RESOURCE**.

It includes Trainer's Notes, camping and cooking tips, website links and instructions for kaper charts, knots, lashing, knife safety, tent pitching, songs, games, and more.

## OUTDOOR ESSENTIALS

### Level 1: Light Blue Star (Daisies and up)

**Remember: Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual is your primary resource.**

▶ **G.S. Traditions**

Learn to sing several Girl Scout songs, one for hiking, one for a campfire, one for a grace.  
Learn the importance of using the buddy system and use it when you take a short penny hike.

▶ **Be Prepared**

Make a kaper chart and use it during your next meeting or outdoor activity.

▶ **Campfires**

Learn the basics of fire building by making an edible campfire. Discuss tinder, kindling and fuel sizes. <https://scoutingweb.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/PDF/Edible%20Fire%20Snack%20Activity.pdf>

▶ **Cooking Outdoors**

Plan a nutritious but simple lunch to take on an outing (no-cook, unrefrigerated)

▶ **First Aid & Safety**

Discuss basic first aid for cuts, scrapes, insect bites and put together your own pocket first aid kit.

▶ **Knife Safety**

Learn how to properly use and pass a straight knife, either plastic or a butter knife.  
Use a knife to cut up soft fruit for a snack at your next meeting. <https://vimeo.com/36998822>

▶ **Knots**

Learn to tie an overhand knot and a bow. Use this skill in a craft project.  
<https://www.animatedknots.com/> OR <https://www.animatedknots.com/scouting-knots#ScrollPoint>

▶ **Minimal Impact**

Learn about the first two Leave No Trace Seven Principles, <https://lnt.org/> Watch Grace, GSSA's own Gold Award Girl Scout, explain: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD\\_QVaPZw&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD_QVaPZw&t=1s)

▶ **Navigation**

Draw a map of your outdoor yard or park; learn to recognize north, south, east and west.

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Level 2: Pink Star (Brownies and up)**

**Remember: Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual is your primary resource.**

### ▶ **G.S. Traditions**

Leave a place better than when you found it; help clean up an outdoor area near your meeting site. Learn and practice an outdoor flag ceremony. See Outdoor Essentials Resources Manual.

### ▶ **Be Prepared**

Learn how to dress-for-the-weather by layering.

Learn what to pack in your backpack for a simple overnight; make sure you can carry it.

### ▶ **Campfires**

Learn basic fire safety – water bucket nearby for burns, secure loose clothing and long hair, limit who and how many at the fire ring, never use hand-sanitizers near open flames, etc.

Learn basic fire building – how to select and prepare a proper campfire site, tools needed, how to extinguish a fire by stirring and sprinkling, never flood the fire ring, etc.

### ▶ **Cooking Outdoors**

Learn 3-bucket dishwashing method -soap, rinse, sanitize.

Plan and help prepare a simple one-pot meal.

Prepare a foil packet side dish. (garlic toast, baked apple or banana boat)

Discover the secrets to stick cooking by roasting over coals, not flames.

(honey-bear biscuits or s'mores)

### ▶ **First Aid & Safety**

Learn what to take with you on a hike or an outing; is every item needed for every hike?

Learn the purpose for every item in your troop's emergency first aid kit.

Learn 101 Uses for a Bandana.

### ▶ **Knife Safety**

Make a paper pocketknife and learn all of the key points of knife safety like, sitting down, the circle of safety, opening, closing and passing a knife, cutting away from yourself, etc.

Use a knife to shave wax for fire kisses to start your troop campfire. (Soap-carving is also fun.)

(See Outdoor Essentials Resources companion document.)

## Level 2 continued

### ▶ Knots

Learn to tie the two knots so well that you can do it with your eyes closed or behind your back.

Square knot – Use it to show you can tie a bedroll or sleeping bag.

Fisherman’s knot – Use it to make an adjustable friendship bracelet.

<https://www.animatedknots.com/> OR <https://www.animatedknots.com/scouting-knots#ScrollPoint>

### ▶ Minimal Impact

Learn the next two Leave No Trace Seven Principles: <https://lnt.org/> OR

[http://www.people.vcu.edu/~albest/Training/LNT\\_Quick.pdf](http://www.people.vcu.edu/~albest/Training/LNT_Quick.pdf) See it taught here by our own GSSA

Gold Award Girl Scout: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD\\_QVaPZw&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD_QVaPZw&t=1s)

### ▶ Navigation

Learn what to do if you get lost; how could a whistle help you? Learn some trail signs to leave a message for other hikers. (See Outdoor Essentials Resources companion document.)

**Level 2 - Pink Star** may be awarded to Brownies and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels.

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Level 3: Purple Star (Juniors and up)

**Remember: Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual is your primary resource.**

### ▶ G.S. Traditions

Using the GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoints, each team, patrol or buddy group chooses a Checkpoint for an outdoor activity and learns all about the safety guidelines.

Share that information with the rest of your troop in an entertaining way.

### ▶ Be Prepared

Learn how to properly select a tent site and pitch a tent.

Pay attention to what's above, below, nearby, how to use a ground tarp, what not to allow in or near a tent, why tents should be thoroughly swept clean and dried before storing, etc.

### ▶ Campfires

Learn how to build several types of fire lays that are good for cooking, for ceremonies, for windy or wet weather conditions, etc.

Do you know the secret to building fires that don't smoke, throw sparks, smother out or flame up too high? Do you know that Girl Scouts are never allowed to use liquid starter fluids?

Learn about how to use a charcoal chimney to start charcoal.

### ▶ Cooking Outdoors

Learn to store food properly to prevent spoilage, cross-contamination, and protect it from animals.

Learn to set up, light, use and store a propane camp stove.

Plan, shop for and prepare part of a meal using a propane camp stove.

### ▶ First Aid & Safety

Run simulations to practice basic rescue skills:

splint an injured arm or leg, practice the two-person carry, use a rescue knot to help pull someone from a ravine, care for blisters, splinters, rashes and dehydration.

### ▶ Knife Safety

Review knife safety & learn why a sharp knife is safer than a dull knife.

Learn about knife sharpening and maintenance (washing, oiling)

Set up a designated whittling and cutting area where you can use pocketknives, bow saws, hatchets.

## Level 3 continued

### ▶ Knots

Learn to tie a bowline and learn why it is the best “rescue knot.”

Can you tie a bowline one-handed?

Learn to tie a taut-line and a clove hitch and when you would use them.

Learn to lash a tripod for a handwashing station - especially useful near your food prep area.

<https://www.animatedknots.com/> OR <https://www.animatedknots.com/scouting-knots#ScrollPoint>

### ▶ Minimal Impact

Learn to ID animal tracks, calls, and signs for at least four wild animals in your area.

Learn the final three Leave No Trace Seven Principals:

<https://lnt.org/> OR [http://www.people.vcu.edu/~albest/Training/LNT\\_Quick.pdf](http://www.people.vcu.edu/~albest/Training/LNT_Quick.pdf)

See our own GSSA Gold Award Girl Scout demonstrate and explain:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD\\_QVaPZw&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD_QVaPZw&t=1s)

### ▶ Navigation

Learn to use a compass to navigate a simple course during the day.

Take a 5-senses hike at night.

**Level 3 - Purple Star** may be awarded to Juniors and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels.

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_



## Level 4: Red Star (Cadettes and up)

**Remember: Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual is your primary resource.**

### ▶ G.S. Traditions

Plan and participate in a Scout's Own Ceremony and build a ceremonial teepee or log-cabin fire to make it more inspirational.

### ▶ Be Prepared

Learn various methods to create an overnight camping shelter out of a plastic tarp.

Learn how and where to store your food to keep it from wild animals.

### ▶ Campfires

*Fire-starters* - Learn to make ahead and use two new types of fire-starters that don't involve wax. (petroleum jelly on cotton balls, char cloth, potato chips)

*Fire-lighters* - Learn to use two new ways to light fires without using matches or liquid fuels. (battery & steel wool, magnesium lighter, solar w/ magnifying glass or mirror, torch striker)

### ▶ Cooking Outdoors

Plan and prepare part of a meal using a box, reflector or solar oven.

### ▶ First Aid & Safety

Learn how to render first aid for hyperthermia, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, hypothermia, fainting, seizures, snake and spider bites.

### ▶ Knife Safety

Learn to safely use a bow-saw to cut up deadfall branches for fire wood.

Rope-off an area where pocketknives, saws & hatchets can be used safely.

### ▶ Knots

Create a display of at least six knots you can tie so well that you can tie them without looking.

Explain the use for each knot.

Learn to do square lashing and make a rack for hanging up your wet swimsuit and towel.

<https://www.animatedknots.com/> OR <https://www.animatedknots.com/scouting-knots#ScrollPoint>

## Level 4 continued

### ▶ Minimal Impact

Use a tarp to create your own shelter and sleep in it overnight. (tarp, hammock, etc.)

Teach a younger group of girls the hand-signs to remember the Leave No Trace Seven Principles demonstrated here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD\\_QVaPZw&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1pD_QVaPZw&t=1s)

### ▶ Navigation

Learn how to use the sun's shadow during the day and the stars at night to determine directions. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYnaqan8CMM>

**Level 4 - Red Star** may be awarded to Cadettes and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels.

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Level 5: Orange Star (Seniors and up)

**Remember: Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual is your primary resource.**

### ▶ G.S. Traditions

Participate in teaching an outdoor skill to younger girls.

### ▶ Be Prepared

Learn how to find water in the wilderness and how to purify it for drinking.

Learn how to dig a cat hole and how far away it should be from campsites or water.

### ▶ Campfires

Try your hand at one of these:

making char-cloth, creating a spark with flint & steel, creating smoke with a bow & drill.

### ▶ Cooking Outdoors

Try a new utensil-less cooking method you've never used before.

Examples: ground meat baked in a hollowed onion or potato, kabobs, bacon & eggs in a bag, egg in a cup, egg on a stick, hot rock cooking, etc.

### ▶ First Aid & Safety

Become certified in first aid/cpr **OR** research and learn basic wilderness first aid skills.

### ▶ Knife Safety

Learn to safely use a hatchet or an axe to chop or split firewood. Rope off an area where pocketknives, saw, hatchets or axes may be used safely away from others.

### ▶ Knots

Use lashing skills to build a camp table or chair.

<https://www.animatedknots.com/> OR <https://www.animatedknots.com/scouting-knots#ScrollPoint>

### ▶ Minimal Impact

Learn how to avoid getting too close to wild animals in your area, without disturbing the habitat. Learn how to react if you find yourself too close to a wild animal or other wildlife.

### ▶ Navigation

Find out how flora can help you identify which way is north.

Try your hand at an orienteering course.

**Level 5 - Orange Star** may be awarded to Seniors and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels.

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Level 6: Gold Star (Ambassadors and up)

**Remember: Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual is your primary resource.**

### ▶ G.S. Traditions

Complete the GSSA Camping Pre-course online.

### ▶ Be Prepared

Plan an overnight using only as many supplies as can fit in a shoebox. Consider using some items for multiple purposes - poncho for a shelter, shoestrings for tie-down cords.

### ▶ Campfires

Learn how to build a trench fire. Dispose of the ashes appropriately.

### ▶ Cooking Outdoors

Make dehydrated food and mixes that would be useful to take on a backpacking trip. Identify a half-dozen edible plants that are native to your area and go find some.

### ▶ First Aid & Safety

Practice making a stretcher from everyday objects like walking sticks, bamboo or branches, clothing, sleeping bags, blankets or tarps. Try using it to drag or carry someone 50 yds.

Create an emergency action plan for a camping trip. Include supplies needed, training required, a communication plan and an evacuation plan.

### ▶ Knife Safety

Whittle something creative, using your knife safety skills and your imagination.

### ▶ Knots

Help younger girls learn a knot to use in a craft project. (survival bracelets)

<https://www.animatedknots.com/> OR <https://www.animatedknots.com/scouting-knots#ScrollPoint>

### ▶ Minimal Impact

Participate in an area clean-up event (camp, park, waterfront, etc.)

### ▶ Navigation

Practice reading a topographical map.

Make a compass using a leaf, a needle, a pocketknife and a bowl or puddle of water.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaop9Iatak8>

**Level 6 - Gold Star** may be awarded to Ambassadors and up who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels.

**Date Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Level 7: White Star (Adults)

1. Complete the online GSSA Camping Pre-Course.
2. Use the Outdoor Essentials Resource Manual Trainer's Notes as your guide.
3. Send video/photo evidence of your ability to teach/demonstrate these five skills:

### ▶ Be Prepared

Tent Pitching - Demonstrate teaching tent-pitching basics as outlined in the Trainer's notes.

### ▶ Campfires

Fire-Building – Demonstrate teaching fire-building basics as outlined in the Trainer's notes.

*Discuss ways to ignite a fire and several fire-starters that keep a fire going.*

### ▶ Cooking Outdoors

Demonstrate teaching the 3-bucket dishwashing method as outlined in the Trainer's notes.

### ▶ Knife Safety

Demonstrate teaching knife safety as outlined in the Trainer's notes.

*Be sure to designate an area where campers can safely sit/kneel and use pocketknives, saws, and hatchets.*

### ▶ Knots

Demonstrate that you can teach someone how to tie these knots:

Square knot, Clove Hitch, Fisherman's knot, Bowline, Taut-Line and Tripod Lashing.

<https://www.animatedknots.com/> OR <https://www.animatedknots.com/scouting-knots#ScrollPoint>

**Completing these requirements will satisfy requirements to be Troop Camping Certified.**

**Level 7 - White Star** may be awarded to adults who have mastered skills from this level and all previous levels.

Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

GSSA Staff Member