

CAMP Like a Girl Scout

WITHOUT LEAVING HOME!



Camping is one of the most treasured Girl Scout traditions. Is a great way to connect to nature and to develop skills, confidence, and competence in the outdoors. It is always a great time to practice outdoor skills—even at home! This packet is designed to help families bring the Girl Scout camping experience home. You'll find:

- How to Get Started
- 8 Steps to a Successful At-Home Campout
- Potential Schedule
- Sample Crafts, Activities, Songs, Recipes, and More!



When girls help set up camp, meals, and do hands-on activities, they will learn by doing and have lots of fun! We encourage you to share your at-home camp experience on social media by tagging GSEMA @GirlScoutsEMass. Whether you pitch a tent in the yard, craft s'mores in the microwave, construct a dreamy blanket fort, or sing a Girl Scout song, your at-home camping creations will inspire other girls across the world to try it out themselves!

To learn more about Girl Scouts, visit gsema.org.

HOW TO GET STARTED

INVOLVE YOUR GIRL SCOUT IN THE BACKYARD CAMPING PLANNING PROCESS.

Start with a family meeting: Share the idea of going on a backyard campout and get input from the rest of the family. Pick a day that works for everyone and talk about the different things you can do during your campout. Plan your meals, pick your activities, and discuss what each person needs to do to get ready for the campout.

Before the campout, decide on your ground rules.

For example:

- When you can go inside (to get food from the fridge, a jacket, something you forgot, etc.)? Or decide whether you want to pretend like you're on a traditional campout where you can't go back for anything you forgot!
- If electronics are allowed
- What activities only adults can do and what kids can do with adult supervision



Safety:

- Please review the Safety Activity Checkpoints for [Camping](#) and [Outdoor Cooking](#).
- Please ensure that you have a first aid kit readily available.
- Check with your local fire department and neighborhood regarding open fires.
- Never cook or have a fire inside of the tent.
- Have a significant water source for emergencies.

8 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL AT-HOME CAMPOUT

1 SELECT YOUR METHOD OF CAMPING

To start off your camping adventure, you first need to select how you will be camping. There are three options below that we recommend. Whatever you choose, you are sure to have a night of adventure and fun!

If you have a tent: create a space away from your house and set up your tent. Find a smooth, flat surface to set up camp for the night.

- Place a tarp on the ground and then set up your tent on top of it.
- Lay out your bedding using sleeping bags, blanket, air mattresses, yoga mats, etc.

If you don't have a tent: Make a shelter by tying rope or string around two trees and placing a tarp over the ropes to create a covering. You can tie the sides of the tarp down or weigh them down to give the tarp a tent shape. Make sure the tarp is secure, so it does not blow away

- Place a tarp under the shelter and set up camp.
- Lay out your bedding using sleeping bags, blanket, air mattresses, yoga mats, etc.

Indoor camping: Clear out a space in your living room or another open room in your house.

Build up your indoor camping space in any way you want—add blankets, pillows, couch cushions, use kitchen chairs and blankets to build a fort—the options are endless!

Spread your blankets and pillows out. Make it homey!



2 CREATE YOUR SUPPLY LIST

Sleeping basics:

- Tent
- Ground cover/tarp
- Sleeping bags (or sheets and blankets)
- Sleeping pads or air mattresses
- Pillows

Helpful Equipment:

- Beach blanket to sit on outside of tent
- Flashlights/headlamps (one per person)
- Outdoor fire pit
- Fire starting materials
- Matches or lighter
- Insect repellent (if needed)
- Sunscreen
- Hygiene essentials



Cooking Supplies:

- Backyard grill or camp stove and propane
- Plates, cups, and utensils
- Cooking utensils, pots, and pans
- Cooler with ice
- Food for dinner and breakfast
- S'mores supplies (including marshmallow sticks)
- Water and other drinks of choice
- Paper towels
- Trash bags

Clothing:

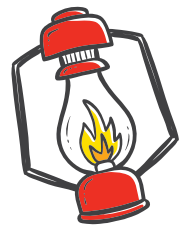
- Pajamas and a change of clothes
- Jackets and hats



3 SET UP THE ATMOSPHERE

Setting the scene will help make the campout feel special and different from other at-home activities. This will give your girl a sense of adventure and help her feel like she is camping in nature.

- Hang lights or lamps around your sleeping area or around trees nearby.
- Set up lawn chairs or patio chairs for everyone to sit around.
- If you can't have a real campfire, pull up some [campfire videos](#) on YouTube.



4 SELECT YOUR AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

When girls participate in outdoor activities, they benefit in multiple ways. Girls develop outdoor competence when they learn to engage safely and responsibly in a range of outdoor activities. Girls develop a love of nature and an interest in the natural world. Girls gain confidence in their ability to take on new challenges and learn from and succeed in them. Lastly, girls come to understand how their behaviors impact the environment and what they can do to protect the natural world.

Check out this list of fun outdoor activities!

- Earn a Girl Scout badge, check out [these programs](#) to see if you or your troop could earn any of these badges including some outdoor badges.
- Create a leaf rubbing.
- Observe and document nature in your own way. Draw what you see, take notes, take pictures. Find different types of trees, flowers, bugs, birds, insects, etc.
- Create a nature scavenger hunt or try out [this one](#).
- Create art using nature (leaves, rocks, sticks, etc.).
- Paint or draw your back yard.
- Create a yard map (see activity listed at end of this packet).
- Play Simon Says.



Other Resources: [GSUSA knot tying videos](#), [Outdoor Activities](#), [Online Leave No Trace course](#)

5 SELECT YOUR COOKING METHOD AND MEAL

This section has several different meals and cooking methods to make your night full of new experiences. Be sure to try a new recipe! Don't forget to try a Girl Scout tradition—if you wish to say grace before your meal, there are Girl Scout graces to sing at the bottom of this section.



Identify cooking and campfire options: Do you have a built-in firepit in your yard, a firepit table or another place where you could safely build a fire in your backyard? Do you have a barbecue grill or camp stove?

- [Girl Scouts Campfire Safety](#)
- [How to Build a Campfire](#)
- Cooking with a [solar oven](#)
- Can't build a campfire? Try making an [edible campfire](#).
- You can also cook traditional camp meals inside (like baking foil packs in the oven).

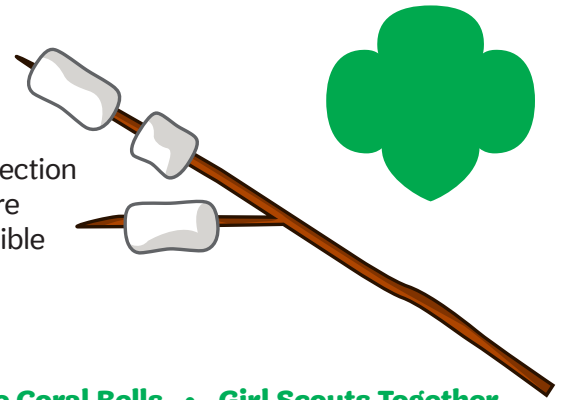
Plan your meals: If you have a firepit, grill, or camp stove, you can plan meals to cook outside. If you don't have a fire, plan meals that don't have to be cooked: sandwiches for dinner, a no-cook dessert and granola/cereal, or muffins/bagels for breakfast.

- [Classic Outdoor Cooking Recipes – Girl Scouts](#)
- [Easy Campfire Recipes](#)
- [Ideas for Meals](#)
- [Foil Packets](#)

Grace: To incorporate a Girl Scout tradition into mealtime, you might sing a [Girl Scout Grace](#) before your meal, such as [Johnny Appleseed!](#)

6 GIRL SCOUT TRADITIONS

Add a few Girl Scout traditions to your backyard adventure. This section has campfire songs and campfire traditions to make your campfire experience extra special! Whether you have a campfire, firepit, edible fire, or a fire made from art be sure to try one of the following!



Sing campfire songs:

- [Flicker](#)
- [On My Honor](#)
- [The Moose Song](#)
- [Green Trees](#)
- [Brownie Smile Song](#)
- [Make New Friends](#)
- [The Milk Song](#)
- [Black Socks](#)
- [Hermie the Worm](#)
- [Princess Pat](#)
- [Icky Sticky Bubble Gum](#)
- [White Coral Bells](#)
- [I love the Mountains](#)
- [Sing Your Way Home](#)
- [Girl Scouts Together](#)
- [Lollipop Song](#)
- [Donkeys are in Love with Carrots](#)

Wish Sticks

Each person brings a twig to the campfire. Holding it tightly in her hand, she makes a silent wish and adds her twig to the fire. Or, before the campfire, each girl finds a large stick. She must scrape off enough bark so that she can write a wish on it, using a magic marker. Or she can write the wish on a small piece of paper and tie it to the stick. The sticks are added to the fire during the evening. As the sticks burn, their wishes are going into the air and will come true.

A Girl Scout always leaves a place better than she found it!

Pack up all your supplies, put everything in its place, and do a trash sweep of your camping area to ensure no litter is left behind.



7 NIGHT ADVENTURES

Are you up for a nighttime adventure? Try out one of these activities to close out your night!

- Observe the night sky with [SkyView](#).
- Make shadow puppets.
- Read a book around the fire or lanterns.
- For the brave at heart, play spider eyes!

Have your girl hold a flashlight at their temple, right next to their eyes. Then have them direct the flashlight (and their eyes) at the ground, moving very slowly. Spider eyes look like shiny specks of glitter! You will see them in the grass, bushes and tree trunks. Girls might have to practice a bit with this one until they realize what they are looking for.

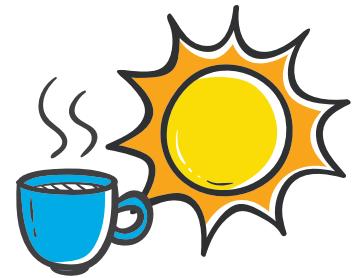
- Make one of these [campfire desserts](#), like [Campfire Cone S'mores!](#)



8 BREAKFAST IDEAS

Tame your appetite and give your body fuel for the day!

Try one of these [breakfast ideas](#) and [ideas for meals!](#)



POTENTIAL SCHEDULE

Afternoon	Choose some of the outdoor activities listed above
3-4 PM	Select your method of camping and set it up
4-4:30 PM	Establish safety rules and rules for camping
4:30-4:45 PM	Start off with the Girl Scout Promise and Law and prepare for your outdoor activities
4:45-5:45 PM	Outdoor activities
5:45-6:30 PM	Build fire (if applicable) and dinner time
6:30-6:45 PM	Clean up dinner
6:45 PM-Dark	Outdoor activities
Dark-Bedtime	Campfire, songs, dessert, and night adventures Get things ready for bed, make sure fire is out, food is safely put away, etc.
Wake-up	Breakfast outside Clean-up, break down camp



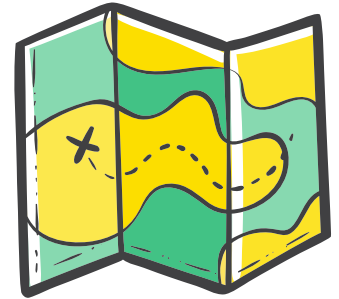
MORE ACTIVITIES

CREATE A YARD MAP

Perhaps you have always wanted your kids to grow a better understanding of the types of plants they see when out in the yard or on a hike but are not too confident in your own identification skills. Yard mapping STEM projects are a great way to use free plant identification apps to map out the species in your yard, local park, or other location. A great way to learn plant identification as a family!

You'll need the following materials to complete this project:

- Device to run the plant identification apps (i.e. smart phone or tablet)
- Plant identification app (try: GardenAnswers, IdentifyTree Lite, TreeBook, Leafsnap, Pl@ntNet, and Google Goggles)
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Notebook
- Tape
- Clipboard
- Colored pencils



Learning to use a plant field guide is an important, yet sometimes frustrating skill to learn. In this project, kids can use technology to get started and then double check their work using a traditional field guide.

1. Choose an outdoor area that you would like to map. Your yard, local park, or nature trail are excellent choices.
2. Use the apps for phones or tablets indicated in the supply list to help identify the species of plants in the area.
3. Double check your findings with a traditional plant field guide if you have one.
4. Make notebook entries about the plants you find. Kids might even want to carefully collect a leaf sample and tape it into their notebook.
5. Once you have identified several plant species, create a map that indicates where you found them.
6. Include a key to the map. Older children may even want to draw their map to scale!

MAKE A SIT-UPON

When camping you often sit on the ground. The ground can be wet and sometimes just too hard. This is why Girl Scouts make sit-upons. What is a sit-upon? It's like a cushion you make that is water-proof.

Directions:

- Take one plastic bag and stuff it with 15-20 other plastic bags. Try sitting on it. Need more stuffing? Add more bags.
- Once you have the thickness you prefer, tie your plastic bag in a knot and stuff it into your cloth bag.
- Leaving the handles out, it's time to start with the decorating! Cover the seams of the cloth bag with duct tape, folding the tape over the edges to help waterproof it. When taping the top of the bag, cut pieces of tape to fit around the bag's handles.
- Once the edges are sealed, use strips of duct tape to decorate the outside of your sit-upon.

Supplies Needed:

- A recyclable bag with handles
- Duct tape
- Plastic grocery bags (or you can use leaves)



You can use all one color, make a pattern, or get as creative as you wish. The handles make it easy to carry, giving you a clean, dry place to sit when you need a rest. The homemade sit-upon is also perfect for sitting around the campfire.