Games

Fun with Purpose!
Games can be used many different ways in Girl Scouting—breaking the ice, developing teamwork, learning or reinforcing skills, building stamina, or just blowing off steam after sitting for too long. Here are some tips for game leaders:

Choosing Games

- Be sure the games you select are right for the age, experience, and physical condition of the girls.
- Start with familiar games that are quickly learned, and then move on to more complex games.
- Avoid games that offend other people’s beliefs or customs. Also avoid games that waste food or other resources.
- Provide opportunities for girls to participate in a variety of games—such as get-acquainted games, nature games, action games, international games, relay games, singing games, and wide games (games where groups complete activities as they rotate between stations).
- Use Girl Scout resource books for additional ideas on creating, teaching and organizing games.

Getting Ready

- Be interested and enthusiastic about the game yourself.
- Know the game well before attempting to teach it. Identify the safety hazards, anticipate the difficulties, and adapt the game to the group and situation.
- Devise a method(s) for organizing teams or formations quickly.
- Know your playing area. Make sure to have a safe area and easily recognized boundaries.
- Have the equipment together beforehand.

Get Set, Go!

- Give the name of the game and some interesting facts about it to help motivate interest.
- Explain the game briefly, giving the basic rules. If needed, demonstrate the game with a small group of girls.
- After explanations, allow the group to get into the desired formation or team positions to start the activity.
- Ask for questions before you start to play.
- If you decide to change rules during the game, try only one change at a time. Allow the group to help suggest rules as well. You might say to the group, "Let’s try playing the game this way."
- Stop the game when the enthusiasm is still high. Don’t let it drag on.
- Arrange for total participation. Devise a plan for rotation. Minimize waiting and maximize playing time.

Eight Pointers for Game Leaders

1. Establish a warm, positive atmosphere that’s fun for everyone
2. Encourage everyone to participate and do her best
3. Be patient
4. Be fair in your judgments
5. Show respect for each girl
6. Encourage fair play and safety at all times
7. Be flexible and prepared to vary or change the game
8. Emphasize cooperation and playing for fun rather than winning
ICEBREAKERS

Here are some great games for early meetings, first days of camp, or special events to get individuals to jell as a group and to help girls and adults learn everyone's name.

Name Games

My Name Is

How to play: Girls sit in a circle or a number of small circles, depending upon the size of the group. One girl is asked to tell the group her name. She says, "My name is Kelly Green." The girl on her left then says, "Her name is Kelly Green and my name is Maria Lopez." The next girl then says, "Her name is Kelly Green, her name is Maria Lopez, and my name is Shanna Smith." This continues until the last girl in the circle tries to name all the girls in the group. If a girl cannot recall a name, others in the circle may help her.

Linda Lemon

How to play: Girls make a circle. Tell the girls they are going to the market to purchase something they like, but it must begin with the same letter as their first name. The first girl might say, "My name is Linda, and I am going to the store to buy a lemon." The next girl might say, "My name is Malia, and I am going to the store to get a mango and a lemon." Player three might say, "My name is Naomi, and I am going to the store to buy a nightshirt and a mango and a lemon." The last girl gets to name everything!

Variation: Play shopping bag upset. Have the girls change places and repeat the process from any place in the circle.

Toss the String

You need: A ball of string or yarn. Groups of 15 or less.

How to play: Have the group form one or more circles. The girl with the ball of yarn starts by calling out a girl's name and tossing the yarn to her, being sure to hold onto the end of the string. The girl who catches the ball must call out another girl's name and toss the ball to her. The object is to include everyone and create a spider web with the string. The leader can then ask one girl to pull on her string while everyone else holds on. How many girls can feel the string being pulled? Use this as a starting point for a discussion on the importance of group cooperation and an individual's contribution to the group.

Warm-Up Games and Mixers

Birthday Lineup

You need: An area where girls can line up.

How to play: Explain to the group that you want them to line up in chronological order, according to birthdays, without talking. After the girls have lined up, discuss how they arrived at their formation and note if there are any double birthdays.

Nosebag Skits

You need: Preassembled bags of assorted objects and clothing that can be used in a skit. Kitchens are good sources for such objects.

How to play: Divide the group into teams. Each team is given a bag with an item for each girl in it. The group is given five to ten minutes to create a skit using all of the items. This is great to use as an activity or an introduction for a badge or journey. All you need to do is "theme" the items and the skit – or have the girls try to figure out the theme based on the items and create their skit around it.

Human Knots

How to play: Five to ten girls stand in a circle. Each places her hands in the center and takes hold of the hands of two people other than those standing next to her. The group must work together to untie the knot without releasing hands.
**Dividing-Up-the-Group Games**

**Number Call Out**

**How to play:** Assemble the group. Call out a number such as "three" and the girls must scramble to get in groups of three. Try for numbers that divide evenly into your total group, or have those left out be the next callers.

**Leg Extension**

**How to play:** Have everyone stand in a circle. On the count of three each girl must extend one leg into the circle. All right-legged girls become a group and all left-legged girls become another group.

**Ice Cream Flavors**

**How to play:** Have girls silently choose either chocolate or strawberry ice cream as their flavor. They are not to tell anyone of their decision. Everyone then closes her eyes and call out the flavor she selected. Girls continue to call out their flavor while seeing others with the same flavor to come and join hands. The game ends when everyone has found her flavor. If the teams are uneven, ask someone to voluntarily move to the other team.

**GIRL SCOUT GAMES & ACTIVITIES**

Games and activities are a great way for your girls to interact and have fun! Here are some ideas to get you started.

*For more ideas, borrow a games book from the Resource Room ([Games for Girl Scouts, Great Big Book of Children's Games & more!](website)), look in The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting, Adult Guides for the Leadership Journeys and visit GSUSA.*

**Travel With Flat Juliette!**

As you journey through your Girl Scout year, take Juliette Gordon Low, the founder of Girl Scouts with you! Just download and print "Flat Juliette" from [www.gsnc.org/resource_room/documents/FlatJulietteFlyer2013.pdf](website). Print Juliette on cardstock, color her in, cut her out and she’s ready to go! Create a memory album with pictures of Flat Juliette’s travels with your troop throughout the year.

**Trefoil Promise Puzzle**

Here is a Girl Scout Promise puzzle to cut out and reassemble. Choose the one with lines to cut on or let the girls get creative and make their own! For durability print the puzzle on cardstock or glue it onto construction paper before cutting.

*Trefoil Puzzle with lines* - [www.gsnc.org/resource_room/documents/PromisePuzzle.pdf](website)
*Trefoil Puzzle without lines* - [www.gsnc.org/resource_room/documents/PromisePuzzlewithoutlines.pdf](website)
**Introduction Bingo**

**STEP 1:** Make the Bingo Card.

Each girl is given a sheet of paper and folds it four times so that there are 16 squares. This is the bingo card. Girls walk around the room with the cards and collect signatures from the other troop/group members until all sixteen spaces are filled. If you have less than sixteen girls in the troop, include the leaders or allow the girls to fill in “free spaces” (not in a row) or get duplicate signatures on their cards.

**STEP 2:** Play the Bingo Game.

Each girl writes her name on a small slip of paper and drops it into a paper bag or container. Girls take turns pulling out names. When a name is called, the girl stands up, introduces herself and shares something about herself with the group (age, family, teacher, favorite color, book, Girl Scout activity). Then all the girls cross off her name on their bingo cards. The first person to get four squares crossed off in a row is the winner. Continue playing until all the girls have introduced themselves.

**Cut Apart Promise Game**

Print the Girl Scout Promise on a large sheet of poster board. Cut the words apart so that each girl will get a word or phrase. Distribute the pieces and tell the girls to arrange themselves in the correct order. Then repeat the Girl Scout Promise.

*NOTE: For older girls this activity can be duplicated using the Girl Scout Law.*

**Girl Scout Law Relay**

Print the ten Girl Scout Laws on large index cards. Make one set of cards for each team. Divide the girls into teams. Set up tables or clear a section of the floor for the Girl Scout Law to be assembled. Line up the teams equally distant from the assembly area. Mix up each set of cards and distribute the cards to the team members. Each girl walks to the assembly area, takes a turn placing her law in position and returns to the back of her line. If necessary, each girl may take a second turn, switching only one pair of laws at a time until it is assembled correctly. The winning team will be the first back in line with the Girl Scout Law arranged in the correct order.

*NOTE: You can make this relay more challenging by including cards for the Girl Scout Promise and dividing the Girl Scout Law into phrases.*
The Story of Juliette Low - An Action Story

Divide the Troop into 8 groups and give them the following group names:
Little Girls, Juliette Low, Georgia, Horses, Lord Baden-Powell, London, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts

SOUND EFFECTS & ACTIONS:
As the story is read, each group listens for its group name, and stands up making the sound effect and/or action listed below. Before you read the story, practice the sounds and actions so each group understands what to do!

Little Girls..........................Stand and giggle
Juliette Low.........................Curtsey and say "Be My Friend"
Georgia (state of)...............Say "Hey, you all!
Horses..............................Say "Neighhhhh"
Lord Baden-Powell..........Bow formally and say "How do you do?"
London.............................Sing "London Bridge is Falling Down"
Boy Scouts..........................Make Girl Scout sign and say "Be Prepared"
Girl Scouts.........................Sing one line of "Girl Scouts Together"

STORY:
Once upon a time there was a little girl named Juliette Low who lived in Georgia and loved to ride horses. After she grew up she went to London where she met Lord Baden-Powell who founded the Boy Scouts. She was fascinated by the work he was doing. She studied with him awhile and decided to found a troop of Girl Scouts for her friends who liked to ride horses in Georgia. So Juliette Low said good-bye to the Boy Scouts in London and came home with the idea that Lord Baden-Powell gave her. She formed a group of little girls, who liked to ride horses and be together, into a troop of Girl Scouts. And they loved it so much that the idea spread and now there are troops all over the world.

Aren't we glad that a (speed up here)
Little Girl named
Juliette Low from
Georgia who liked
Horses went to
London and met
Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the
Boy Scouts, and came home to start the wonderful world of
Girl Scouts!
COOPERATIVE GAMES

STAND UP  2-100 participants

Two people sit on the ground back to back, knees bend and elbows linked. Try to stand up together. Try variations with 3, 4 or more people to see if you can stand up together.

CATCH THE DRAGON’S TAIL  8-30 participants plus 1 bandana per group

Pick a “head” person and a “tail” person. The “tail” puts a bandana in her pocket. All other players form a line between the “head” and “tail” with arms around the waist of the person in front of them. The “head” leads the front section of the line around so that she can grab the bandana. The rear section of the dragon does not want the “head” to catch the “tail” and get the bandana so they attempt to avoid the “head”. Play until the bandana is grabbed. For the next round, the “head” takes the bandana and becomes the “tail.” VARIATION: Form multiple dragons trying to catch each other’s “tail.”

SPIDER’S WEB  8-10 participants plus foam balls of different sizes, bean bags or tennis balls.

Everyone stands in a circle and holds up her non-catching arm. “IT” starts by tossing a ball to someone across the circle from her. That person catches the ball with both hands, then tosses it to someone across from them who has her arm up. The ball goes back and forth to form a pattern until it comes back to “IT”. When a girl catches a ball she takes her arm down. The second time around you do the pattern by memory. After a few rounds. “IT” adds a second ball and a few rounds after that a third ball or a different size or perhaps color. After a few more rounds, reverse the pattern.

KNOTS  5-12 participants

Stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Each player places her hands in the center of the circle and takes hold of the hands of two different people, other than those standing directly next to her. The group must work together to untie the knot without releasing hands. The object is to untie the knot to form one large or two small interconnecting circles

FOX AND SQUIRREL 5-99 participants plus 1 small foam ball and 2 large foam balls

Stand in a circle. Start by passing a small foam ball, the squirrel, around the circle. As you pass it to the next person say “squirrel”. Next beginning passing 2 larger foam balls, the foxes, in either direction around the circle. As you pass these, say “fox”. The object of the game is to capture (tag the person holding the “squirrel”) the “squirrel” with one or both of the foxes. The “squirrel” can fly (the “foxes” cannot), so you can toss it across the circle to get away from the “foxes”. “Foxes” can go either direction around the circle and can change directions. Be careful NOT to be caught holding the “squirrel” when the “fox” is passed to you!

ENERGY  5-25 participants

Stand or sit in a circle holding hands. The leader begins the Energy by means of a hand squeeze passing from person to person. Pass it one way around the circle, then pass it the other way. Next try passing two pulses around the circle in opposite directions. Next try passing two pulses around the circle in opposite directions at the same time. Then try with everyone’s eyes closed. Next pass multiple pulses in less and less time.
Juliette Low and World Friendship - An Action Story

Divide the Troop into 3 groups and give them the following group names:
Juliette Low, Scout or Scouting, World

ACTIONS:
As the story is read, each group listens for its group name, and stands up making the action listed below. Before you read the story, practice the actions so each group understands what to do!

Juliette Low. . . . . . . . . Join hands with persons on right and left.
Scout or Scouting. . . . . . .Smile and make the Girl Scout sign.
World. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Stand up, spin around once, and sit down.

STORY:
In 1912, Juliette Low became interested in Scouting while visiting her friends, Lord and Lady Baden-Powell, who lived in England and who started Boy Scouting and Girl Scouting in their part of the World. When Juliette Low came back to America, she thought Scouting was so wonderful that she decided to start the first Girl Scout troop in her own home town of Savannah, Georgia. This she did on March 12th, 1912, and this first little troop of eight girls was the first Girl Scout troop in this part of the World.

This first Girl Scout troop was so successful that Juliette Low wanted to see Scout troops all over the World because she knew that Scouting would help girls all over the World to become friends and to help build World peace and good will. Girl Scouting grew and grew until now you are not only a member of your own little troop but also a member of the Girl Scouts of the USA which is a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

Juliette Low died in 1927 and her friends wanted to pay her a great tribute. They knew that her greatest dream was of World friendship and of World peace and that she hoped to accomplish this through Girl Scouting. So her friends started a memorial fund in her honor and called it the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund and each year Girl Scouts in the United Stated can contribute to this fund which helps Scouting all over the World.

A contribution to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund can travel to all parts of the World and help Scouts in many ways. Maybe it will help send older Scouts from our country to Our Chalet in Switzerland where Scouts from all over the World get together to exchange ideas and to help build World peace. We have no way of knowing how far contributions may travel. We have no way of knowing in what ways it may be returned to us in new friendships and World peace. But we do know that the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund is helping to fulfill Juliette Low’s dream of Girl Scouting and World Friendship.

NOTE: The purpose of the Action Story is to acquaint the girls with our founder, Juliette Low, and should be presented in a respectful and interesting manner.
**OUTSIDE GAMES**

**BLOB TAG:** have everyone divide into groups of 2 who then hold hands. Have designated boundaries. Select one of these groups to be IT. On "GO," the IT group attempts to tag any of the other twosomes. If they do tag them, without letting go of hands, the tagged group needs to link to the IT group, thus making it a foursome. The game continues until the IT group swallows up the rest of the smaller groups and IT becomes one big BLOB!

**ISLANDS:** Place a few Frisbees on the ground and have everyone start prancing around them while clapping or singing. When the Referee signals "Islands", everyone runs to touch a Frisbee. The last person touching a Frisbee is out. When the group gets smaller, remove an "Island." **VARIATION:** If any two people touch while running to an Island, they are also out.

**BRUSSEL SPROUTS:** One player starts as the center of the Brussel Sprout. This starts in slow motion. When they tag another person they link arms and continue. Each additional player tagged becomes part of the Brussel Sprout. During the game any player can shout "Lima Bean" and the game increases in speed. When it is called out again, then the game slows down. The Brussel Sprout center can call out "Carrot!" When this is done, everyone in the Brussel Sprout unlinks arms, jumps in the air, turns themselves around, and links arms again. This continues until all are a part of the Brussel Sprout.

**BEACH BALL BOOGIE:** Everyone finds someone to dance with. Give about ¾ of the pairs a beach ball. They need to link their bodies by holding the beach ball between them without using hands. When the music starts unlinked pairs dance while linked pairs try to find a pair without a beach ball and to pass it to them without using hands. If one partner wants to go with the ball, that’s OK.

**SQUIRRLS IN A TREE:** Girls are grouped in 3’s except for 1 that is IT. Two of the girls in each grouping face each other and hold hands high to form a tree. The third stands in the middle of the raised hands and becomes the squirrel. IT wanders among the trees. A leader gives a signal and all the squirrels plus IT must run to find a new tree. The one left out becomes IT and the game continues. Squirrels must find new trees, they cannot return to a tree they just left. After several rounds the squirrels and trees trade places until everyone gets to be a squirrel.

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**QUIET GAMES**

**MAGIC CIRCLE:** Circles of string are placed upon the ground. Girls are divided into teams and given a few minutes to list all the things they see in their circles. The team that lists the most items wins. This is great when introducing a new idea to younger girls or when older girls need to memorize a list of things for some activity, etc.

**GOSSIP:** Players sit in a circle and the leader whispers a brief sentence to their neighbor on the right who whispers it to the person on their right and so on around the circle until it reaches the person sitting to the left of the leader. That person announces what they heard and the leader tells the original sentence.

**JAN-KEN-PO:** This Japanese game is a version of the traditional rock-paper-scissors. Two or more girls start by swinging closed fists in a downward motion saying "jan-ken-po". On the third downward motion they show "frog" (two fingers curved and pointing downward), "snake" (index finger pointing outward and wiggling back and forth) or "slug" (hand in a fist). Frog chops snake, snake eats slug, slug slimes frog. Do this until there is only one person left.

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**CAMPFIRE ACTIVITIES**

**NOSEBAG SKITS:** You need pre-assembled bags of assorted objects and clothing that can be used in skits. Kitchens are a good source for these objects. Divide into teams based on the amount of time you have allowing 5-10 minutes to develop the skit and 1 minute to show it. The team must use each item that is in the bag.

**BUZZ** The game is started at any place in a circle with the players numbering off consecutively. "Buzz" is said every time there is a 7 in the number or a multiple of seven. 7-buzz, 14=buzz, 17=buzz, etc. If a player does not say buzz at the right time, she must drop out of the game.
**CAMPFIRE MOTIONS:** IT goes away while those in the circle decide on a leader. Everyone takes the same sitting position as the leader and performs the same motions as the leader. The leader can change the movements and everyone else has to keep the leader’s identity a secret. IT returns to the circle and has three guesses to figure out who the leader is. When the leader is discovered, she becomes IT.

**FLASHLIGHT FUN**

You need: 1 good bright flashlight for the leader and each girl should have their own flashlight. This is great for younger scouts that are at camp for the first time or who continue to inappropriately use their flashlights.

Have one person in front of the group with a flashlight in her hand and asking the group to do everything she does. And here’s what she does and says:

- Put your flashlight in your right hand (leader does this and each other step)
- Turn on your flashlight
- Point your flashlight at the Sky
- Make BIG circles
- Make little circles
- Point your flashlight at your toes!
- At your elbows.
- Point it behind you.
- Change your flashlight to you other hand.
- Point it out to the side.
- Make squares with the light.
- Put your hand over your flashlight
- Put the light under your chin
- Now grin!
- Point your flashlight at the sky
- Write your name with it.
- Write MY name with it.
- Shine your flashlight at the campfire.
- Shine your flashlight at my feet.
- Hold it in both hands
- Make GIANT circles with it.
- Put your flashlight in your right hand.
- Turn your flashlight off.
- Put it on the ground beside you.
- Leave it there until you are excused.
**WIDE GAMES**

Wide games have been a part of Girl Guides and Girl Scout programs for many years. They are fun and a challenging way to move a large group of people through a series of activities that are tied together by a common theme. They are called wide games because they generally cover a larger area than other games and they usually last longer. In fact, a wide game may last an hour or a day, depending on the objectives and the group.

Wide games are often used to teach or test knowledge or develop teamwork among girls. They can be competitive or noncompetitive. Generally they follow a specific theme from station to station, beginning and ending with large group assemblies. The theme helps pull unrelated activities together or helps determine the activities chose (a "lost in the wilderness" theme might focus on camp craft skills).

Activities can be from Girl Scout program materials, with earned awards acknowledged, or they can be linked to other girl interests, developmental needs, or community resources. Activities related to the theme can be used during the passage from one station to the next. These might involve decoding a secret message or looking for specific objects along the way.

The development of the wide-game theme can be very simple or can involve a lot of creativity, including make-believe, roll-playing, costumes and secret orders. Make-believe is usually well-received by Daisy and Brownie Girl Scouts. When fantasy is used with Junior Girl Scouts or older, an element of humor or role-playing needs to be present. Above all, the development of a theme should add to the fun and spirit of the activity.

**STEPS IN PLANNING A WIDE GAME**

* Decide who the audience is for the wide game. What are the ages, program level, interests, abilities and needs of the girls? How many people are involved? Establish objectives that take all of this into account.

* Determine the planning group and how girls can be involved in the development and presentation of the wide game.

* Select a theme and activity that will tie into objectives. Decide how many stations are needed, and if there are activities needed between stations. Every station can be active every rotation, or some stations can be idle during some of the rotations. Do not have more groups than active stations.

* Find a site for the wide game. This might be a camp, a part, a school ground, a large indoor facility, or a neighborhood. Use Safety-Wise as a guide, and be sure that there are adequate sanitary and drinking water facilities. Visit the site to finalize the selection.

* Chart a time schedule and flow for group activities. Your total time estimates should include an equal time for each activity period (activities need to be created to happen in the same time span): an opening and closing time periods; time for moving between stations; time for any snacks, meals or breaks; and consideration for the age and ability of your group.

* Plan the activities for each station. Activities need to stand alone, as groups will be arriving at each activity in a different rotation. Make the props, gather the costumes, and get the materials needed. This can be done by committee, a troop, or those responsible for the station. Activities can be planned for the groups between stations. If the game is competitive, decide on a scoring system and appoint a judge/arbitrator. Planners who know the game should not be participants.

* Determine who is responsible for the overall logistics, registration (if needed), safety, and leadership. Plan an opening activity and a closing activity to set the tone and to pull it all together.

**IDEAS FOR WIDE GAMES:**

- Bicycle gymkhana  
- Careers  
- Contemporary Issues  
- Crafts  
- Ecology  
- Environmental Action  
- Folktales  
- Games  
- Sports  
- Geography  
- Health & Fitness  
- Hobbies  
- Local History  
- Multicultural Influences  
- Music  
- Nature Study  
- Olympic Games  
- Badges/Try-Its, etc.