



girl scouts   
of central illinois

## New Troop Leader's

# Guide to Cookies!



*Everything a new leader needs to know to get  
started at Girl Scout Cookie Season!*

Brownie Edition

# Contact for Cookies

There is a reason the Girl Scout Cookie Program is a celebrated tradition. It's an incredible opportunity for girls to expand their entrepreneurial knowledge and build lifelong skills!

The largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world also offers an amazing opportunity for you as a volunteer. You get to see firsthand how Girl Scouts grow, learn, and come into their own.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is a great responsibility – it could not happen without you. We are confident you will find the experience both enjoyable and rewarding. Thank you for your support and dedication to the success of the program.

If you have questions, we are here to help! Below is a list of contacts that will be available to answer your questions throughout the program. Have a safe and fun Girl Scout Cookie Season!

**Meg Anderson**

*Bloomington/Peru regions*

217-494-0875

[mkanderson@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:mkanderson@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**Nichelle King**

*Decatur region*

217-241-3747

[nking@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:nking@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**Petrea Muroya**

*Quincy region*

217-725-8703

[pmuroya@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:pmuroya@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**Kelsey Parker**

*Champaign region*

217-273-4287

[kparker@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:kparker@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**Tiffany Kaufmann**

*Peoria region*

309-369-3551

[tkaufmann@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:tkaufmann@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**Abigail Smith**

*Springfield region*

217-953-0300

[asmith@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:asmith@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**GSCI Customer Care**

888-623-1237

[customercare@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:customercare@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**Emma Miller**

Director of Product Sales

309-846-5923

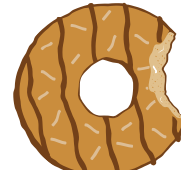
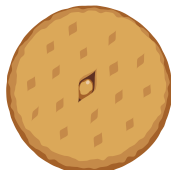
[emiller@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:emiller@girlscouts-gsci.org)

**Kelly Day**

President

217-233-0472

[kday@girlscouts-gsci.org](mailto:kday@girlscouts-gsci.org)





# Welcome!

We're so excited for you to join the Girl Scout Movement!

Your talents and experience have the power to change lives. As a Girl Scout volunteer, you'll help craft your Girl Scouts' experiences—from the way they run their cookie businesses to the way they speak up in meetings. You'll also teach them the skills and give them the confidence they need to bring their unique ideas to life. As Girl Scouts learn, grow, and lead, you're there through it all—shaping the future right along with us. And while you teach them important life lessons and set them up for happy, successful lives, you'll grow too—honing your own leadership and organizational skills. It's a win-win!

## Here are a few things to think about as you get started:

- This guide will break down the badges your troop can earn during Girl Scout Cookie Season to make it an easier experience for you!
- Becoming an awesome troop takes time, and we don't expect you to do it alone! You and your co-leader will build a team of parents, caregivers, and other supportive adults to make your Girl Scout troop the best it can be.
- Most troop leaders tell us they spend an average of 4-6 hours each month on planning, leading meetings, and doing Girl Scout activities throughout the year.
- Managing the cookie program can increase your time commitment. This guide will help you balance the fun and business of cookies.



# Benefits of the Girl Scout Cookie Program

Everything Girl Scouts do is designed to help them grow into leaders of courage, confidence, and character. The five skills learned through the Girl Scout Cookie Program are an important ingredient in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and teaches Girl Scouts skills that will help them grow into leaders in their own lives, leaders in business, and leaders in the world.



## Goal Setting

Girl Scouts set cookie goals individually and, with a team, create a plan to reach them. They develop cooperation and team building skills along the way.

*I know I can do it!*



## Decision Making

Girl Scouts help decide how the team will spend their cookie money, furthering critical thinking and problem solving skills that will help in many aspects of life.

*I make smarter decisions.*



## Money Management

Girls Scouts take cookie orders, handle money, and gain valuable and practical life skills around financial literacy.

*I make change happen!*



## People Skills

Girl Scouts learn how to talk to, listen to, and work with all kinds of people while selling cookies. These experiences help them to develop healthy relationships and conflict resolution skills they can use throughout their lives.

*I get a lifetime supply of confidence in every box.*



## Business Ethics

Girl Scouts are honest and responsible at every step of the cookie sale. Their business ethics reinforce the positive values they are developing within Girl Scouts.

*Selling cookies is more than just business.*

It's not just selling Girl Scout Cookies. It's a financial literacy and lifelong skill-building program!

## Serious Fun = Serious Skills

For more than 100 years, the Girl Scout Cookie Program has allowed Girl Scouts to fund their own activities. That purpose is no different today. As the largest girl-led business in the world, the Girl Scout Cookie Program is a unique opportunity for girls to lead the change in their own lives and the wider world.

Girls set their cookie program goals and work as a team to decide how troop proceeds will be used. What will your troop decide to do?

- Fund a Take Action project
- Travel to destinations near and far
- Assist others in the community
- Explore the great outdoors through a camp experience
- Attend awesome Girl Scout programs



# Cookie Season Checklist

We created this handy checklist for you to track your progress and keep you moving through your first year. If you get stuck, that's ok! You have a whole network of local volunteers (called a service unit) and a team of staff ready to help or answer questions when you need them. Don't be afraid to reach out! You even have a Girl Scout staff member (Program Specialist or Membership Engagement Coordinator) who will help with your training and check-in to make sure you are on track.

**Kick off the Girl Scout Cookie Season right! Use this checklist to stay on the right path and keep all your ducks in a row!**

- ☐ Find the online trainings on your MyGS account and complete them prior to the start of cookie season.
- ☐ Start your troop's bank account to hold all of your cookie profit.
- ☐ Check out all of the cookie resources on our council website.
- ☐ Discover and decide what cookie related badges your troop will be trying to earn during cookie season.
- ☐ Sign the Cookie Coordinator Agreement. Find the agreements and other important cookie documents under the cookie section on the council website.
- ☐ Have all troop member parents and guardians read through and sign the Parent Agreement.





# How the Cookie Crumbles

## 59% - Girl and Volunteer Services

\$3.54 of each box stays within Girl Scouts of Central Illinois to fund various services provided to girls and leaders such as council-sponsored programs and events, summer camps, shops, council service centers, financial assistance, outreach to girls in underserved areas and volunteer training and support services.

## 18% - Girl and Troop Rewards

\$1.08 of each box stays at the girl level to fund their Girl Scout Leadership

Experience - they choose how to spend it! It includes girl recognitions, Cookie Dough/Travel and troop profit.

## 23% - Cost of Sale

\$1.38 of each box pays the baker for the cookies, as well as delivery fees, cookie program materials, forms and printed resources.

100% of cookie proceeds stay in central Illinois!





# Quick Tips

## Standardized Pricing

All cookies will be \$6 per box. All varieties will be available to "trade out" at your local Service Center.

## Digital Cookie

Girls Scouts and troops learn more, earn more and have lots more fun. It takes learning Goal Setting, Decision Making, Money Management, People Skills and Business Ethics to the next level. Digital Cookie is a great opportunity to learn and participate in e-commerce. To take full advantage of Digital Cookie opportunities Girl Scouts may begin the Digital Cookie program on Monday, December 15. On that day, girls will receive a Digital Cookie registration email and may begin to email customers to have cookies shipped to their door or for in-person delivery.

## Exploremores® Cookie

The 2026 cookie season will be the first season for the brand new Exploremore® Girl Scout Cookie. Encourage customers to stock up and try this new rocky road flavored cookie.

## ACH Payments

To better serve the financial needs of troops and our council, we will have **THREE ACH PAYMENTS**. The first ACH payment is for one third of the initial order (minus troop profit), the second ACH payment is for one third of the beginning of March's total amount owed to council and the last ACH payment will cover all remaining balance owed to council. Please review the Cookie Calendar for ACH dates.

## What is a Direct Sale?

Girl Scouts of Central Illinois uses a direct-sale format to sell cookies for the cookie program. Girls will have boxes IN HAND to sell door-to-door to family, friends, and neighbors. Girl Scouts exchange cookies and payment in one easy step! No more taking orders, waiting weeks, and then returning for the delivery and money collection. A direct sale program condenses all that work into one simple step.

**Girl Scouts/Troops should not make any cookie deliveries until February 13.**

## How Do I Order Cookies?

Your first cookie order is called the Initial Order. For you to have cookies in hand by February 13, 2026 you must place an Initial order through the Smart Cookies ordering system. The easy step by step instructions are found on page 37 and advice on how much and which varieties to order are found on page 22.

## No Return Policy

ABC Bakers does not allow GSCI to return unsold cookies. GSCI does not allow Girl Scout troops to return unsold cookies, and troop leaders should not allow parents/guardians to return unsold cookies. The orders your troop places should be based on the demand of your Girl Scouts (with parent/guardian consent). If you accept return cookies from your parents, you are personally accepting responsibility for the cost of the cookies that are being returned. GSCI does not encourage troop leaders/cookie coordinators to accept return cookies from parents.

# Booth Sales

Booth sales are a way for girls to bring their sales to the people! Customers love to purchase Girl Scout Cookies and often they don't have a Girl Scout come to their door. Troop goals are more likely to be reached when booth sales are set up in front of grocery stores, sporting events or other high traffic areas. Plus, girls will have fun setting up their store front and talking to customers.

Customers can pay with cash, check (made payable to Girl Scouts of Central Illinois or GSCI) or credit using the Digital Cookie App or Square, etc. The Digital Cookie Credit Card processing option will allow girls to differentiate between a personal sale and a booth sale when entering the payment. Both Girl and Troop Booth payments will automatically be credited in Digital Cookie. Adult chaperones should collect all money and deposit into the troop bank account.

Using the Smart Booth Divider, Smart Cookies will calculate individual girl cookie booth sales for you and evenly distribute package sales to each girl that participated in the cookie booth.

## Securing Booth Locations

Council Secured Booths: Girl Scouts of Central Illinois books several locations for booth sales. These booths are open for any troop to sign up in one of the following ways.

- From January 5-8 two booth sale time slots per troop may be reserved.
- January 9-March 29 is first come first served. Time slots that remain are available for any and all troops. There is not limit on the number of time slots a troop may reserve. If a troop is unable to use a booked time slot the troop must cancel their reserved time so it is available for others.

## Troop Secured Booths

Troop volunteers or parent/guardians can start arranging troop secured booths at any time by contacting local businesses/organizations to get permission to set-up a booth sale. Once the location, date and time is known, they should enter the information in Smart Cookies. When the information is entered in Smart Cookies, the booth sale will then be included in the GSUSA Cookie Locator. Customers access the Cookie Locator via GSUSA and GSCI's websites and your booth sale will become visible to customers who are actively seeking Girl Scout Cookies. Last year over 10,000 local customers used the cookie locator. Be sure to enter your booth sale information so you don't miss out on this fantastic marketing opportunity (see page 38 on how to enter your booth sale in Smart Cookies).

### *Are there geographic boundaries for booth sales?*

All booth sales must be held within the geographic confines of GSCI. If you are unsure a council map is available in the Cookie portion of our website ([GetYourGirlPower.org](http://GetYourGirlPower.org)). You may also contact Customer Care for geographic questions.

### *Can I hold a booth sale outside my community?*

The short answer is yes. A troop may hold a booth sale in any area within our council confines. GSCI has 38 counties and over 500 towns. Girls may live in one community and go to school in another and have parents that work in a third. Also families travel and recreate to different communities. When it comes to setting up booths, a good starting point is to look at your local community and businesses you visit recognizing that "local" is a relative term, depending on where you live, work and play.



















### *Are there establishments where I cannot hold a booth sale?*

Girl Scouts should not hold a booth sale in or in front of any establishment where youth are not allowed to frequent. This includes 21+ bars, dispensaries, etc.



# Entrepreneurship Badges & Pins

When your Girl Scouts are selling Girl Scout Cookies, they are practicing goal setting, money management, people skills, decision making, and business ethics. As they learn to think like an entrepreneur and run their own Girl Scout Cookie business, they can earn badges and pins! They can even explore their own business ideas to earn an Entrepreneurship badge! There are so many ways to earn badges and pins during the Girl Scout Cookie Season.

	Cookie Business		Financial Literacy		Cookie Entrepreneur Family	Entrepreneur
Daisy						
	My First Cookie Business	Cookie Goal Setter	Money Explorer	My Money Choices	Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin	Toy Business Designer
Brownie						
	My Cookie Customers	Cookie Decision Maker	Budget Builder	My Own Budget	Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin	Building Entrepreneur
Junior						
	My Cookie Team	Cookie Collaborator	Budget Maker	My Money Plan	Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin	Business Jumpstart

Along with all the badges and pins, Girl Scouts can also earn reward patches based on the amount of boxes they sell. Fun Patches also serve as great way to show off your Girl Scout Cookie pride! These patches can be purchased in our Trefoil Boutiques.



# My Cookie Customers 1

## Step 1: Arrival and Opening Ceremony

**Time Allotted:** 15 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Materials:**

- Nutritious snack items such as fruit, granola bars, carrot sticks, graham crackers, sliced cucumber and yogurt dip, or juice and crackers (Check for food allergies or dietary restrictions in advance.)
- Girl Scout Cookie order cards
- Plain paper and/or construction paper
- Writing, drawing, and coloring supplies
- Girl Scout Promise and Law

**ARRIVAL:** Ask Brownies who arrive early to unpack and set up any snacks and activity materials for later. Then, ask that they set up a signmaking station with stacks of paper, markers, Girl Scout Cookie order cards, etc. Brownies can make a “menu” for their customers to use at their cookie booth, listing the cookie flavors and package costs. These can be designed using slideshow software as well. Brownies can continue their menu in Meeting 2 if they don’t finish, or they can make cookie booth signs.

**WARMUP AND WELLNESS:** Divide Brownies into two or three teams and give each team a piece of paper with the word “BROWNIES” written vertically going down the page. Challenge each team to come up with a word for each letter that says something about the troop. For example, B can stand for “brave” or “the best.” When each team is done, have members of each team take turns sharing their ideas with the troop. Ask, “How does it feel to be a Brownie in this troop?” Give opportunities for Brownies to share their thoughts. If you notice any Brownies acting differently than usual, give them the option to share their feelings with the troop or a trusted troop leader if they wish. For meeting 2, you can ask Brownies to write word for each letter in the word “CUSTOMERS.”

**OPENING CEREMONY:** Welcome Brownies to the first My Cookie Customers meeting and have them gather in a Brownie Circle. Have them say the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law together.

## Step 2: Select Your Activity

**Choice 1:** Make Flash Cards (*Fulfills Step 1*)

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

- Girl Scout Cookie order cards
- Index cards
- Pencils
- Girl Scout Cookie packages

**ASK:** What do you already know about Girl Scout Cookies? Some Brownies may have background knowledge if they sold Girl Scout Cookies before, *had an older sibling that was a Girl Scout, or if they have seen cookie booths in the community, but some may be new to Girl Scouts, have never sold or even tried Girl Scout Cookies before-and that’s okay! There is always something new each cookie season.*

**SHARE:** In this step, you will learn about Girl Scout Cookies. It’s much easier to sell when you know your product well! First, do some research on the different kinds of cookies, how much they cost, and what rewards you can earn. Look at Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies with an adult to learn about online selling. For this activity, you are going to make flash cards to practice your cookie facts!

**ACTIVITY:** *Make flash cards.* Instruct Brownies to use cookie packages or information on the Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies site to make their flashcards. One side of the card should have the cookie name, while the cookie description goes on the back of the card. Brownies then pair up, read the description side of the card, and ask their partner to guess the cookie name. Remind them to hide the cookie name on the back of the card with their hand! Brownies take turns going through the cards. For a challenge, have them show or say the cookie name and ask their partner to describe it.

### **Choice 2: Be a Detective (*Fulfills Step 1*)**

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

- Prepared question cards
- Cookie packages
- Girl Scout order cards
- Computers, smartphones, or tablets

**ASK:** What do you already know about Girl Scout Cookies? *Some Brownies may have background knowledge if they sold Girl Scout Cookies before, have an older sibling who is a Girl Scout, or if they have seen cookie booths in the community. Some may be new to Girl Scouts, have never sold or even tried Girl Scout Cookies before-and that's okay! There is always something new each cookie season.*

**SHARE:** In this step, you will learn about Girl Scout Cookies. It's much easier to sell when you know your product well! First, do some research on the different kinds of cookies, how much they cost, and what rewards you can earn. Look at Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies with an adult to learn about online selling. For this activity, you are going to be a detective and uncover all kinds of top-secret Girl Scout Cookie information!

**ACTIVITY:** *Be a detective.* Tell Brownies to form small teams. Have each group draw questions out of a hat to investigate: How many kinds of Girl Scout Cookies are there? Which are the most popular? How does Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies work? What are some of the cookie rewards? How can customers donate cookies? You can add more questions. You can also add clues on the cards (such as a website) or direct them to the cookie packages. Brownies can use their order cards, cookie packages, and computers, smartphones, or tablets to find out the answers to the questions. Have each group share the questions that they investigated and what information they uncovered. Try this: Play classic detective music!

### **Choice 3: Make a Notebook (*Fulfills Step 1*)**

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

- Girl Scout Cookie order cards
- Cookie boxes or any cardboard
- Plain paper
- Binder clips
- Scissors
- Writing and coloring supplies

**ASK:** What do you already know about Girl Scout Cookies? *Some Brownies may have background knowledge if they sold Girl Scout Cookies before, have an older sibling who is a Girl Scout, or if they have seen cookie booths in the community. Some may be new to Girl Scouts, have never sold or even tried Girl Scout Cookies before-and that's okay! There is always something new each cookie season.*

**SHARE:** In this step, you will learn about Girl Scout Cookies. It's much easier to sell when you know your product well! First, do some research on the different kinds of cookies, how much they cost, and what rewards you can earn. Look at Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies with an adult to learn about online selling. For this activity, you are going to make your own notebook all about the different kinds of Girl Scout Cookies!

**ACTIVITY:** *Make a notebook.* Create a sample notebook using plain paper, a binder clip, and the front and back side of an empty cookie box (or any cardboard). Or you can have the notebook deconstructed so that you can show Brownies the individual parts and show them how you can put it together. Provide materials (paper, cardboard, scissors) for Brownies to make their own. Remind them that they don't have to copy your sample-they can bind it differently or make cookie-shaped pages if they would like. Next, have Brownies write the cookie names and descriptions on the pages. They can display their book at their cookie booth and share cookie facts with their customers!

## **Step 3: Select Your Activity**

### **Choice 1: Draw a Target (*Fulfills Step 2*)**

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

- Protractors
- Plain paper or poster paper
- Writing and coloring supplies



### Choice 2: Draw a Target (*continued*)

**ASK:** How would you like to use our earned cookie money? Brownies may offer a wide range of ideas and get excited about the possibilities. It is important that they share their ideas and feel empowered through this process!

**SHARE:** In this step, you are going to decide how to use your cookie money. Let's brainstorm ideas for ways to use the troop's cookie money. You can use the money to buy Girl Scout badges or snacks for meetings. You could use some of the money to go on field trips or help others. First, vote on your favorite choice. Next, you'll set a troop goal so that you can stay on track! In this activity, you are going to draw a target to keep track of your goals.

**ACTIVITY:** *Draw a target.* Model how to draw a target using a protractor (or you can use cups, plates, and pot lids). Ask, "Which goal is the biggest or most important to you? That one goes in the middle. Smaller goals can go in the outer rings." Decide how many cookie packages Brownies will sell to help reach each goal. The outer ring should require fewer packages, and the center ring will need the most. Encourage Brownies to display their target at their cookie booth or have an adult share it online. Brownies can create personal targets on plain paper to keep track of the packages they sell and personal goals. If you are keeping track of troop package sales, use a larger poster paper to display goal progress at meetings.

### Choice 2: Come up with a Cheer (*Fulfills Step 2*)

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 30-40 minutes

#### **Materials:**

- Paper and pencils

**ASK:** How would you like to use our earned cookie money? *Brownies may offer a wide range of ideas and get excited about the possibilities. It is important that they share their ideas and feel empowered through this process!*

**SHARE:** In this step, you are going to decide how to use your cookie money. Let's brainstorm ideas for ways to use our troop cookie money and then vote on your favorite choice. Next, you'll set a troop goal so that you can stay on track! In this activity, you are going to come up with a cheer that you can use to keep track and celebrate when you reach your goals.

**ACTIVITY:** *Come up with a cheer.* Create two Brownie teams and give each the task of creating a cheer. One team can create a "Sales Update" cheer. This cheer will be used at each meeting as sales are reported and the troop is given updates on goal progress. The other team can create a "Goal Reached!" cheer to celebrate and mark when a goal is achieved. Have the teams share their cheer and teach the other group so that they can all participate in the cheers at each meeting. For more fun: Encourage Brownies to record a video and share online with help from an adult!

### Choice 3: Make a Personal Goal Stick (*Fulfills Step 2*)

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 30-40 minutes

#### **Materials:**

- Wooden paint stirrers
- Black markers
- Rubber bands or thin ribbons

**ASK:** How would you like to use our earned cookie money? *Brownies may offer a wide range of ideas and get excited about the possibilities. It is important that they share their ideas and feel empowered through this process!*

**SHARE:** In this step, you are going to decide how to use your cookie money. Let's brainstorm ideas for ways to use our troop cookie money and then vote on your favorite choice. Next, you'll set a troop goal so that you can stay on track! In this activity, you are going to make a personal goals stick to keep track of your goal progress.

**ACTIVITY:** *Make a personal goals stick.* Brownies can draw pictures to remind them of their goals on one side of the wooden paint stirrer, while the other side indicates the number of packages needed to reach that goal. A rubber band or thin ribbon tied into a tight bow can be inched up to track their goals. Consider making a goal stick that reflects troop package sales to show how each member's sale contributes to the troop's goals.

## Step 4: Closing Ceremony

**Time Allotted:** 10 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 5-10 minutes

**Materials:** None

**ASK:** What did you learn from today's meeting that you are excited to share with your customers? *Give all Brownies the opportunity to share their thoughts about the activities, their goals, the upcoming cookie season, etc. with the troop or just with you if they wish to share something more personal.*

**SHARE:** Today you learned all about Girl Scout Cookies and decided how you want the troop to use our earned cookie money. You learned what is important to you and our troop and are on your way to achieving your goals! In the next My Cookie Customers meeting, you are going to practice handling money and making change with your customers using play money. You are also going to find ways to connect with customers and inspire them to buy cookies and share your story with others!

#### Step 4: Closing Ceremony (*continued*)

**ACTIVITY:** Read the steps and activities below for Brownies to choose which they would like to do at the next meeting.

- **Step 3: Find customers (choose one):** Involve customers, make a customer list, OR draw your community.
- **Step 4: Handle money and make change (choose one):** Set up a pretend cookie booth, make a cookie calculator, OR practice online.
- **Step 5: Connect with customers (choose one):** Practice your pitch, create a video to inspire customers, OR make thank-you cards.

Have Brownies form a Friendship Circle and end the meeting with a Friendship Squeeze. Have them sing the Make New Friends song to end their time together. If there are meeting items to gather or areas to straighten up, ask Brownies to choose a song and challenge them to tidy everything up before the song ends!

### Step 5: Follow up with Families

**Time Allotted:** 10 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 5-10 minutes

After the meeting, remember to share with families all the great things their Daisy did! Use the Follow-Up email template in the **Manage Communications** section to:

- Share highlights or photos of Daisies learning about Girl Scout Cookies and deciding on troop goals.
- Send information about the next meeting along with important cookie updates and deadline reminders. Encourage parents to help their Girl Scout set up their Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies site, practice their pitch at home and help them create a video to promote their business online.
- Send the **Brownie Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin Requirements** so families know how to help their Girl Scout continue the fun and learning at home.
- Be sure to include the **Safety Tips for Online Marketing** and **Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families**.



# Cookie Decision Maker 1

## Step 1: Arrival and Opening Ceremony

**Time Allotted:** 15 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 10-15 minutes

**Materials:**

- Nutritious snack items such as fruit, granola bars, carrot sticks, graham crackers, sliced cucumber and yogurt dip, or juice
- Girl Scout Cookie packages (or photos of cookie packages)
- Sticky notes
- Pencil or pen
- Pair of dice
- Girl Scout Promise and Law

**ARRIVAL:** Ask Brownies who arrive early to unpack and set up any snacks and activity materials for later. Then, ask that they set out Girl Scout Cookie packages (or photos of cookie packages) and a pair of dice. Brownies can take turns matching two cookie flavors “against” each other in a game of “Would You Rather.” They can use the dice to generate a random number of cookies for each cookie flavor to make it interesting! “Would you rather have 6 Thin Mint cookies or 2 Girl Scout S’mores?” Brownies do not have to wait for the whole troop to arrive to start this activity. They can start working on this and include others as they arrive.

**WARM UP AND WELLNESS:** Gather as a troop and extend the game of “Would You Rather” by facilitating questions and discussions about different scenarios relating to the upcoming cookie season. For example, “Would you rather practice what to say to customers or practice handling money and making change?” “Would you rather sell cookies at a cookie booth or make a video to share online?” “Would you rather raise \$100 for the troop or raise \$200 for a community organization?” “Would you rather go on a field trip to the zoo or visit a veterinarian’s office and earn the Pets badge?” Some Brownies may have strong feelings and can easily make decisions about some of the questions, while others may be quieter about their feelings or not be as decisive. Brownies can also feel in between about some topics or even change their minds. Tell them that they can share later or just with you if they wish. In the end, tell Brownies that sometimes they may have to choose between a few things, other times they can do it all.

**OPENING CEREMONY:** Welcome Brownies to the first Cookie Decision Maker meeting and have them gather in a Brownie Circle. Have them say the Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law together.

## Step 2: Select Your Activity

**Choice 1:** Take a Cookie Quiz (*Fulfill Step 1*)

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Materials:**

- Girl Scout Cookie order cards
- Cookie packages
- Index cards
- Pencils
- Computers, smartphones, or tablets (optional)

**ASK:** What kind of information can you find on a cookie order card? Provide a cookie order card to each Brownie. Some Brownies have seen and used order cards before, while others haven’t yet and will need more time--and that’s okay! Leave a little “wait time” between taking answers from those with their hands raised. Providing that “wait time” will give all Brownies the opportunity to point out something they see on the order card.

**SHARE:** As a cookie entrepreneur, you need to know all about your business. In this step, you will get to know Girl Scout Cookies. You can start by looking at your order card or the Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies site to find out about the different cookies and what they cost. Then, you’ll be ready to share what you know with your customers! For this activity, you are going to make a cookie quiz and put your cookie skills to the test.

**ACTIVITY:** *Take a cookie quiz.* Have Brownies write down cookie names on one side of the cards and descriptions on the back (or create digital flashcards). They can use order cards or cookie packages (or the Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies website) to look up the cookie names and descriptions. Then, have them add cards with cookie facts or other program facts, like deadlines and rules, for a fun challenge! Have Brownies form teams, shuffle cards, and test their knowledge. They can read the description or fact and have their partner guess the cookie. Try this: Have a 30-second lightning round and see how many cards they get right in that time!



**Choice 2: Make a Cookie Lanyard or Necklace (Fulfill Step 1)****Time Allotted:** 40 minutes**Materials:**

- Girl Scout Cookie order cards
- Cookie packages
- Plain paper
- Scissors
- Hole puncher
- Drawing and coloring supplies

**ASK:** What kind of information can you find on a cookie order card? Provide a cookie order card to each Brownie. *Some Brownies have seen and used order cards before, while others haven't yet and just need more time-and that's okay! Leave a little "wait time" between taking answers from those with their hands raised. Providing that "wait time" will give all Brownies the opportunity to point out something they see on the order card.*

**SHARE:** As a cookie entrepreneur, you need to know all about your business. In this step, you will get to know Girl Scout Cookies. You can start by looking at your order card or the Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies site to find out about the different cookies and what they cost. Then, you'll be ready to share what you know with your customers! For this activity, you are going to make a cookie lanyard or necklace to keep cookie facts handy.

**ACTIVITY:** *Make a cookie lanyard or necklace.* Instruct Brownies to draw and cut out paper Girl Scout Cookie shapes. One side can be colored in to represent cookie patterns and details, while the other side labeled with cookie names and key words like chocolate covered, peanut butter, caramel, etc. Hole-punched cookies can be worn as necklaces or even strung as decorative garland at cookie booths!

**Choice 3: Practice Online (Fulfill Step 1)****Time Allotted:** 40 minutes**Materials:**

- Girl Scout Cookie order cards
- Computers, smartphones, and/or tablets

**ASK:** What kind of information can you find on a cookie order card? Provide a cookie order card to each Brownie. *Some Brownies have seen and used order cards before, while others haven't yet and will need more time-and that's okay! Leave a little "wait time" between taking answers from those with their hands raised. Providing that "wait time" will give all Brownies the opportunity to point out something they see on the order card.*

**SHARE:** As a cookie entrepreneur, you need to know all about your business. In this step, you will get to know Girl Scout Cookies. You can start by looking at your council order card or Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies to find out about the different cookies and what they cost. Then, you'll be ready to share what you know with your customers! For this activity, you are going to practice online and learn about buying and selling Girl Scout Cookies online.

**ACTIVITY:** *Practice online.* Encourage Brownies to explore the different kinds of cookies and their flavor details on the Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies site. Brownies will find out all about buying cookies online by adding packages to their shopping cart, seeing how much they cost, and exploring further. Have Brownies compare what they see on the Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies website with their order card. Talk about any differences. Ask, "How is buying online the same and different from buying in person?" "What other interesting features do you see or can you do with online cookie shopping?"

**Step 3: Select Your Activity****Choice 1: Brainstorm Ideas (Fulfill Step 2)****Time Allotted:** 40 minutes**Recommended Time:** 30-40 minutes**Materials:**

- Paper bags
- Sticky notes
- Beads

**ASK:** How can our troop use cookie money to give back to our community? This concept may be new to some Brownies so it's okay if they don't have an idea just yet. Encourage all ideas about how the troop can help their community.

**SHARE:** In this step, you will decide your giving goal. It's exciting to earn money by running your own cookie business, and it feels great to be able to help others. First, talk to the troop about your goal. Your goal is how you'd like to spend your cookie money. Do you want to use it for meeting supplies? What about a field trip? Decide as a group. It's important to have goals for things that you want for the troop, but it's also important to have a troop giving goal. Do one of these choices to find your giving goal. For this activity, you are going to brainstorm ideas for how the troop can give to the community.

### Choice 1: Brainstorm Ideas (*continued*)

**ACTIVITY:** *Brainstorm ideas.* Label paper bags with different ideas for how the troop would like to give back to the community. After talking about each cause or organization, have Brownies vote for their favorite ideas. Give each Brownie three beads to drop into the bags with their favorite ideas (or create an online poll). If there is a tie, have another round of voting where Brownies get one bead to cast their top vote. Set a goal for how much money will be used for that goal. If possible, schedule a visit to the organization's location or invite a representative to speak to the troop at a future meeting to build that connection.

### Choice 2: Make a Donation Poster (*Fulfill Step 2*)

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Materials:**

- Poster paper
- Drawing and coloring supplies

**ASK:** How can our troop use cookie money to give back to our community? *This concept may be new to some Brownies so it's okay if they don't have an idea just yet. Encourage all ideas about how the troop can help their community.*

**SHARE:** In this step, you will decide your giving goal. It's exciting to earn money by running your own cookie business, and it feels great to be able to help others. It's important to have goals for things that you want for the troop, but it's also important to have a troop giving goal. For this activity, you are going to make a donation poster to tell your customers about your giving goal.

**ACTIVITY:** *Make a donation poster.* Discuss opportunities to give back to the community, including your council's cookie donation program and other ideas from the troop. Make a list of the troop's ideas. Ask, "Which opportunity are you most inspired by?" As a group, have Brownies vote to decide which cause is most important to the troop. They can vote by a show of hands or with heads down and thumbs up. Brownies decide on a package goal that they will donate to that cause. Have Brownies make posters about their donation goals to hang at their cookie booth-or have an adult help share it online.

### Choice 3: Bottle Your Goals (*Fulfill Step 2*)

**Time Allotted:** 40 minutes

**Materials:**

- Empty bottles
- Line indicators (rubber bands, markers, paint)
- Filling materials (sand, rice, etc.)

**ASK:** How can our troop use cookie money to give back to our community? *This concept may be new to some Brownies so it's okay if they don't have an idea just yet. Encourage all ideas about how the troop can help their community.*

**SHARE:** In this step, you will decide your giving goal. It's exciting to earn money by running your own cookie business, and it feels great to be able to help others. It's important to have goals for things that you want for the troop, but it's also important to have a troop giving goal. For this activity, you are going to make "goals in a bottle" to keep track of your giving goal.

**ACTIVITY:** *Bottle your goals.* Demonstrate how to set up the bottle using paint or thick rubber bands to mark lines on a clear empty bottle. On each line, write the number of packages to sell at each mark. For example, if it will take 100 cookie packages to reach a goal, Brownies can choose to label 5 lines with every twenty packages sold (20, 40, 60, etc.) or 10 lines with every ten packages (10, 20, 30, etc.). At the top, put "Goal" for the total number of packages Brownies hope to sell. Brownies can choose to use sand or rice to fill the bottle to the line each time they reach a labeled amount. Encourage Brownies to display the bottles at their cookie booth and talk to their customers about their goals.

## Step 4: Closing Ceremony

**Time Allotted:** 10 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 5-10 minutes

**Materials:** None

**ASK:** What part of today's meeting inspired you? *Give all Brownies the opportunity to share their thoughts about the activities, their goals, the upcoming cookie season, etc. with the troop or just with you if they wish to share something more personal.*

**SHARE:** Today you learned about your cookie business and what's new this cookie season. You also learned what is important to the troop and decided on a giving goal together. In the next Cookie Decision Maker meeting, you are going to build up your team, practice playing cookie seller with pretend money, and show your cookie spirit!

**ACTIVITY:** Read the steps and activities below for Brownies to choose which they would like to do at the next meeting.

- **Step 3: Build your team (choose one):** Role-play running your cookie booth, get help from an expert, OR play a team-building game.



#### Step 4: Closing Ceremony (*continued*)

- **Step 4: Practice handling money and tracking sales (choose one):** Make a chart, play cookie booths, OR track your sales online.
  - **Step 5: Show your cookie spirit! (choose one):** Dress up, come up with a cookie song or dance, OR decorate your cookie booth.
- Have Brownies form a Friendship Circle, hold hands, and end the meeting with a Friendship Squeeze. Have them sing the Make New Friends song to end their time together. If there are meeting items to gather or areas to straighten up, ask Brownies to choose a song and challenge them to tidy everything up before the song ends!

### Step 5: Follow up with Families

**Time Allotted:** 10 minutes

**Recommended Time:** 5-10 minutes

After the meeting, remember to share with families all the great things their Daisy did! Use the Follow-Up email template in the *Manage Communications* section to:

- Share highlights or photos of Daisies learning about Girl Scout Cookies and deciding on troop goals.
- Send information about the next meeting along with important cookie updates and deadline reminders. Encourage parents to help their Girl Scout set up their Digital Cookie/Smart Cookies site, practice their pitch at home and help them create a video to promote their business online.
- Send the **Brownie Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin Requirements** so families know how to help their Girl Scout continue the fun and learning at home.
- Be sure to include the **Safety Tips for Online Marketing** and **Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families**.





# Steps to Earn Your Cookie Entrepreneur Family Brownie Pin

Check off the boxes as you complete each activity with your family. You can earn this pin every year you sell cookies! Parents and Guardians can help the Girl Scouts earn this pin too!

## ☐ 1. Go for the goal.

Talk with your family to figure out a realistic goal of how many boxes of cookies you think you can sell, then set a second “stretch” goal that is a little higher. You might not meet the stretch goal, and that’s OK, but you won’t know unless you try! Once you decide on your goals, write them down and fill in the goal tracker! Don’t forget to color your tracker in as you sell cookies!

*My troop’s goal is to sell \_\_\_\_\_ packages so we can*

*\_\_\_\_\_!*

*My personal goal is \_\_\_\_\_, but my stretch goal*

*is \_\_\_\_\_.*

## ☐ 2. Find more customers.

Who do you want to sell Girl Scout Cookies to beside your family and friends? Have your family help you think of people you see on the way to school or at weekend activities. How could you find even more customers? Brainstorm ways to spread the word about your cookie business, then write or draw your ideas here!

**Celebrate together.** Having a goal to aim for will keep your Girl Scout motivated and teach them to embrace challenges, but it’s also important to celebrate their efforts along the way too, not just the outcome!

Cookie Goal Tracker

_____	packages
_____	packages
_____	packages
_____	packages
_____	packages
_____	packages
_____	packages
_____	packages
_____	packages

**Open Doors.** Help your Girl Scout think of other ways to reach new customers, like going door to door, using Digital Cookie, making phone calls to family, and setting up a booth. If they decide to go door to door, make sure a caring adult is with them at all times. Ask your troop’s leader about the council’s guidelines for cookie booths.

### ☐ 3. Be a money master.

Practice counting money and making change with family members before you start selling to customers. Don't worry if you need help at first, that's what family is for! Fill in the box below to start practicing totaling today!

One box of Thin Mints costs \_\_\_\_\_ dollars.

Two boxes of Thin Mints costs \_\_\_\_\_. ( $\_\_\_ + \_\_\_ = \_\_\_$ )

Four boxes of Thin Mints costs \_\_\_\_\_. ( $\_\_\_ + \_\_\_ + \_\_\_ + \_\_\_ = \_\_\_$ )

**Help them shine.** Your Girl Scout may be ready to handle simple money transactions, but an adult should always be available to assist with big orders and larger bills, as well as help keep money safe after it has been collected.

### ☐ 4. Make your pitch.

Think of how you will ask people to buy cookies. In addition to introducing yourself and asking if they'd like cookies, you might want to let customers know what your troop plans to do with the cookie profits, your favorite cookie flavor, and even sharing your goals with them. Write your pitch below!

---

---

---

**Yes, no, maybe so.** When they're practicing their pitch, pretend to be the different customers that may face: some who want cookies, some who don't, and some who are on the fence. It will help build confidence for real life scenarios, as well as convince someone who is undecided to buy cookies.

### ☐ 5. Think like a Girl Scout.

The Girl Scout Law reminds us to be responsible for what we say and do. You can do that by filling in important deadlines below and then keeping track of them with help from an adult. That means starting your sales on or after the official start date and turning in your order and money on time.

**Day by day.** Keep all cookie deadlines on one family calendar to keep the whole family in the cookie loop! This helps you keep an organized family schedule. You can also give your Girl Scout a calendar of their own so they can practice crossing off dates and planning ahead. Having all of the important dates in one place is the best way to keep organized and avoid missing any important dates and deadlines! Time management will strengthen their business ethics as they get older!

#### My Important Cookie Dates

Girl Scout Cookie Season starts on: \_\_\_\_\_

Cookie Order Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_

Cookie Pick-up: \_\_\_\_\_

Money due date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

My other deadlines: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Check in with your troop leader about how you can get each pin, visit our shop website at <https://bit.ly/GSCIShop>, or visit one of our Trefoil Boutiques in person!

# Familiar Terms

**ACH DEBIT** - When troop funds are electronically taken from a troop account to cover payments for cookies the troop has ordered or transferred in from another troop. To be ACH ready means that the troop has set up a troop bank account and completed and turned in the ACH paperwork. ACH paperwork is available on the cookie portion of the council website ([GetYourGirlPower.org](http://GetYourGirlPower.org)) in the forms section.

**COOKIE BOOTHS** - Locations, usually stores, where girls sell cookies to customers. Troops should bring tables, chairs, cookies and change. GSCI works with some of the local retailers to secure locations for troop leaders and these locations may be reserved through the Cookie Booth Scheduler. Troops are encouraged to set up their own cookie booth locations since most cookie reservations set up by the council go fast. Successful cookie booths are in high traffic areas, display troop goals and incorporate eye-catching marketing.

**COOKIE BOOTH SCHEDULER** - Located in Smart Cookies and is used by troops to schedule booth sales in their area. Troops may begin to schedule booth sales at 9:00 a.m. on January 5, 2026.

**COOKIE CUPBOARDS** - Locations where cupboard orders arrive and are picked up by the troop. Some regions will have multiple location choices for cupboard order pickups.

**COOKIE DOUGH** - Credit earned by selling cookies. Cookie Dough may be used toward day and overnight camp, council-sponsored programs, membership renewals and items in the Trefoil Boutique (except gift cards). Cookie Dough expires on September 19, 2026, and will not be accepted as payment after this date. The due date to redeem your Cookie Dough code for a GSUSA online shopping code is September 5, 2026.

**DIGITAL COOKIE** - Website where girls manage their online cookie sales program. Troops use Digital Cookie for Troop Virtual Booths and Shipped Orders. The website is [DigitalCookie.GirlScouts.org](http://DigitalCookie.GirlScouts.org).

**DIRECT SALE FORMAT** - Allows girls to have cookies in-hand to sell door-to-door to family, friends, and neighbors. With the direct sale format there is only one transaction, and selling is condensed into one simple step.

**SMART COOKIES** - Website where troop volunteers place cookie orders and document sales made by Girl Scouts. Volunteers also use Smart Cookies to place Girl Scout reward orders, reserve council-secured cookie booth locations, run reports, and much more. The website is [ABCSmartCookies.com](http://ABCSmartCookies.com).

**INITIAL ORDER** - The first order a troop places. The initial order must be placed in Smart Cookies by January 19, 2026.

**PLANNED ORDERS** - Used to supply troops with additional cookies they need after the initial order. There will be 6 planned orders after the initial order. Planned orders are due by 8 p.m. on Sunday nights. *(Planned order dates can be found on the Cookie Calendar on pg. 21)*

**SERVICE UNIT COORDINATOR** - The Service Unit Coordinator (SUC) is a volunteer who oversees a particular geographic area within the council. The SUC serves the troop leaders in her/his area. The SUC has good knowledge of the cookie program and is a great resource for troop leaders. They help train troop leaders and cookie coordinators, secure cookie delivery sites, and determine troop cookie pickup dates and times. It is important that you know who your SUC is and that you communicate with her/him so you know where and when to pick up your cookies. If you do not know who your SUC is, please contact your membership engagement coordinator or program specialist.





# 2026 Cookie Calendar



Date	Activity
December 15	Begin to use Digital Cookie & social media
January 2	Initial order opens for troop entry
January 5	Booth Scheduler opens at 9 am
January 10	Cookie Rally! (Register at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/GSCICookieRally26">tinyurl.com/GSCICookieRally26</a> )
January 19	Initial order due by 11 pm
Feb. 6 - Feb. 12	Delivery of product to SU delivery sites
<b>February 13</b>	<b>Direct Sale begins for in-person sales</b>
February 15	First planned order due in Smart Cookies by 8 pm
February 13-15	National Girl Scout Cookie Weekend
February 22	Second planned order due in Smart Cookies by 8 pm
March 1	Third planned order due in Smart Cookies by 8 pm
March 6	Troop funds must be in troop bank account for first ACH (1/3 of initial order)
March 8	Fourth planned order due in Smart Cookies by 8 pm
March 10	First ACH (1/3 of initial order minus troop profit)
March 15	Fifth planned order due in Smart Cookies by 8pm
March 19	Troop funds must be in troop bank account for second ACH (1/3 of beginning of March balance)
March 22	Sixth planned order due in Smart Cookies by 8pm (FINAL)
March 23	Troops begin to enter reward orders in Smart Cookies
March 24	Second ACH (1/3 of beginning of March balance)
<b>March 29</b>	<b>Digital Cookie Online Marketing &amp; Direct Sale ends</b>
April 2	Troop reward orders due in Smart Cookies by 8 pm
April 7	All money turned into troop leader
April 9	Outstanding Balance (OSB) forms due to service centers
April 10	Troop money deposited in troop bank account for final ACH
April 14	Final ACH sweep (Remainder of balance owed to council)
May 15	Rewards will be available for pickup
June 9	Last day to submit NSF checks
September 5	Due date to redeem Cookie Dough code for GSUSA online shopping code
September 19	2024 Nutty Bucks and 2025 Cookie Dough expires