

Girl Scout Gold Award

Guidelines for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors

Since 1916, Girl Scout’s highest award has stood for excellence and leadership for girls everywhere. Soon, you will be joining the ranks of generations of young women who have made a difference in their communities and beyond.

As a Girl Scout, you are part of the sisterhood of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, a global movement comprised of more than ten million girls worldwide who are using their talents to positively impact their communities. With your talent and passion, you, too, can make changes in your community that can reach people around the world.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest and most prestigious award that Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors can earn.

Fulfilling the requirements for the Girl Scout Gold Award starts with completing two Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador journeys or having earned the Silver Award and completing one Senior or Ambassador journey.

Each journey you complete gives you the skills you need to plan and implement your Take Action project.

After you have fulfilled the journey(s) requirement, 80 hours is the suggested minimum hours for the steps: identifying an issue, investigating it thoroughly, getting help and building a team, creating a plan, presenting your plan, gathering feedback, taking action, and educating and inspiring others. The suggested minimum hours are not a rule; they are a guide for you to plan your time in achieving your goal.

Standards of Excellence

When you decide to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, you are on your honor to uphold the Standards of Excellence. These standards set a high benchmark for everything you do and invite you to think deeply, explore opportunities, and challenge yourself. Following the Standards of Excellence challenges you to develop yourself as a leader, achieve the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes and make a mark on your community that creates a lasting impact on the lives of others.

Girl Scout Gold Award Steps and Standards of Excellence

Girl Scout Gold Award Steps	Standards of Excellence
1. Choose an issue: Use your values and skills to identify a community issue you care about.	§ Live the Girl Scout Promise and Law. § Demonstrate civic responsibility.
2. Investigate: Research everything you can about the issue.	§ Use a variety of sources: interview people, read books and articles, find professional organizations online. Remember to evaluate each source’s reliability and accuracy. § Demonstrate courage as you investigate your issue, knowing that what you learn may challenge your own and others’ beliefs. § Identify national and/or global links to your community

	issue.
3. Get help: Invite others to support and take action with you.	<p>§ Seek out and recognize the value of the skills and strengths of others.</p> <p>§ Respect different points of view and ways of working.</p> <p>§ Build a team and recruit a project advisor who will bring special skills to your Take Action project.</p>
4. Create a plan: Create a project plan that achieves sustainable and measurable impact.	<p>§ Lead the planning of your Take Action project.</p> <p>§ Work collaboratively to develop a plan for your project that creates lasting change.</p>
5. Present your plan and get feedback: Sum up your project plan for your Girl Scout council.	<p>§ Submit a Project Proposal to your council that is concise, comprehensive, and clear.</p> <p>§ Describe your plan including the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes you want to achieve and the impact you plan to make on yourself and the community.</p> <p>§ Articulate your issue clearly and explain why it matters to you.</p> <p>§ Accept constructive suggestions that will help refine your project.</p>
6. Take action: Take the lead to carry out your plan.	<p>§ Take action to address the root cause of an issue, so that your solution has measurable and sustainable impact.</p> <p>§ Actively seek partnerships to achieve greater community participation and impact for your Take Action project.</p> <p>§ Challenge yourself to try different ways to solve problems.</p> <p>§ Use resources wisely.</p> <p>§ Speak out and act on behalf of yourself and others.</p>
7. Educate and inspire: Share what you have experienced with others.	<p>§ Reflect on what you have learned when you present your Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report to your council.</p> <p>§ Summarize the effectiveness of your project and the impact it has had on you and your community.</p> <p>§ Share the project beyond your local community and inspire others to take action in their own communities.</p>

Girl Scout Gold Award Toolkit

Stay organized and keep track of your ideas, contact information, appointments, and plans with the Girl Scout Gold Award Toolkit. This toolkit includes a standards of excellence tracking sheet, tips, planning guides, and advice to help with each step of your Take Action project. Use these tools as you need them—and don't forget that your journey(s) include tools and ideas, too!

1. Choose an issue: Use your values and skills to choose a community issue that you care about. Check out the Decision-Making Tips in your toolkit. If you have more than one issue that you are passionate about, interview others to help you decide. Practice making your pitch and see how it feels. You can also make a 15-second video, write a bumper-sticker slogan, or come up with another fun way to sum up why this issue is important to you.

Tools:

- **Decision-Making Tips**
- **Interview Tips**
- **Making-Your-Pitch Tips**

2. Investigate: Use your sleuthing skills to learn everything you can about the issue you've identified. Zoom in on your issue to identify a specific aspect of it that you would like to address, because focused effort has more impact than a big idea that's scattered.

- **Log on:** Check news sites and the sites of organizations related to your issue. Explore how the media in other countries cover your issue. **Note:** Before doing your online research, take the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge at www.girlscouts.org/internet_safety_pledge.asp.
- **Go to the library:** Find books that offer in-depth analysis about your issue, read your local newspaper, and look for magazine articles that offer different perspectives on your issue.
- **Interview people:** Talk to your friends, neighbors, teachers, business owners, and others who can offer information or insights about the issue you've chosen.

Knowing the various causes of a problem enables you to figure out unique ways to solve it. Use the Mind-Mapping Tool in your toolkit to create a diagram that tracks a problem and its possible causes.

Tool:

- **Mind-Mapping Tool**

3. Get help: Invite other people to join your team to support your efforts and help you take action. Consider reaching out to classmates, teachers, friends, and experts from organizations and businesses. Networking with people can make you a more effective leader. Also, the more people you have behind you, the more likely you will positively influence your community. You are the leader of your team – plan your project, motivate your team, learn from others.

Choose a project advisor, a person with expertise in the topic of your Gold Award project. An advisor can help you identify resources, provide insights, solve problems, and provide additional background information on your chosen issue.

Tools:

- **Teaming Tips**
- **Project Advisor Tips**

4. Create a plan: Going for the Girl Scout Gold Award requires you to address the root cause of an issue and, thus, make a lasting impact in your community—take a look at the Sustainability Tips in your toolkit for ideas. Create a plan that outlines the best use of your time and talent, your resources, and your team's talents, making the most with what you have- that's your challenge!

Tools:

- **Project Planner**
- **Planning and Budgeting Tips**
- **Sustainability Tips**

5. Present your plan and get feedback: Fill out the Project Planning Checklist in your toolkit to organize your thoughts and make sure you have everything you need before you hand in your Project Proposal Form to your Girl Scout council for approval. Include what you've learned, why your project idea matters, with whom you're teaming, and your plan for making your project sustainable. Girl Scout Council approval is required before you can continue working on your project. Once your project is approved, take a look at your Project Planner from step 4. Do you have everything you need?

Tools:

- **Project Planning Checklist**
- **Project Proposal Form**

6. Take action: Lead your team, carry out your plan. Use the tools you have developed in the previous steps and remember to check your journey(s) for tips. If you hit a speed bump along the way, learn from it and find ways to adjust your plan.

7. Educate and inspire: Tell your story and share your results. You can inspire someone who has never before considered taking action to do something! Use the Reflection Tool in your toolkit to identify how this experience has affected you and how your views may have changed. Finally, complete your Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report, which is a comprehensive account of what you've done, with whom you've connected, the lasting impact you've made, and what this experience has meant to you.

Tools:

- **Sharing Tips**
- **Reflection Tool**
- **Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report**

Congratulations! Celebrate! Be sure to thank your project advisor, your team, and all the other people who helped you along the way.

July 2009