



girl scouts
of kentuckiana

Overnight Travel Guide

Fall 2016

**Girl Scouting builds girls of courage,
confidence, and character, who make the
world a better place.**

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Type of Trip	Grade Level	Example	Forms Required	Council Approval Required
Day or overnight trip to GSK properties.	All Grade levels	A day visit to a GSK Camp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the process for campsite reservation Notify Service Unit Manager 	Site Confirmation is approval
Day or overnight event hosted by the council, a Service Unit, a local troop, or other GSK volunteers.	All Grade levels	Festival of the Arts, or a weekend camporee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the event registration process required by the event organizers. Notify Service Unit Manager 	No
Meeting Time Trips (near your meeting place)	All Grade levels	Walk to a park near your meeting place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify Service Unit Manager 	No
Day trips (local or regional ¹)	All Grade levels	Touring a local fire station or visiting Holiday World.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify Service Unit Manager If you don't have a SUM notify your Volunteer Specialist 	No
Overnight trips are 1-2 nights in length (regional or local)	All Grade levels	An overnight trip to another city or a weekend camping trip to a state park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify Service Unit Manager Intent to Travel Application submitted at least 4 weeks in advance 	Yes
Extended Overnights are 3 nights in length or longer (regional or local)	GS Juniors and older	An overnight trip to Indianapolis, Nashville, or Saint Louis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify Service Unit Manager Intent to Travel Application Application for Optional Insurance Submit both forms at least 4 weeks in advance 	Yes
National Trips often last a week or longer	GS Cadettes and older	Troop trip to Savannah, Chicago, or Washington, DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify Service Unit Manager Intent to Travel Application Application for Optional Insurance Submit both forms at least 4 weeks in advance 	Yes
International Trips often last a week or longer	GS Seniors and Ambassadors	Trip to Canada or Mexico; visits to the WAGGGS World Centers; trips where a passcard/passport is required; and Cruises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify Service Unit Manager Intent to Travel Application Application for Optional Insurance Submit both forms at least 3 months 	Yes

¹ Day trips over 150 miles or 2 hours (one way) from your home city or town are **strongly discouraged**.

- Anytime you meet outside of your normal meeting time and location you must notify your Service Unit Manager.
- If you don't have a SUM notify your Volunteer Services Specialist.

² Allow 5 business days for background checks to be processed.

Trip Planning Checklist

- Girls brainstorm ideas for things they would like to do.
- Discuss activity/travel opportunities and research ideas.
- Girls vote or use troop government to choose a destination.
- Girls consider cost and money-earning potential and develop an activity/trip budget.
- Plan and participate in troop money-earning activities, if needed.
- Adults read applicable sections of *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. (These can be found on the GSK website under Resources.)
- Secure enough approved volunteer drivers and chaperones to appropriately supervise the trip. All drivers participating in troop trips must complete a background screening form². All chaperones accompanying an overnight must complete a background screening form.
- If council permission is needed, submit the Intent to Travel Application at least 4 weeks prior to departure. Email the completed form to training@gskentuckiana.org; or send to your local PLC.
- Purchase Optional Insurance, at least 4 weeks prior to Regional or National Trips.
 - Option Insurance is **required** for Extended Overnights (3 nights or more), and International Trips (must be purchased 3 months in advance of departure).
- Once council approval is obtained, finalize booking the activity/trip.
- Collect signed Parent/Guardian Permission Slips, bring these and the girls' Health Histories with you on the trip.
- Have FUN on your trip!
- As a troop, evaluate the experience
 - What did you enjoy?
 - What would you change?
 - What did you learn?

Traveling as Girl Scouts

What is a Girl Scout Trip?

A Girl Scout trip is not only an opportunity for girls to have fun and experience adventures, but is also a way of enriching the **Girl Scout Leadership Experience**. Taking trips is one of the many ways troops can **Discover**, **Connect** and **Take Action**. A Girl Scout trip should stimulate good activities or be the final step of some activity the girls are already involved in. All of the troop's energy should not be put into just going on the actual trip. It is important that the troop trip planning and implementation incorporates the three program processes: **girl-led**, **corporate learning** and **learning by doing**.

Every trip should have an immediate purpose. For the young or inexperienced troop, the purpose might be as simple as riding on a train. An experienced troop might want to take part in a troop exchange, test camping skills in a different environment or visit a historic place.

A Girl Scout trip is not something planned for girls by grownups. The girls themselves do the planning with the guidance of adults. In this way, taking a Girl Scout trip is also an important way for girls to learn. If the entire group cannot decide on or feel that they would enjoy the same goal, it is advisable for the group to go back to the drawing board and design a trip or project that would meet the needs of all the members.

When a troop's money is used to pay for any part of a trip, then that trip is a Girl Scout trip, and as such, all Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana policies and procedures must be followed.

Travel Progression Guide

In Girl Scouts, traveling is a progressive experience. The troop's experiences may begin with a visit to a local park, then progress to overnight camping, a visit to a city in another state, and ultimately a long excursion. Girl Scout Ambassadors may want to visit one of the four World Centers of Girl Scouting (India, Mexico, London, or Switzerland).

Learning how to plan a trip is also a progressive experience for a Girl Scout, one that starts at a point she is ready to handle. Both the distance and duration of the trip should be considered. Even older girls should start with simple trips if they don't have experience traveling. Once they understand the planning process, older girls can progress to longer trips more rapidly.

Travel Distances

Use these distance guidelines when considering travel destinations.

- **Local:** within 150 miles or up to a 2 hour drive (one way) from your home city or town.
- **Regional:** between 150 and 300 miles or up to a 4 hour drive (one way) from your home city or town. Regional day trips are strongly discouraged.
- **National:** over 300 miles from your home city or town
- **International:** Canada, Mexico, Europe, or cruises outside of the continental United States (including Caribbean and Alaskan cruises)

Travel Duration

Meeting Time Trips

These are trips to points of interest in the neighborhood, for example, a walk to a nearby garden, or a short ride by car or public transportation to a firehouse or courthouse. These types of activities are simple trips that start the progression.

Day Trips

These are daytime excursions away from the group meeting place and outside the regular meeting time. Girls might plan an all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest, bringing their own lunch, or they might go to a nearby city, scheduling time for a meal in a restaurant.

Simple Overnight Trips

Simple Overnights usually involve one or two nights away. The destination may be local or regional e.g.: a nearby state or national park, historic site, or city for sightseeing. The group may stay in a hostel, hotel, or motel, or they may camp at a Girl Scout campsite or nearby campgrounds.

Extended Overnight Trips

Extended Overnights range from three or more nights spent at camp to extensive regional or national travel within the continental United States. The group might use several accommodations and modes of transportation throughout the trip.

Travel Planning Guide

Girl-Led Trip Planning

Girls of all ages have ideas of places they want to go and, through the progression of experience and skills; they can research, plan, budget, earn money and put together an itinerary for the trip.

Start a discussion with girls using these questions:

- Where could we go?
- When?
- How will we get there?
- How much will it cost?
- How should we get ready?
- What will we do along the way?

The girls should plan the trip, not the adults. Even Girl Scout Daisies can brainstorm a list of ideas; Girl Scout Juniors can make phone calls to find out admission fees and hours of operation. Girl Scout Seniors can make airline reservations. Let the girls take on the leadership roles in planning and carrying out their trip.

Grade Level Trip Planning

Girl Scout Daisies

A walk to the nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to the firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies. Overnight trips may be appropriate if a family member is in attendance. In the Girl Scout Daisy circle, girls can help to choose the specific places they would like to go.

Before the trip the leader talks with the girls about what they will see and do on the trip, what they need to bring with them, and what is expected of them, particularly in regard to courtesy and safety.

Girl Scout Brownies

An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a day-long trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal), while never being too far from home is a good first trip for Brownies.

The girls may have the idea for taking a trip, or a leader or an older Girl Scout may stimulate the discussion. In the Girl Scout Brownie ring, the girls talk about what they would like to do; the leader helps them narrow their ideas to those that are within their abilities and budget. The girls can then vote on the trip they want to take and on alternative plans.

For travel of any distance, the leader finds out how long the trip will take, checks points of interest for Girl Scout Brownies, and makes arrangements for places to eat and for rest stops. She sets arrival and departure times, schedules tours, arranges transportation, and obtains the permission of parents or guardians. Group committee members or older Girl Scouts may help with these pre-trip plans.

Before the trip Girl Scout Brownies and their leader talk about what they will see and do on the trip, what they need to bring with them, how much the trip will cost and what is expected of them, particularly in regard to courtesy and safety.

After the trip, the girls discuss and reflect on their trip. Follow-up activities may include dramatizations, stories, or art activities, such as paintings of what impressed them. They should send thank-you notes to anyone who helped make the trip possible or memorable, and they may include a painting or a poem they have written. They make plans for future trips, basing these plans on what they have learned, enjoyed or need to practice.

Girl Scout Juniors

With adult help, girls decide where they want to go. Girls plan the trip in patrols or small groups, keeping the trip's purpose in mind and including budgeting, pre-trip skills and tips for personal conduct and safety. Leaders advise girls as needed and help them keep their ideas realistic and appropriate for their age.

Badge activities suggest trips to all kinds of places in the community, as well as hikes, walks and campouts. Girl Scout Juniors go on day trips in their own communities and to places of interest nearby. Eventually, their plans include longer trips, with stays in hotels or motels, as well as camps.

Girl Scout Cadettes and Girl Scout Seniors

Girl Scouts Cadettes and Girl Scout Seniors can go away for three days or longer if they have taken overnight trips previously. For example, they might go to a state capital or visit with groups in other parts of the country.

Girl Scout Cadettes and Girl Scout Seniors can combine camp living with exploration and travel, using a campsite as a base from which to take trips. Girls with specialized skills, such as horseback riding, biking, skiing, backpacking, or boating may plan trips around those interests. Girls may also use these skills and

interests to prepare for a national destination. Leaders/Advisors can encourage girls to enrich the experience of their trip by making exhibits, showing slides, and illustrating logbooks for their families, friends and for community groups.

After several trips, they can share their travel know-how with less experienced groups.

Girl Scout Ambassadors

Because Girl Scout Ambassadors usually have greater emotional, physical and mental maturity than younger girls, they can benefit from more extensive travel. In addition, mature girls experienced in travel or in planning, can work with less experienced girls or younger groups. They can help with the planning process, teach specific skills needed for a trip, or serve in a leadership role. They may also prepare themselves for a national or international opportunity.

Travel Safety

The most important factor in having a safe and successful outing is good planning. Let girls do as much of the planning as possible. When girls have been included in planning, they will take the responsibility for enforcing safety procedures. The leader needs to guide the group to ensure that the plans are appropriate to the girls' experience and skill level. Part of the planning process is to learn and practice the basic skills that girls will need to carry out the trip.

Before planning any activity or trip, a leader is responsible for reviewing the following resources:

- *Volunteer Essentials* – *Volunteer Essentials* is the Girl Scout's volunteer handbook. It includes basic policy and procedure information; health and safety guidelines; and information about Girl Scout basics, volunteer tips, Girl Scout activity resources and traditions; and ideas for ways to engage girls. The following chapters are especially important for troops planning an activity or trip.
 - *Volunteer Essentials: Chapter 4: Safety-Wise* is the key safety reference document, providing volunteers with basic program activity guidelines and assuring safe and quality experiences for girls.
 - *Volunteer Essentials: Appendix for Travel Volunteers* provides key information for troops planning overnight or trips.
- *Safety Activity Checkpoints* – These provide specific instructions for staying safe while participating in various activities. They are activity specific and should be reviewed before engaging in activities with girls.

Adult Chaperones

Troops must maintain proper adult/girl ratios during all Girl Scout activities. Use the Events, Travel and Camping ratios found in *Volunteer Essentials* when planning field trips, and overnight travel. Adults accompanying a group should be chosen for their patience, flexibility and good judgment.

They need to understand their responsibilities during the trip. Any adult participating in a field trip or overnight trip including drivers must be approved volunteers. This means that the following conditions are met:

- Be a registered member.
- Have an unexpired background check with GSK.
- Complete Shield the Vulnerable.

Emergency Contact Person

Designate an emergency contact person who will remain near home during the duration of the trip.

- Leave a list of names, phone numbers, emergency contacts and other vital information of all people going so that they can contact you or the girls' families in an emergency.
- Provide the contact person with a complete trip itinerary including contact numbers for hotels, campgrounds and attractions you plan to visit.
- Leave your route of travel with the contact person along with basic vehicle information.

Health History

Leaders should collect a complete, accurate, signed health history from each girl in the troop annually. A Health History Form is available on the council website. It is a fillable PDF and can be emailed to families at the beginning of the school year.

Overnight Safety

To ensure the safety of sleeping areas, use the following guidelines.

- Each participant has her own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed.
- Adults and girls never share a bed.
- It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, hotel room, or designated area) with the girls. However, if an adult female does share the sleeping area, there should always be two unrelated females present.
- If men or boys are participating, separate sleeping areas and restroom facilities must be provided for them.

Car Rental

Troops might need to rent vehicles to go on a trip. The rental agreement is a personal contract between the renter and the agency. Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana does not sign rental contracts for troops.

Remember: Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana adults and volunteers cannot rent or borrow 15-passenger vans for transportation.

Insurance

Girl Scout Activity Insurance

A portion of the individual annual Girl Scout membership dues pays for supplementary insurance for Girl Scout members only. This insurance provides up to a specified maximum for medical expenses incurred as a result of an accident while a member is participating in an approved, supervised Girl Scout activity lasting 1-2 nights, after the individual's primary insurance pays out. This is one reason that all adults and girls should be registered members. Non-member adults, tagalongs (brothers, sisters, or friends), and other persons are not covered by basic coverage.

Optional Insurance

Optional plans of activity insurance are required for Girl Scouts taking Extended Trips (3 nights or longer) and for non-members who participate in approved and supervised Girl Scout activities. These plans are secondary insurance that covers individuals while participating in any approved, supervised Girl Scout activity that involves non-Girl Scouts, lasts longer than 3 days and 2 nights or involves travel outside the United States.

To purchase additional insurance, submit the Application for Optional Insurance and remit payment at least 4 weeks prior to departure. Insurance for International Trips must be purchased at least 3 months in advance.

Every person in the group must be insured, and they must be insured for all the calendar dates over which the trip extends ("day" equals "date"), including the BEGINNING DATE (the day you're leaving) and the ENDING DATE (the day you're returning home).

For example: Troop 1234 is going to Chicago for a long weekend trip. They will be leaving Friday afternoon, and returning home on Monday afternoon. This trip takes place over three nights and four days (Fri, Sat, Sun, and Mon). So insurance must be purchased for four days.

There is one exception to the three night insurance requirement. Events or trips lasting three nights when **one of the nights** falls on a Federal Holiday are covered under the Basic Plan, and additional insurance is not needed (unless the group desires sickness coverage).

Using the above example if the trip departs on Friday 7/4/2014 (Independence Day) and returns on Monday 7/7/2014, the first night was a Federal Holiday. The troop would not be required to purchase insurance. Alternately if a trip departs on Friday 8/29/2014 returning home on Monday 9/1/2014 (Memorial Day) the trip lasts three nights and four days, and would require insurance to be purchased for four days. Even though one of the days was a Federal Holiday, none of the nights were.

Overnight Trip Approval

Council approval is required for the following trips within the stated timeline:

- Overnight stays – 1-2 nights (including camping on non-council sites) – submit forms at least 4 weeks prior to departure date.
- Extended Travel (3 or more nights) – submit forms at least 4 weeks prior to departure date. Optional Insurance must be purchased for trips lasting 3 nights or more.
- International Travel – submit forms at least 3 months prior to departure date.

To obtain council permission submit the Intent to Travel Application. You may submit the form to council either:

- via email to training@gsKentuckiana.org
- via post mail to your local Service Center
- in person at your local Service Center

When an application is submitted, the advisor or leader who submitted the form will receive notice within 10 business days giving one of three answers:

1. The trip is approved – no further steps are required
2. The trip is tentatively approval. Additional steps will be required.
3. The trip is not approved. An explanation for denial and changes that may be made to obtain approval (if applicable) will be given.

If plans change a new application must be submitted. If a trip is canceled, notify council via training@gsKentuckiana.org

Service Unit Trips

Service Units should follow the same travel guidelines as if a troop was planning the trip. The trip advisor will need to submit the Intent to Travel Application and include the names of all participants. Individual troops participating in a Service Unit trip do not need to submit a separate application.

Troop/Group Money-Earning

A troop or group may decide to conduct a money-earning activity to pay for a portion of, or the entire trip. All troops are encouraged to participate in the MagNut and Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program as a means of earning money. Any additional money-earning activities must adhere to Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana policies, be age and skill appropriate, properly supervised and decided upon with girl input and leadership. All money-earning activities must be approved prior to participation. Refer to the *Money-Earning Basics* section of the *Troop Finances* packet for details on conducting a money-earning project.

Family Trips

Most Girl Scout activities and trips are intended for the girls in the troop and their adult volunteers. In some cases it might be appropriate to host a family event or overnight. In order to qualify as a family event the following conditions must be followed:

- The event must be advertised as a family event and all families are invited.
- The activity must be age appropriate for all attending including tagalongs.
- For Girl Scouts who do not have family attending, there must be enough adult chaperones to fulfill ratios who are approved volunteers, and who are not responsible for any other children.
- Optional Insurance must be purchased to cover all non-members.