



For Leaders: Ideas for Planning a Great Girl Scout Year

1. Get your Troop Registered with Girl Scouts of Western Washington. You need to create an account. All girls need to be registered and any parents who will be assisting (\$25 per kid and \$25 per adult). Background checks will need to be done for leaders (another online program). Leaders also need to do some training (in person and online – easy).
2. Check with girls and parents to find out which meeting day and time is best and how often they'd like to meet. Put those dates on calendar first! Many groups like Sundays. Most groups meeting once a month, some more. Use a "Doodle" poll to find the best date that works for all. January and February are busy with cookie sales.
3. Ask troop parents to help – a co-op model, rather than a leader do everything model, is much more sustainable. The leader's job is to keep everyone on schedule and answer questions. Decide what the kids will call the leaders "Mrs. Smith or Jenny or Miss Jenny, etc."
4. Use Sign Up Genius to create a schedule so one or two troop parents can lead the "badge portion" or each meeting or bring a snack if your troop wants that. We always had a no siblings, no snack rule (it's only an hour meeting) and that was easiest for all.
5. Jobs for the Troop: Troop Leader (often two co-leaders), Treasurer and Cookie Manager.
6. Start a bank account with Key Bank – easy to do.
7. We had everyone get a Daisy book and uniform the first year, so they could follow along with the Petals and help to lead one. Expenses include: Girl Scout Registration (\$25), Daisy Starter Kit including uniform, patches, books and free bag is \$69.
8. Check the Mercer Island Service Unit calendar for events. Include important events like Fall Encampment, Skating Party, Gals & Pals, Songfest, Spring Encampment, etc.
9. Ask girls what they'd like to focus on for the year – Badges? Community Service? A Journey? Dedicate some meetings to those activities. For Daisies, easiest is to do the Petals and a few community events and maybe a day trip for either the Fall or Spring Encampment. Maybe do one or two site sale booths at QFC for cookies and have them sell to their neighbors.
10. When the girls get older, volunteer your troop to lead a Mercer Island Girl Scout event like Songfest, the Skating Party, the Parade, a program at Encampment, or make up your own. This is a great way for girls to learn leadership in a safe environment.
11. Look in the GSWW Calendar online for some fun field trips girls would like to do – archery, canoeing, horseback riding, robotics, going to plays, art, etc. Add those in.
12. Plan a meeting or two for Encampment preparation if you're going.
13. Plan events with other leaders and with your "buddy troop."
14. Be flexible and change your plan if you need to. Communicate often with your troop.

Typical Girl Scout Meeting

A typical meeting for younger troops is 1 hour. Here's an agenda:

1. 5 min. Let them get the wiggles out for a few minutes. Girls will be excited to see each other outside of school. Do a welcome dance or play outside or a yoga stretch or something.
2. 5 min. Always start by reciting the Girl Scout Law & Promise. At first, do "repeat after me" style until they can read. Leaders can lead this portion. If you do this every meeting, they will begin to get it and see the connection to all Girl Scout Activities.
3. 10 min. For the first few meetings, do an ice breaker so the girls can get to know each other. Lots of ideas online. Again, led by leaders.
4. 30 min. Get right into it and do a Daisy Petal or badge. While the other parents are leading the petal or badge, the leaders can both bring an iron and iron on the petals or badges to the uniforms. Leaders can help with badges when necessary.
5. 10 min. Closing ceremony. Leaders to lead this portion as well. Do a closing song (learn a new song every meeting), sing Make New Friends every time and then do the Girl Scout Circle Squeeze.

Total: 60 min. and you are done! Some other ideas for the first few years are to visit the local Fire or Police Station. You can have speakers come in – older Girl Scouts can teach basic knot skills or camping skills, local women business owners, etc. KidsQuest and the Pacific Science Center and other places have badge events all ready to go. Outdoor walks or field trips are also great.