

## Ceremonies in Girl Scouting

Making memories and building traditions with girls to be passed on for years.

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- **Flag** ceremonies, can be part of any activity, honors the American flag.

### Meeting

- **Opening** ceremonies start the Girl Scout meeting. **Closing** ceremonies finalize the meeting, with expectations for the next. This may be as simple as a hand squeeze around a friendship circle, or a song.
- **Friendship Circle** Ceremony Representing the unbroken chain of friendship among Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world, the Friendship Circle involves Girl Scouts standing in a circle, crossing their right arms over their left, and clasping hands with their friends on both sides. Everyone then makes a silent wish as a friendship squeeze is passed from hand to hand around the circle.

### Awards

- **Precious Metals** Ceremony to honor all the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award recipients in your troop or Service Unit. These could be broken into separate ceremonies, 1 for each award.
- **Court of Awards** is a time to recognize girls who have accomplished something during the Girl Scout year. May be held multiple times per year. You don't have to wait for the end of the year!
- **Pinning** Ceremonies help celebrate when girls receive grade-level Girl Scout pins.

### Bridging

- **Fly-Up** is a bridging ceremony for Girl Scout Brownies who are bridging to Girl Scouts Juniors. Girls receive the Girl Scout pin along with their Girl Scout Brownie wings.
- **Silver Key** Ceremony for girls moving from Junior to Cadettes.  
<http://www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/SubPages/SilverKey.htm>
- **Investiture** welcomes new members, girls or adults, into the Girl Scout family for the first time. Girls receive their Girl Scout Junior, Girl Scout Brownie, or Girl Scout Daisy pin at this time.
- **Rededication** Ceremonies are an opportunity for girls and adults to renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

### Camp &/or Fire

- **Ash** Ceremonies: Taking ashes from one campfire to another is a ceremony conducted by Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all around the world. The main purpose of these ashes is to bring to all Girl Scouts and Guides the international aspect of the world sisterhood.
- **Flag Retirement** ceremonies honors the American flag as the symbol of our country and all the hopes, dreams, and people it represents... for a specific flag's last time. This ceremony is the last thing done at a campfire after all other activities have happened at the fire. <http://gswoblog.org/2016/05/16/girl-scout-traditions-flag-retirement-ceremonies/>
- **Camp Name** Ceremonies are done at camp to give worthy campers their Camp names.  
<https://www.facebook.com/GreenBloodNews/posts/657680180980013>

### Other

- **Founder's Day or Juliette Low's Birthday**, October 31, is a time to remember the important role Juliette Low played in the development of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States.
- **Girl Scout Birthday** ceremonies can be held on or near March 12, the date Juliette Gordon Low started Girl Scouting in the United States of America by registering the first 18 girls in Savannah, GA.
- **WAGGS** Ceremony Normally done at Thinking day. A nice way to explain all the part of the WAGGS Pin. <http://www.girlscoutleader101.com/2016/02/waggs-ceremony.html>
- **Scouts Own** Ceremony is a girl-planned program that lets girls explore their feelings around a topic, such as friendship or the Girl Scout Promise and Law, using spoken word, favorite songs, poetry, or other forms of expression. It is never a religious ceremony.

## Ceremony Tips

- Girl Lead if age appropriate. Increase responsibility as they mature. Begin with a line of the GS Law and end with them planning and performing the full ceremony.
- Practice/ Walk through the ceremony with inexperienced girls before inviting the guests to the space where the ceremony will be held.
- Take safety precautions when using candles, fire, or when the girls construct bridges or platforms. For Example: use battery operated candles when you do not feel comfortable with real candles.
- Devote sufficient time for planning the ceremony. Good ceremonies have a clear purpose and enrich the meaning and mood of the event. A Ceremony Planner is helpful when planning. Remember: 80% Planning, 20% Performance. ceremonies. [http://girlscouts.stevensadv.com/literature\\_52849/Ceremony\\_Planner](http://girlscouts.stevensadv.com/literature_52849/Ceremony_Planner)
- Certificate are used often with ceremonies.
- Have some generic badges on hand for girls who do not earn awards. Also keep blank certificates on hand for ones that are lost or destroyed before they make it home. This is important for the Daisies and Brownies but not so important as the girls get older.
- Laminate and make multiple copies of the words and poems used in the ceremonies. They get lost or destroyed often.
- Add personal elements to traditional ceremonies. Use favorite poems, songs, stories, and sayings, or have the girls write something new.
- Consider the role of colors and symbols that the girls might use in their ceremony.
- Observe flag etiquette during flag ceremonies.

### General Web site for Girl Scout Ceremonies

- <https://www.girlscoutsp2p.org/content/dam/girlscouts-girlscoutsp2p/documents/Planning%20Ceremonies%20Info.pdf>
- <http://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/traditions/ceremonies.html>
- <http://www.gscwm.org/content/dam/girlscouts-gscwm/documents/GS%20Ceremonies%20and%20Traditions.pdf>
- [http://www.girlscouts-gssi.org/content/dam/girlscouts-girlscouts-gssi/documents/guide\\_bridg\\_reded\\_cer.pdf](http://www.girlscouts-gssi.org/content/dam/girlscouts-girlscouts-gssi/documents/guide_bridg_reded_cer.pdf)
- <http://www.northpinesgs.com/uploads/3/2/0/6/32061239/ceremonies.pdf>
- Google.com

## Important Girl Scout Days

- Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday, or Founder's Day, **October 31**, marks the 1860 birth of Girl Scouts of the USA founder Juliette Low in Savannah, Georgia. Juliette started the organization in 1912.
- World Thinking Day, **February 22**, celebrates the birthdays of Girl Guides/Girl Scouts founder Robert, Lord Baden-Powell (1857-1941) and World Chief Guide, Olave, Lady Baden-Powell (1889-1977). World Thinking Day celebrates friendship and the sisterhood of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the globe. The day is also a time to donate funds to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund. On World Thinking Day, girls participate in activities and projects with global themes to honor their sister Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in other countries. World Thinking Day not only gives girls a chance to celebrate international friendships, but is also a reminder that Girl Scouts of the USA is part of a global community—one of nearly 150 countries with Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. *Note on the World Thinking Day Award: Designed for each age level, award activities are designed to complement the Girl Scout leadership journeys and reinforce the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. As of 2012, The World Thinking Day Award is now an OFFICIAL award and therefore may be worn on the front of the official uniform.*
- Girl Scout Week is celebrated each March, starting with Girl Scout Sunday and ending with Girl Scout Sabbath on a Saturday, and it always includes the Girl Scout Birthday, March 12. Girl Scout Sunday and Girl Scout Sabbath give girls an opportunity to attend their place of worship and be recognized as a Girl Scout. These days can also be a time when girls explore other faiths.
- Girl Scout Leader's Day, **April 22**, honors all the volunteers who work as leaders and mentors in partnership with girls. Girls, their families, and communities should find a special way to thank their adult Girl Scout volunteers.

## Ceremony Planner

Type of ceremony: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose or theme: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Ceremony: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Ceremony: \_\_\_\_\_ Do Invitations need to be made: \_\_\_\_\_

Who will attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Where will people sit or stand? Is special room set up needed?

How will the ceremony **begin** (What songs, poems, and quotations will be included)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who will do what? \_\_\_\_\_

What does the **main section** consist of? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who will do what? \_\_\_\_\_

How will it **end**? (song, poem, Flag Ceremony, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who will do what? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will record the ceremony for the troop scrapbook? \_\_\_\_\_

What decoration or props do you need? (candles, fire, banner, bridge, flags, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What, if any, refreshments will be served? What quantities to you need? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who will bring refreshments? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Items to budget for (costs): \_\_\_\_\_

When will a rehearsal be scheduled for the ceremony? \_\_\_\_\_