

## Multi-Level Troop Guide

A Multi-level Troop is a troop with a combination of Girl Scouts of different grade-levels. These multi-level troops form possibly because the troop leader has one daughter who is a Brownie and another that is a Daisy; or perhaps the community/school is so small that it will not support two troops. Some multi-level troops form because a troop has disbanded and another troop chooses to “adopt” the remaining girls.

### Benefits of a multi-level troop

- Younger girls look up to older girls, and bringing them together in a multi-level troop setting provides younger girls with role models of every age. Younger girls will see their older troop members doing things like earning Girl Scout Highest Awards, attending resident camp, leading younger girls in activities and want to follow their example. Multi-level troops naturally lead the progression of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.
- Older girls have the opportunity to put their leadership skills into action as they mentor younger girls. Many badge and Journey activities suggest that older girls (even Brownies) work with younger Girl Scouts to teach skills, play games, implement service projects, etc.
- A multi-level environment allows girls to interact and make friends with a more diverse group.

**Pro Tip:**  
Connect with your Service Unit to help find other multi-level troops in your area. They can provide additional tips and expertise for working with a multi-level troop.

### Multi-Level Troop Meeting Tips

- Determine which troop assistants are willing to become resident ‘experts’ in the materials for a particular grade level. When planning activities, bring the volunteers together so that they can discuss the similarities and differences.
  - There will be many times in which the girls should break off into Grade Level “groups” or “sessions” to focus on their Journey or Badge.
- Host troop meetings in a place that is large enough to break into groups without having to leave to another room. This will help ensure you stay within the specified adult-to-girl ratios.
- Keep a consistent meeting structure:
  - Incorporate time for all girls to be together, such as songs and games, snack time, open discussion about the topic being covered in the activities, opening and closing ceremonies, etc.
- Create a simple troop agreement to establish the rules and consequences the troop agrees to follow that complement the Girl Scout Promise & Law.
- Develop a mentorship or big sister/little sister system within the troop. This makes younger/ new girls feel welcomed, encourages older girls to model good behavior, and provides guidance for younger girls to follow the Girl Scout law and rules agreed upon in the troop agreement.



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## Program Processes with a Multi-Level Troop

- Girl-Led—let the girls decide!
  - The conversations with the entire troop can help guide the troop leader where to go next.
  - Share a variety of topics or activities and have the girls vote upon their preferences. Use the results to guide you in planning the troop meetings.
    - Example: “Would you like to do something outside, build something or play games?” The answer may lead you to choose between the “Naturalist” badges, “Think Like an Engineer” Journey or the “Creative Play” badges.
- Cooperative Learning—girls learn from and with one another
  - Try to vary the makeup of small groups, you can even mix Girl Scout levels. The girls will all bring a variety of skill sets and expertise to share with the group while also learning to work together.
- Learning By Doing—hands on experiences and evaluation to seek further understanding
  - Girls crave hands on experiences, but it is the questions and discussion during and after an activity that help further the learning and understanding of the topic but also informs the troop leader of what girls want to do next. This is a perfect way to bring the entire troop together at the end of a meeting and ties directly into the Girl-Led and Cooperative Learning processes as girls make decisions based on what they have learned from their experience as an individual and as a group.



## Girl Scout Programming for Multi-Level Troops

- The National Portfolio provides a variety of badges, Journeys and other earned recognition that follow a progression.
  - Choose the Multi-Level Year Plan options in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) for content tailored to multi-level troops (grades K-5 or 6-12).
  - Use the badge chart in the Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting to identify a particular topic or badge category. Tailor the troop activity or discussion to follow that badge category then break into groups by Girl Scout level to work on the badge for their age.
    - Example: The badge category “Citizen”
      - Daisy—Honest and Fair petal
      - Brownie—Celebrating Community
      - Junior—Inside Government
      - Cadette—Finding Common Ground
      - Senior—Behind the Ballot
      - Ambassador—Public Policy
  - Mentorship awards such as the Junior Aide, Cadette Leader-in-Action (LiA) and Cadette Program Aide (PA) require girls to work with younger girls in guiding them through a specific number of sessions in Journey or badge work. Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors take their leadership skills to the next level by leading younger girls in a troop experience for an extended period of time through their Volunteer-in-Training (VIT) or Girl Scout Service bar. All of these awards are perfect for the multi-level troop.
- Check the Adventure: Program Opportunities Guide for events open to all Girl Scout levels. Remember that the girls don’t have to go to all program events together, they can attend the ones they are most interested in or are appropriate for their level.



### Pro Tip:

**Use a spreadsheet or tracker to track the badges/journeys completed. This will help when creating the troop year plan in the future.**

## Find Additional Guidance

- Connect with your Service Unit to find other leaders with a multi-level troop for ideas and guidance.
- If you are on Facebook, be sure to join the GSWO Volunteer Support Page to connect with leaders and staff across the entire GSWO council.