

## A GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL TROOP MEETING



Troop Meetings are the foundation of a Girl Scout Troop Experience. This guide will help you organize a fun and successful Troop Meeting!

### TROOP MEETING FREQUENCY

Discuss with your Girls how often you want to meet as a Troop, there are a few options to choose from. You can use these common meeting frequencies or pick your own style!

1. Biweekly Troop Meetings
2. 1 Troop Meeting a Month & 1 Troop Outing a Month
3. Monthly Troop Meetings
4. Weekly Troop Meetings

You'll also want to figure out which holidays the troop would like to observe and not meet on a great way to do this is incorporate the school calendar in to your planning and have the Girls and their families bring their personal calendars to your planning session!

Lastly does your troop want to take a winter or summer break? Troops can take a break over the summer, continue meeting, or change their meeting frequency during summer break!

## 6 ELEMENTS OF A GREAT TROOP MEETING

### START UP

Plan activities for girls as they arrive at the meeting so they have something to do until the meeting begins. It could be as simple as coloring pages, journaling or talking with each other. This could be something related to the meeting topic, something for fun, or a project that gets continued every meeting.

Total Time – 5 minutes

### OPENING

Each troop decides how to open their meeting – most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story, or other activity designed by the Girls. It's best to keep this the same for each meeting.

Total Time – 5-10 minutes

### BUSINESS

Collect dues and forms, make announcements, or discuss an upcoming event or trip. If your Girls are older, Junior and beyond, you can encourage them to take responsibility for handing in money or forms. To keep your families involved you can either have parents stay until the business portion is done or you can also move business to the end of the meeting.

Total Time – 5 minutes

### ACTIVITIES

This is the main part of your meeting! Troop Activities can be badges, journeys, service projects, or just something for fun! Use the meeting plans found in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK). Activities are already designed to fit easily into this part of your meeting.

Total Time – 30-45 minutes

### CLEAN UP

Girl Scouts should always leave a place cleaner than they found it! Utilize a Kaper Chart to make clean up an easy and regular part of your meetings. (check out our next page on how to make a Kaper Chart!)

Total Time – 5 minutes

### CLOSING

Just like the opening, each troop can decide how to close – with a song, a game, or a story. A great Girl Scout tradition to incorporate here is the Friendship Circle, all Girls and Leaders stand in a circle with their arms crossed (right over left) in front and hold hands of the Girl next to them.

Total Time – 5-10 minutes



## KAPER CHARTS FOR SUCCESS

A “kaper” is a job or chore that must be done. A “kaper chart” is a Girl Scout tradition of divvying up these troop responsibilities. The chart lists all the jobs that are available and who’s in charge of each one. Girls usually rotate jobs—this ensures that girls learn how to handle all sorts of different responsibilities and makes sure that the same girl isn’t saddled with the same duty for every meeting, event, or trip. You might have different Kaper Charts for meetings and trips.

### THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN MAKING YOUR KAPER CHART

1. **What are your Girls responsible for?** You can have Girls: take attendance, lead the Promise and Law, game/song leader, activity assistant, clean-up crew, and Friendship Circle captain.
2. **How many people do you need?** Some jobs may require 1 Girl while others can be a small group task.
3. **How do you want to rotate?** To make sure that everyone gets a chance at each Kaper figure out the rotation cycle that works best for you!
4. **Do you have regular tasks?** Some troops want the flexibility to change their tasks week to week while others keep consistent responsibilities.
5. **Pick your favorite style!** Once you’ve figured out how you’ll use the Kaper Chart, you and your Girls can decide what you want your chart to look like—a spinning wheel model, a chart with Girls’ names on clothespins, or a dry-erase board? Pinterest is a great place to search for ideas (they can range from [simple, just for camp](#), to [all-out unicorns](#)).

## REMINDERS FOR LEADERS

### It Doesn't Need to be Perfect

There are lots of resources with information and guidance to help you facilitate great troop meetings and experiences, but you are encouraged to be creative! If you forget a part of the troop meeting or the field trip doesn't go the way you planned or you run out of time – that's ok! The Girls aren't expecting perfection from you; your time, attention and guidance are the best part of your leadership. Remember you are a role model, they learn just as much from you watching how you handle an imperfect situation.

### Learn with Your Girls

As you use the Girl-Led process in the development of your troop's meetings and experiences, the girls will, at some point, want to earn a badge or complete a project in a subject unfamiliar to you. Be open with the girls when you don't know something but don't use that as a reason to keep them from exploring the topic or doing the project. Instead, become their partner in figuring out how to learn more. When they see you learning alongside them, their confidence in their current knowledge and skills as well as their ability to learn will rise. It will also help them to understand that learning is a lifelong process.

### Your Girls Don't Have to Walk Away with a Badge Each Meeting

Girl Scouts do love their badges, but don't stress about having a badge completed at each meeting. Some badges may take a few meetings to complete – or you may not work on a badge at all! As you use the Girl-Led process you may do fewer badges and more of something else like a service project. You can always try and find a fun patch to match your activities, but that isn't required. Sometimes the Girls need a break to just have fun – playing a game, doing a craft, or just talking with each other!

### Have Fun!

Most important – your meetings should be fun! Girls come to Girl Scouts to learn how to be leaders, make decisions, and have fun in the activities they choose.

