

Girl Scout Silver Award

Highest Award for Girls 11-14

The Girl Scout Silver Award represents a girl's accomplishments in Girl Scouting and her community as she grows and works to improve her life and the lives of others. The first four requirements of the Girl Scout Silver Award help girls build skills, explore careers, gain leadership skills, and make a commitment to self-improvement. The Girl Scout Silver Award Project can be undertaken when the first four requirements are completed. It can be done as an individual or with a group. If done with a group, a girl must be responsible for a specific part of the project and evaluate her contribution to the project and the group.



FEATURED GIRL SCOUT SILVER AWARD

After an incident involving a boy at school, I decided that it would be good to take a self-defense class. Because I could not find a one- or two-day program, I set up a self defense class for girls ages 12 and up for my Girl Scout Silver Award project. I invited a local police officer to instruct the class, and collected cans of food for the local food bank as an admission fee. About 35 girls came, and I could tell that they all got a lot out of it! It's nice knowing that something I set up could potentially save someone's life one day.

—Brittany, age 14, VA

Requirements for the Girl Scout Silver Award

A girl must be 11 or going into the sixth grade to begin work on STEPS 1-4 of her Girl Scout Silver Award. She must be 12 or going into the seventh grade to start work on STEPS 5 and 6 of the Girl Scout Silver Award Project. She must complete STEPS 5 and 6 by age 14 or before the start of the 10th grade.

STEP 1: GET READY

- Read *Go for It! The Girl Scout Silver Award* STUDIO 2B insert.
- Meet with advisor and develop a timeline for STEPS 2-4.
- Make an agreement with adult advisor.

STEP 2: GIRL SCOUT SILVER LEADERSHIP AWARD (charm)

- Earn three Interest Project Awards found in *Interest Projects for Girls 11-17* related to parts of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- Earn the STUDIO 2B Focus: *uniquely me! The Real Deal* charm.
- Put leadership into action: spend 15 hours in a leadership role.
- Use the *Go for It! The Girl Scout Silver Award* STUDIO 2B insert to keep records and a journal for discussion with advisor.

STEP 3: THE GIRL SCOUT SILVER CAREER AWARD CHARM

- What's Out There?
- Who's Out There?
- Be Your Own Boss—Earn "Your Own Business" Interest Project Award
- Use *Go for It! The Girl Scout Silver Award* STUDIO 2B insert to "journal it" for discussion with advisor.

STEP 4: THE GIRL SCOUT SILVER 4Bs CHALLENGE CHARM

- **Become:** Set goals for self-improvement.
- **Belong:** Earn the charm from the STUDIO 2B Focus book: *Looking in, Reaching Out*.
- **Believe:** Identify an issue in school or community that you feel strongly about. Find out more about it. Use your voice to address it.
- **Build:** Focus on coming up with a solution to address a problem.

Use *Go for It! The Girl Scout Silver Award* STUDIO 2B insert to "journal it" for discussion with advisor.

Note: Planning hours for the Silver 4Bs Challenge may be applied to the Girl Scout Silver Award hours in STEP 5.

STEP 5: THE GIRL SCOUT SILVER AWARD PROJECT

- Plan It
- Know More About It
- Choose It
- Map It
- Adjust plans if necessary
- Do It! The project should:
 - Take approximately 40 hours to complete (including planning time)
 - Provide community service, but can be done inside or outside of Girl Scouting
 - Be approved by your leader or advisor.

Note: Permission for any money-earning related to project must be obtained from Girl Scout council.

STEP 6: THINK ABOUT IT

- After reading *Go for It! The Girl Scout Silver Award* STUDIO 2B insert, evaluate your project with your advisor.
- Optional (check with your council): Submit the *Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report* to your council and use it as an evaluation guideline.

Do's and Don'ts

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask your advisor or a council-approved adult to be your project advisor.• Find out if your council has a schedule for submission of reports for award ceremonies and plan accordingly.• Follow all national and council guidelines for fundraising.• Follow all safety-guidelines found in <i>Safety-Wise</i>.• Be able to document your unique role, hours, and accomplishments if working with a group on the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be afraid to do an individual project following your own interests.• Be afraid to use resource people whose knowledge or careers can make your Girl Scout Silver Award the best that it can be.• Submit a plan to the council for council approval—your project can be approved by your troop/group advisor or Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor.• Feel you need to have earned the Girl Scout Bronze Award in order to work on this award.• Feel like you have to complete the Girl Scout Silver Award in order to "go for the Gold" at the next age-level.

Completion

Evaluate your project with your Girl Scout Silver Award advisor. You may need to fill out *the Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report form*, have your advisor sign it, and submit it to your Girl Scout Council office. Many Girl Scout councils honor Girl Scout Silver Awardees at a special ceremony in the spring of the year. In order to be eligible for the award, find out what the submission deadline is for your council. Ceremonies can also be planned by individuals, groups, or service units to honor girls upon completion of their award.

Inspiration Corner

Need inspiration? Here are some sample projects to get you thinking.

- Clean up a polluted stream for wildlife
- Create a "science nook" at a school
- Create a Lou Henry Hoover Memorial Sanctuary at camp
- Establish a sustainable food pantry in your community
- Host a walker "pit stop" for an extended breast cancer walk
- Learn to be clowns and visit hospitals or senior centers
- Make puppet boxes to accompany stories for Daisy and Brownie Girl Scouts
- Plan and coordinate a math day for younger girls
- Put on a bicycle safety fair in your community
- Start a sustainable recycling program at school
- Write and perform a puppet play to teach children safety tips they can use when not in school.



Benefits of Earning the Girl Scout Silver Award

1. The Girl Scout Silver Award is recognized as the second highest award in Girl Scouting. It is a national award with national standards, awarded by your council on behalf of Girl Scouts of the USA.
2. You are recognized as a future community leader if you have earned the Girl Scout Silver Award as an individual or as part of a group.
3. Although you don't have to do the Girl Scout Silver Award before going for the Girl Scout Gold Award, going for the Girl Scout Silver Award develops skills that will allow you to stretch in going for the Girl Scout Gold Award.
4. You'll find yourself supported by the community while on your quest for leadership in many ways. Being a Girl Scout will open many doors.
5. Having your family members pitch in to help with your project can be fun! It can be a positive time spent working together.
6. Believe it or not, younger girls will look up to you when you earn that award. Are you prepared to help mentor someone?
7. Learning to work closely with a group to accomplish your goal for the community can be a lesson in cooperation, leadership, and compromise. Teamwork is a skill that goes beyond the sports field.
8. Working on a Girl Scout Silver Award is a safe way to build your leadership skills while acting on a community issue you really care about.
9. You will build skills and expand your knowledge. Who knows what you can accomplish before you set the goal and go for it!
10. You will create change in the world around you.
11. Working on the project with friends can be a lot of fun!



From Good to Great: Successful Girl Scout Silver Award Projects

One of the roles of the troop/group advisor and Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor is to help a girl or group of girls move a project that may be a good idea to a great idea. It is important to differentiate between a community service project and a Girl Scout Silver Award project. The later should involve planning and individual opportunities for leadership and decision making. When working on a group project, each girl needs to play an individual role. Here are several activities that start as good service projects, but with some careful coaching, have moved into the caliber of Girl Scout Silver Award project.

Good Service Project ?	GREAT Girl Scout Silver Award Project!
Volunteering many hours at a park site picking up litter.	Working with the park to establish an ongoing "Junior Ranger" Program for neighborhood children during the summer and weekends.
Working at the local library doing children's story hours.	Creating an after school reading program for a homeless shelter after meeting with the children and establishing needs — building bookshelves and selecting books from donations.
Sewing pillows for very ill children in a hospital.	Assessing needs for the children's hospital with administration and children. Teaching younger girls to sew "keeper pillows" and special head covers for ill children in several hospitals.
Planting flowers with a group in a park during a community service day.	Organizing a community clean-up, beautification day and BBQ that becomes an annual event involving businesses and families. Planting window boxes, painting porches and cleaning up vacant lots are some of the completed tasks.



Ways Parent /Guardians Can Support Girls Working on Girl Scout Silver Awards

The Girl Scout Silver Award is the highest award in Girl Scouting that girls 11-14 can earn. It represents a girl's commitment to herself and to her community, as she focuses on leadership, career exploration, personal challenges and completing a project that will benefit her community. It takes many hours of preparation, planning and work to accomplish the goals a girl has set for herself.

Parents/guardians play a significant role in supporting a girl's path to the Girl Scout Silver Award. As a parent you may be called upon to be coach, mentor, cheerleader, sounding board and chauffeur.

As a parent, you are not expected to be a taskmaster — this is the girl's project. However, you can assist a girl by:

- Reading through the materials provided to girls regarding these awards so that you feel comfortable offering support.
- Encouraging and supporting her, but not pressuring her. “Going for the Silver” is something that a girl has to want to do herself.
- Helping her choose a topic that will become the basis for her project if she asks for ideas. Remember, however, that the topic is based on her passions, not yours.
- Aiding her in accessing a network of adults who can lend insight, provide contacts, and point to resources. You may work with someone who has just the skill set your daughter needs in an advisor, or someone who belongs to a service club that your daughter and her advisor can approach for financial assistance.
- Supporting a girl in following any Girl Scout safety or money earning guidelines during her path to the Girl Scout Silver Award. This is important to assure the safety of your daughter and the integrity of the Girl Scout program.
- Allowing your daughter to stumble and learn the lessons that come with the Girl Scout Silver Award project. She will have a Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor, an adult who has been trained to assist her in partnership.
- Realizing that your daughter is capable, competent and worthy of respect as she assumes more responsibilities within her community. Provide her with positive and constructive support on this journey.
- Attending the event if it is appropriate, and joining in the celebration as your daughter is honored for her accomplishments.



FAQs about the Girl Scout Silver Award

- Q:** What if a girl has already started on her Girl Scout Silver Award. Will she give up anything if she changes to the new requirements?
- A:** All girls have the option to choose whether to stay with the old requirements if they have started or to switch over to the new ones. A girl should discuss her options with her advisor. Girls can also mix and match in the two years of transitioning. Girls can also decide to receive the 2001-2003 award pins and the From Dreams to Reality Patch if they have earned the 2004 requirements — while the supply of pins lasts. A girl contemplating working on her Girl Scout Silver Award this fall should begin with the new requirements.
- Q:** Can girls earn the Girl Scout Silver Award if they are involved in STUDIO 2B?
- A:** All girls, once they have left Junior Girl Scouts and are between the ages of 11-14, can work on their Girl Scout Silver Awards.
- Q:** Do girls need to complete the Girl Scout Silver Award before they are in grade 10 or ages 14 to 18?
- A:** Yes, it can only be earned by girls 11-14 or in grades 6-9.
- Q:** If a group of girls is bridging from Junior Girl Scouts in the spring, can they then begin work on their Girl Scout Silver Award activities?
- A:** If girls celebrate moving from Juniors to the next level at the end of their school year (whether fifth or sixth grade) to whatever they decide to call themselves at the next level, they can start work on activities leading up to the Girl Scout Silver Award, such as Interest Project Awards or STUDIO 2B charms over the summer before they are registered “officially” for the next level. They must, however, be age 12 or in the seventh grade to begin work on steps 5-6 of their Girl Scout Silver Award project (as stated in the new guidelines for the Girl Scout Silver Award.)
- Q:** Can a group of girls work on their Girl Scout Silver Award together?
- A:** Yes! It is important, however, that each girl have an individual leadership role and each girl logs her own hours. Each girl should fill out her own Girl Scout Silver Award STUDIO 2B insert and the GSUSA Girl Scout Silver Award (if required by her council), stating what she did and learned individually (and as part of a group.)
- Q:** How can we assure that Girl Scout Silver Awards represent quality projects? In the past we have had some projects that resemble service projects signed off by advisors.
- A:** Ensure that both the girl and her advisor receive orientation about the award and about the difference between a service project and a Girl Scout Silver Award Project, whether it is through training, Web site information, or a marketing piece. The last thing you want to do is tell a girl her project isn't the caliber of a Girl Scout Silver Award project when the report comes in. The project at that point reflects on the adults who are advising her

and it would be unacceptable to refuse her the award if she had put in the hours and gone through the process.

Q: Do girls need to complete the steps that come before the Girl Scout Silver Award projects in any order?

A: Girls can do the Girl Scout Silver Leadership Award, the Girl Scout Silver Career Award, in any order, but they should do the Girl Scout Silver 4B's Challenge as the last step before doing the project. They must complete STEPS 1-4, be the correct age and be working with an advisor before working on their project.

Q: What is the Girl Scout Silver 4 B's Challenge?

A: The Girl Scout Silver 4 B's Challenge will help girls be better prepared and informed before choosing a project to spend many hours on. It was initiated to end the frustration girls expressed about coming up with ideas for projects. It also makes the 4 Bs (the Girl Scout program goals) a more meaningful part of the project and the logical time for the project advisor to step in to help girls once they focus on what they want to do. Since the Girl Scout Silver 4 B's Challenge represents an important part of the project planning process, girls may count the hours working on the 4B's Challenge towards the hours on their project.

Q: If a girl has done similar activities in pursuit of other Girl Scout awards, can these activities count toward the Girl Scout Silver Award?

A: Activities done prior to working on the awards or as activities counting towards other leadership awards can not be counted toward the number of hours for this award. However, if a girl has earned, for example, the charm for a STUDIO 2B Focus Book, which is one of the requirements for one of the awards, **she can set new goals for herself in that book.** Note: Hours earned toward the Girl Scout Silver Award **can** count toward the President's Volunteer Service Awards if your council is participating as a "certifying organization."

Q: Do the changes in 2004 make the awards harder or easier to earn?

A: Some of the steps leading up to the award project have been streamlined so that each step is a progression toward the most important part of the award — the action project. The project has a greater number of hours to complete, but the hours in the Girl Scout Silver 4B's Challenge can be applied to the project.

Q: What is the difference between a troop/group advisor and a Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor in the Girl Scout Silver Award process? Do girls need both?

A: A troop/group advisor is the adult who is working with an ongoing troop or group. She works with girls in the first three steps of their Girl Scout Silver Award —helping them get initial information, working on the Silver Leadership Award, and the Girl Scout Silver Career Award. Some resource consultants may be brought in while girls are working on specific Interest project awards, but the advisor will help girls keep on track and lay out an overall timeline. The troop/group advisor may help girls with the initial activities in working on the 4B's. Once a girl (or girls) develops her vision statement, the advisor might help her identify a person in the community who might be a great project advisor. Girls are encouraged to go beyond the group when seeking specific knowledge for a project. However, the troop/group advisor may act as the project advisor if she can fulfill that role and it is a decision arrived at by the girl and herself.

The Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor is an adult who has received training or will receive training on how to work with girls on the project. She will have specific experience related to the project. For example, if a girl is doing a project to benefit a homeless shelter, her project advisor might be the person who runs the shelter, or if girls are doing a literacy project, the project advisor might be a librarian. If girls are doing a day camp for girls, their advisor might be someone who has run day camps in the council or the community. It is possible that the troop/group advisor can work in partnership with the project advisor.

- Q: How do girls get a Girl Scout Silver Award advisor if they are not in a troop or group? Can they do the first steps on their own?
- A: Individually registered girls (Juliettes) should check with their Girl Scout council or service unit. There should be an adult in place to help girls through the process. Once girls commit to working toward a Girl Scout Silver Award, they should have a Girl Scout Silver Award advisor assigned to them. That person will work with a girl through all of the steps or up to when a Girl Scout Silver Award project advisor is recruited or that person may act as the project advisor as well. This is because many of the steps involve discussion and analysis where feedback is needed.
- Q: Is it recommended that a girl's parent be her project advisor for the Girl Scout Silver Award?
- A: For a number of reasons it is best to find a project advisor who is not the girl's parent. It is not always possible to get the full benefit of the leadership experience if working with a parent. If the mother is the person working with a group project, she might bring in a project advisor to assist her in the planning or implementation process, or make sure her daughter is working directly with her co-advisor. Avoid situations where parents do a girl's work, even when it comes to calling and asking questions. If money earning is involved, the girl and her advisor can act as a team, with the girl doing the planning and the adult doing the "ask." Girls can ask family members to help with their projects.
- Q: Do girls need to submit a plan to the council for approval?
- A: For many Girl Scout councils girls will not have to, but others may require it. Girls may also need to submit a project report at the end of their work. This form is available through the council office or on girlscouts.org. It needs to be signed by the advisor. However, if the project requires money earning or involves the council in any way (such as use of council property, a public event for the community or a partnership with another non-profit group) the council must give permission for the project to go ahead.
- Q: Do girls need to complete the Girl Scout Silver Award before they work on the Girl Scout Gold Award?
- A: A girl cannot work on her Girl Scout Gold Award before the age of 14. A girl doesn't need to earn the Girl Scout Silver Award to begin the Girl Scout Gold Award. However, it is helpful, as some of the processes are the same, and many of the skills that are learned in working on the Girl Scout Silver Award are a foundation for working on the Girl Scout Gold Award.
- Q: What if girls want to help raise money for their local hospital, because someone in the troop is sick. Can they do this?
- A: Girls need to follow national and council guidelines related to fundraising and money earning. Girl Scouts cannot raise money for another organization according to GSUSA

policy. However, girls can volunteer for that organization or decide to use money from their treasury to fund the work of their Girl Scout Silver Award (like buy paint to paint a homeless shelter). Instead of marching in a walkathon, girls can volunteer to help with registration or first aid, or make sure everyone has water and a snack along the route. Any money earning MUST be reviewed and approved by the council BEFORE it is done.

Q: Are there projects besides fund raising that girls should not do for their Girl Scout Silver Awards?

A: If there is a question about whether it can be a Girl Scout Silver Award project, girls and their advisors should check with the council. Avoid projects that are just simple service projects, projects that involve Web sites (usually a lot of legal issues involved), or like creating a "council's own" patch.

Q: Where does a girl wear her Silver Award awards?

A: If a girl wears the Girl Scout uniform for girls 11-14, she can choose to wear her earned charms on the STUDIO 2B Bracelet or on the STUDIO 2B Charm Holder pinned to the sash or vest with other earned insignia. The Girl Scout Silver Award goes to the left of the Girl Scouts of the USA Membership Pin. She can wear the STUDIO 2B Bracelet and Charm Holder and the Girl Scout Membership Pin and Girl Scout Silver Award with regular clothing as well.

Note: See also Gold Award FAQs and section on "Money Earning for Leadership Projects" under Gold Awards.