

girl scouts



girlsports



A K-12 program
to create leaders in
sports and in life



Sports, Skills, and Leadership

Since 1912, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) founder Juliette Gordon Low believed that health, nutrition, and fitness were essential to the Girl Scout experience. Girl Scouts hiked, played basketball, went on camping trips, and were encouraged to prepare healthy meals—all progressive initiatives for girls in a post-Victorian era.

Today, Girl Scouts continues this mission to inspire girls to achieve leadership roles in all aspects of society. GSUSA believes that girls who compete on the playing field become leaders and succeed in life. Our 2.3 million girls learn how sports, nutrition, and healthy living can help them:

- develop leadership skills they can use now and in the future
- discover that their possibilities are limitless
- learn that they can do good things for themselves and the world

Girl Scouts helps girls get there through sports and the leadership skills they learn—no matter what path they choose.

INAUGURAL GIRLSPORTS PARTNER

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Good Food, Good Life

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Three ways that Girl Scouts helps girls become leaders through sports and in their lives.

1

Our 5 Legacy Athlete Badges

Skill building from good sportsmanship to coaching strategies

2

Make Your Own Badge

Create your own path to learn a skill and earn a customized sports badge

3

Girls Connect with Sports Online

Activities and places for girls to share success stories

The Case for Sports and Leadership

Girl Scouts encourages its 2.3 million girls to participate in sports activities, earn their Legacy Athlete badges, and pick up some valuable leadership skills along the way.

“Prior to becoming a Girl Scout, Melissa was a shy, quiet girl who hardly spoke at all,” reports Annette, the mother of the 12-year-old Girl Scout Cadette from Omaha, Nebraska. “In the five years since she joined the Girl Scouts, she is so much more confident. She now knows that she can be whatever she wants to be, and sports has played a big part.” Active in basketball, soccer, and swimming, Melissa tried golf for the first time this past summer. “It’s fun to experiment,” Melissa says. “There is no reason to be afraid to try something new.”

Melissa’s story is one reason why GSUSA promotes sports to help girls become more confident. We know that girls who play sports are more likely to:

Earn better grades and go to college. A University of Chicago study found that female athletes do better in school, do not drop out, and have a better chance to graduate from college.

Develop more confidence. Multiple studies show that women have a higher level of self-esteem, a lower incidence of depression, and a more positive body image.

Become executives. Female and minority athletes are more likely to aspire to hold leadership positions later in life than their peers who are not athletes. In fact, more than four out of five executive businesswomen played sports growing up, according to the Women’s Sports Foundation. The vast majority reported that the lessons they learned on the playing field contributed to their success in business.




Compete in male-dominated career positions. The National Bureau of Economic Research shows that girls who play sports are more likely to enter the workforce and participate in previously male-dominated occupations, particularly high-skill, high-wage ones.

Get involved in their community. The New York State Public High School Athletic Association concluded that adults who played sports in high school are more likely to volunteer their time for civic organizations.



5 Athlete Badges That Change Girls' Lives

Girl Scouts have a unique opportunity to earn Legacy Athlete badges and gain new skills—like cross-training to up their fitness levels or becoming a coach to see what it takes to lead and make a difference. The skills that girls learn will take them well beyond the field and into the real world—from classrooms to boardrooms. Here's how.

Badge	What Girls Learn	What It Means
BROWNIE (Grades 2-3) Fair Play 	How to be a valuable member of a team by becoming familiar with the rules of the game and communicating well so that everyone feels included.	Fair play helps girls learn what it takes to be part of a team, and support others effectively on and off the field—all of which are essential for getting along with others and preventing all-too-common bullying behavior.
JUNIOR (Grades 4-5) Practice with Purpose 	How to set goals, improve physical skills, and commit to practice; that it takes discipline, time, and effort to become good at anything—on the field or off!	As girls realize that they can get better at things through practice, they gain confidence, are more likely to try new things, and pursue athletic, academic, and other interests outside of their comfort zones.
CADETTE (Grades 6-8) Good Sportsmanship 	How to be a good teammate, a fair competitor, and set a positive example for others.	Girls gain confidence and a can-do attitude when they don't let momentary failures lead to negative thinking. Staying positive—whether winning or losing with friends, at school or at home—leads to problem solving and team success.

Badge	What Girls Learn	What It Means
SENIOR (Grades 9-10) Cross-Training 	How to develop and follow a plan with variety that keeps them interested and motivated to reach their health and fitness goals.	As young high school girls start to think about their futures, developing a plan and setting goals offers them critical skills that will help improve their chances for making the varsity team, getting into a college, or finding their dream job.
AMBASSADOR (Grades 11-12) Coaching 	How to develop effective coaching strategies so they can motivate an individual or a team to accomplish goals.	Girls will soon enter the adult world where their coaching skills will help them inspire others to work constructively, whether with individual or collective goals. By being mentors and empowering one another, they demonstrate how sisterhood can support their athletic and academic lives, and even their future careers.

It's fun to have an active, healthy lifestyle. Turn the page to find out how girls can create their own learning experience and make their own sports badge.



DAISY (Grades K-1)
Boosting Our Youngest Girl Scouts

Our youngest Girl Scouts begin their Leadership Experience by being active with other girls. When they gather, they play outdoor games like hopscotch, jump rope, or toss a ball. They read Daisy Journey books, which inspire them to ride their bikes, strengthen their bodies, and improve their flexibility. They also earn Petals (equivalent to badges), which teach them core Girl Scout values. These can be applied to games and sports—from waiting their turn to practicing fair play with their friends. These experiences make fitness fun, strengthen their team-building skills, and help them form healthy friendships.

For more on badges, go to ForGirls.GirlScouts.org/badges

Girls Learn to Earn Their Own Sports Badges

When girls create their own path to learning—when they decide what they want to explore and make a plan for *how* they’re going to do it—they learn the importance of being self-starters, problem solvers, and creative thinkers.

Make Your Own badge was developed to give girls from Brownie (grades 2-3) through Ambassador (grades 11-12) the opportunity to:

- decide what skills they want to learn
- figure out what they need to know and what steps they need to take to learn it
- demonstrate what they’ve learned

For example, if a Girl Scout Cadette wants to learn how to skateboard, here are the steps:



By completing a Make Your Own badge, a girl will have learned a critical skill to her future success: She will know *how* to learn.



Girl-Made Sports Badges

Through our Make Your Own badge program, girls from Brownie (grades 2-3) through Ambassador (grades 11-12) can customize their own sports badges. They decide what skills they want to learn, create and complete the steps to earn the badge, and have fun designing a badge that is uniquely theirs.

Here are some of the categories and sports that girls have participated in for which they created customized sports-related badges through Make Your Own badge.

To show girls how they can make their own badge, go to GSMakeYourOwn.com.

Recreational	Individual	Team	Alternative/Extreme
Skiing	Martial Arts	Soccer	Snowboarding
Hiking	Horseback Riding	Softball <i>Softball Team</i>	Roller Derby <i>"I learned bicycle safety, how to wear helmets and pads correctly, about different kinds of trails for riding, and different types of bikes for each style of riding." —Junior</i>
Kayaking <i>"I learned how to kayak in open water, what to do when my kayak flips over, how to swim with a life jacket, and how to properly stop, steer, and back up my kayak." —Cadette</i>	Ice Skating	Basketball	White-Water Rafting
Bowling <i>Bowling Is a Sport</i>	Rock Climbing	Lacrosse	Mountain Biking
Roller-Skating/ In-line Skating	Archery	Volleyball	Ice Climbing
Surfing	Swimming <i>Swim Strong!</i>	Water Polo	BMX Racing <i>"We learned zip lining. We learned about equipment, signals, and how to self-rescue." —Ambassador</i>
Sailing	Kickboxing	Ice Hockey	Zip Lining <i>My Zip Line</i>
Ping-Pong	Fencing	Synchronized Swimming	Skateboarding

Girls Connect with Sports Online

Girls and volunteers can find fun, useful information about sports on our Girl Scouts website ForGirls.GirlScouts.org/GirlSports. Here are just some of the exciting things they can do online:



Post a photo! Girls can post a picture of themselves or their friends in action on our Photo Wall. Upload them from a computer, smartphone, and through Instagram or Twitter using #GSSports.



Play sports games. Test your knowledge in our sports quizzes or play our mix-and-match games.

Watch videos. Interested in a sport-related career? Watch twin sister entrepreneurs Izzy and Coco Tihanyi talk about turning their lifelong surfing passion into Surf Diva, a school for girls and women. They're featured in our *It's Your Business—Run It!* video series. And when you're finished watching Izzy and Coco, check out some of the other interesting entrepreneurs.



A scene from the *It's Your Business—Run It!*: Izzy and Coco Tihanyi video.

Visit our Inspiring Women Timeline. Be inspired by sports trailblazers, like Lisa Leslie, the legendary basketball star with four Olympic gold medals and three MVP titles who was voted one of the top-15 players in WNBA history by fans. Or discover some of the other inspiring athletes who broke barriers so that girls today can participate and compete in every sport.



Hear stories. Watch sports writer Sue Macy share her passion for athletes who are not well-known, such as the women on the first all-American girls' professional baseball league. Or see Alicia Thompson talk about the gymnastic stories she writes with her co-author, Olympic legend Dominique Moceanu. All are in our *Storytellers* video series.



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