

# Planning Meetings

There is no such thing as a "standard" troop meeting. A willingness to be flexible is essential, but here are a few guidelines you can use to set up your meetings.

## **PARTS OF A MEETING:**

- **START-UP ACTIVITY:** Leaders should have some activities planned while the girls are arriving. This should be an easy activity to keep the girls occupied before the official meeting begins.
- **OPENING:** This needs to be similar from one meeting to the next. The repetition of this ceremonial activity is a clear signal that the troop meeting has started. It is usually a brief ceremony or activity such as reciting the Girl Scout Promise, having a flag ceremony, or listening to a poem.
- **BUSINESS:** This is a time for planning and decision-making. It usually follows the opening and should be kept to essentials with girls handling as much as their experience allows. This is the time for girls to plan for future activities. For example, what service project they want to do or which try-its or badges they want to earn.

For Girl Scout Brownies, this is where the Brownie Ring fits in. This is the time for Daisy Circle or Junior Patrol meetings. Check your handbooks for more information on troop government.

- **MAJOR ACTIVITY:** This is when try-its, badge work, field trips, art projects, guest speakers, etc., occur. This should take up the major part of your meeting.
- **CLEAN-UP:** This is everyone's responsibility! "A Girl Scout always leaves a place better than she found it." Clean-up should not be used as a disciplinary tool, as girls need to know that cleaning up is a responsibility that all share.
- **CLOSING:** Once again, make this a special ceremonial time. It is a formal way to end the meeting. It can be a quiet song, a friendship circle, a flag ceremony, or whatever you choose.

**NOTE:** Make sure parents do not get in the habit of picking their daughters up before the closing. Girls should not miss clean-up or closing time. This also means the leader is obligated to have the meeting finish at the agreed upon time.

# Conducting a Troop Meeting

A troop meeting is a very active time. It is the place for growth, adventure and fun. It is the place girls share responsibilities and make contributions. The main components of the troop meeting are listed below. Suggestions are given to help you plan a productive meeting.

	<b>Daisy</b>	<b>Brownie</b>	<b>Junior</b>	<b>Cadette/Senior/Ambassador</b>
<b>Meeting Length</b>	40 to 50 Minutes	1 to 1½ hours	1½ to 2 hours	1½ to 2 hours
<b>Pre-Planning</b>	Good troop meetings are the result of good planning. Prior to the scheduled troop meeting, leaders need to discuss the meeting agenda. The agenda may vary from level to level and from troop to troop. New leaders may need to spend an hour planning each meeting, while experienced leaders may not need as much time.			Tailor activities to the age level and personality of your troop. The level handbook will assist you with ideas and serve as a guide.
<b>Start-up Activities (things to do before and during the girls arrival)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treats</li> <li>• Games</li> <li>• Name Tags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up room</li> <li>• Treats</li> <li>• "Do-It" bag</li> <li>• Mix &amp; Talk</li> <li>• Name Tags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader/girl discussion</li> <li>• Kaper Chart</li> <li>• Ceremony practice</li> <li>• Treats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social time</li> <li>• Announcements</li> <li>• Set up</li> <li>• Planning</li> </ul>
<b>Opening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Song</li> <li>• Promise &amp; Law</li> <li>• Show &amp; Tell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flag ceremony</li> <li>• Promise &amp; Law</li> <li>• Handshakes</li> <li>• Song</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flag ceremony</li> <li>• Promise &amp; Law</li> <li>• Recite poem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flag ceremony</li> <li>• Poems, skits, songs or games</li> </ul>
<b>Business</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Daisy Circle</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn girls' ideas on what they want to do</li> <li>• Read Daisy Story</li> <li>• Discuss field trip</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brownie Ring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take attendance</li> <li>• Collect dues</li> <li>• Discuss plans or activities</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Patrols</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take attendance</li> <li>• Collect dues</li> <li>• Make plans</li> <li>• Kaper chart</li> <li>• Special events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take attendance</li> <li>• Collect dues</li> <li>• Pass out flyers</li> <li>• Event registration</li> <li>• Troop calendar</li> </ul>
<b>Major Activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craft</li> <li>• Hike</li> <li>• Field trip</li> <li>• Dances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Story telling</li> <li>• Play-acting</li> <li>• Costume-making</li> <li>• Ceremony</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on badges &amp; projects</li> <li>• Speaker</li> <li>• Troop party/trip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest Projects</li> <li>• Speaker</li> <li>• Ceremony</li> </ul>
<b>Clean-Up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put away Name Tags</li> <li>• Arrange chairs</li> <li>• Pick-up scraps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put away Name Tags</li> <li>• Arrange chairs</li> <li>• Pick-up scraps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put away Name Tags</li> <li>• Arrange chairs</li> <li>• Pick-up scraps</li> </ul>	
<b>Closing (end of meeting)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship Circle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship Circle (handbook, p. 22)</li> <li>• Closing flag ceremony</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship Circle (handbook, p. 14)</li> <li>• Taps</li> <li>• Closing flag ceremony</li> </ul>	
<b>Evaluation</b>	It is important for the troop leaders to review the accomplishments of the troop after each meeting. What went well and why? What areas can be improved? For additional support, contact your Leader Mentor.			

# Sample Meeting Planner

For All Levels

Once you have had your first meeting with your troop, it will be easier to plan the next few meetings. Keep in mind what the experienced girls in the troop have already done in Girl Scouting. It is important to involve the girls in planning and decision-making activities.

DATE:	WHAT	WHO	SUPPLIES
	<b>Start-Up Activities</b> (while girls are arriving) 5 Minutes		
	<b>OPENING</b> (to get us started) 5 Minutes		
	<b>TROOP BUSINESS</b> (attendance, dues, discussion) 10-15 Minutes		
	<b>MAJOR ACTIVITY</b> (meeting program) 30-45 Minutes		
	<b>CLEAN-UP</b> 5 Minutes		
	<b>Closing</b> (formal end) 5 Minutes		
<b>SNACK</b> (put snack where it best fits in your meeting)			

What went well at this meeting?

What should we consider before the next meeting?

# Activity Suggestions

## START UP ACTIVITIES

### SQUIRM

Can be played with any age group and any size group. Place a rubber band over the head, just below the hairline in back and on the tip of the nose in front. The object is to move the rubber band down over the nose, chin and around the neck by using only the face muscles.

### MOVE TO THE RIGHT

Can be played as a large group or smaller groups sitting in folding chairs in a circle. The leader asks questions and if someone meets the criteria they move one chair to the right, sitting on the person's lap in this chair if need be. There isn't any limit to the number of people sitting on each other's laps on one chair. The object is to be the first one back to your original chair. Examples of questions are: move one chair to the right if you are from out of state; have blue eyes; wear glasses; have tennis shoes on; have more than one ring on; have other than white underwear on, etc.

### ZIP, ZAP, ZOOP

Players stand or sit in a circle with IT in the middle. IT will point to a person within the circle and says zip, zap, zoop, and then counts to eight. If IT says ZIP, the person pointed to gives the name of the player on his right. If IT says ZAP, the person pointed to gives the name of the player on his left. If ZOOP is said, she'd say her own name. The player must give the correct name before IT can count to five, otherwise she becomes the new IT. All three, ZIP, ZAP, and ZOOP can be said for everyone to change places.

### STATES

Everyone sits in a circle, each with a different name of a state. IT stands in the middle and calls out a state's name and tries to gently tap her with a rolled newspaper before the state called can call out another state. If IT does hit someone before a state is called out, she becomes the new IT. (Variation - use real names, or Jan from Texas, etc.)

### HA! HA!

Player #1 lays on the floor on his back, player #2 lays on the floor at a right angle with his head on #1's stomach, #3 follows with his head on #2's stomach and so on, so that everyone is on the floor with their head resting on someone's stomach. Have everyone pick a number by counting down, starting with 1, 2, 3, etc., and everyone to remember his own number. Starting with number #1 he says "ha", #2 says "ha, ha" and on down the row. The object is NOT to laugh - if anyone laughs, begin again! HA! HA! It's hard to do! For variation, after a few times start from the opposite and work down to #1.

## OPENING ACTIVITIES

Sing a song together, then recite the Girl Scout Promise for the girls. You may have to practice it a few times.

For the first opening, let everyone join hands in a circle. Have each girl call out her name as you nod toward her, "Kim's here, Henrietta's here," etc. Recite the Girl Scout Promise and practice it. Perhaps someone could hold the flag while the rest recite the Pledge of Allegiance. You will learn more about flag ceremonies in later training.

## BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

### TAKE ATTENDANCE, COLLECT DUES

**DREAM CLOUD** - Draw a large cloud on a newsprint taped to the wall. Let the girls "dream" of activities and things they want to do during the year in Girl Scouting. Save and use later for planning your year.

## **ABOUT GIRL SCOUTING**

Leader and co-leader can take turns reading the Daisy story (*Who is a Daisy Girl Scout?*) or Brownie story (*Brownie Girl Scout Handbook*, p. 17), or "A Letter from Daisy Low" (*Junior Girl Scout Handbook*, p. 8) and talk about what it means to be a Girl Scout. Ask the girls if they would like to make puppets or do a play about the Girl Scout story.

## **SERVICE PROJECTS**

Talk to the girls about service projects - these are "good turns." Have several examples such as collecting food for food bank, adopting a grandparent, planting flowers or trees, etc. Ask them for other ideas. Vote on a service project they would like to do.

## **MAJOR ACTIVITIES**

### **ME PUPPETS**

Have the girls make paper bag puppets to look like themselves. They will need small paper bags, pieces of paper, crayons, markers, etc. Yarn and fabric scraps could also be used.

### **COLLAGE**

Have a pile of magazines ready. Let the girls cut out pictures of things they like and make a collage by pasting them to construction paper.

### **"TALKING STICK"**

You need a stick over 2 feet long, or a yardstick. The group sits in a circle. The stick is given to a girl to start and she begins a story while moving her hands up the stick, hand over hand. When she reaches the top, she stops and passes the stick to the next girl who continues the story. Continue around the circle until all have had a turn.

### **"YIPPIE-YUK"**

Have girls leaf through the handbook and call out various activities found there. Designate one side of the room as "Yippie" and the other side as "Yuk" and "unsure" in the middle. The girls move quickly between sides depending on how they feel about the subject, and remain in the middle if unsure. To keep the girls moving, call out foods, colors, etc., to fill in. This game gives you an idea of what girls are interested in.

### **"BACK-IN"**

Girls sit in a circle, backs to center. On separate pieces of paper they write things they would like to do, crumple the paper and throw over their shoulders into the circle. When they run out of ideas, they turn to face inside of circle, smooth out papers, and start planning.

## **CLOSINGS**

### **FRIENDSHIP CIRCLES**

You and girls join hands in a circle and walk toward each other from all around the circle, meeting in the middle with clasped hands raised. Say a farewell, and walk backward into a full circle again, still holding hands.

Or...

You and the girls form a huddle and say a greeting or farewell in a different language.

Or...

You and girls crisscross arms, right over left, and hold hands in a friendship circle. Everyone is silent, and one person starts the friendship squeeze until it goes all around the circle to the person who started it.

### **GIRL SCOUT PROMISE**

Reciting the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Girls can take turns discussing the meaning of one part of the Girl Scout Law or describing something they have done that follows the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Or...

Girls state one personal goal they would like to accomplish before the next meeting.