

TROOP OF EXCELLENCE

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore's Troop of Excellence program was established in 2025 to recognize troops who provide Girl Scouts with exceptional experiences. Troops earning this recognition provide strong, balanced programs for Girl Scouts at all age levels. This prestigious distinction promotes girl/adult partnerships, girl planning, community service, and involvement with the greater Girl Scout community.

Troops who achieve the Troop of Excellence distinction will be showcased on GSMISTS social media and publications. They will receive a certificate and can purchase the Troop of Excellence patch to wear proudly on their vest or sash.

Troop of Excellence Program Details

- GSMISTS Troop of Excellence program spans the membership year – October 1 to September 30.
- Troops must complete all “Troop of Excellence Standards” requirements.
- Troops must also complete “Troop Choice Activities” requirements as follows:
 - Daisy troops must complete 5 troop choice activities.
 - Brownie and Junior troops must complete 7 troop choice activities.
 - Cadette, Senior, Ambassador, and Multi-Level troops must complete 9 troop choice activities.
- Experiences may only be counted towards fulfilling a single requirement.
- The expectation is that at least 75% of girls in the troop participate in a requirement to count the requirement (unless another percentage is specified in the requirements).
- The Troop of Excellence [online application](#) opens on December 1, 2025. Completed applications must be submitted by September 30, 2026. Late applications will not be accepted.
- Troops can purchase the Troop of Excellence patch after their online application has been approved by GSMISTS.

Use this document to track your troop's progress towards becoming a Troop of Excellence. This information will be referenced when your Troop of Excellence [online application](#) is completed.



Please save this PDF to your computer BEFORE typing any information into the fields. [Adobe Acrobat's](#) “Fill & Sign” tool is recommended – it's free!

Troop of Excellence Standards

Registration and Training (all required)

- Membership registrations were completed by September 30, 2025 for returning members of existing troops or by the first meeting for new troops.
- Troop has at least 2 approved (registered member of Girl Scouts and background check approved) and appointed leaders.
- GSMISTS New Leader Training* was completed by the troop leader (for new troops or new troop leadership). Available on gsLearn dashboard.
 - Not complete. Existing troop.
- GSMISTS Troop Leader Refresher Training* was completed by the troop leader (for existing troops). Available on gsLearn dashboard.
 - Not complete. New troop/new troop leadership.
- Every volunteer registered as troop leader/assistant troop leader(s) completed *GSUSA Girl Scouts Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Course*. Available on gsLearn dashboard.
- Every volunteer registered as a troop leader/assistant troop leader(s) completed at least one enhancement training. Training can be in person, virtual, or on gsLearn. Enhancement trainings include those listed in purple on the GSMISTS [Event Calendar](#).



List completed enhancement training:

Date(s) _____

- At least 1 troop volunteer held a current certification in First Aid and CPR and submitted it to GSMISTS.



Troop Planning and Communication (all required)

- Troop was displayed on the online Troop Catalog and was accepting of new members (girls and adults).
- At least 1 troop planning session was conducted during the year. Girls' interests and ideas were incorporated into the yearly calendar.



Date(s) _____

- Troop held at least 2 parent/caregivers meetings throughout the year, encouraging parents/caregivers participation in the troop and fostering good communication and teamwork. Best times to hold a parent meeting: back-to-school, cookie season, and end-of-year.

Date(s) _____

- The troop developed a plan for regular communication with parents/caregivers.
- Troop representative attended at least 50% of service unit meetings.

Date(s) _____

- Troop leadership made use of [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) and discussed safety/emergency rules with their troop, parents/caregivers, and chaperones for meetings, activities, and trips.

Financial Accountability and Product Program (all required)

- Troop established and maintained a bank account with at least two authorized signers, as required by GSMISTS guidelines.
- Troop submitted Annual Finance Report on time (on or before June 1).



Date(s) _____

- Troop had clean ACH sweep history for both product programs (no bounces or delays) and troop had no outstanding debt with GSMISTS.

Financial Accountability and Product Program continued on next page.

Fall Treats & Reads

- Appointed a Troop Product Manager and at least 1 troop volunteer completed the GSMISTS Fall Treats & Reads Training.

Volunteer's name _____

Date(s) _____

- Troop distributed Fall Treats & Reads program materials to all families and collected the Product Program Participation forms.
- Troop Product Manager shared PAEC e-mail from the M2 Media troop dashboard to every girl in troop.
- Troop set a Fall Treats & Reads goal.

What was the goal?

- At least 75% of girls in the troop participated in the Fall Treats & Reads program with each girl selling at least 12 items.

Girl Scout Cookie Program

- Appointed a Troop Cookie Manager and at least 1 troop volunteer completed the GSMISTS Girl Scout Cookie Program Training.

Volunteer's name _____

Date(s) _____

- Troop distributed Girl Scout Cookie Program materials to all families and collected the Product Program Participation forms.
- Entered troop bank account information into Smart Cookies before the given deadline.
- Girls learned about the 5 Skills: Goal Setting, Decision Making, Money Management, People Skills, and Business Ethics by participating in at least one of the following:
 - Earn a Cookie Badge
 - Earn the Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin
 - Attend a service unit cookie rally/kick-off event

Date(s) _____

- Troop Cookie Manager sent at least 3 "cheer messages" (through the Smart Cookies system) to all girls in the troop.

Date(s) _____



- Troop set a Girl Scout Cookie Program goal.

What was the goal?

- Troop participated in at least 3 cookie booth opportunities.

Date(s)/Location(s) _____

- At least 75% of girls in the troop participated in the Girl Scout Cookie Program by selling at least 300 packages of cookies (per girl).
- Finalize rewards in the Smart Cookies system before given deadline.

Girl Scout Ceremonies and Activities (all required)

- The troop planned and participated in at least 1 traditional Girl Scout Ceremony.

- Court of Awards
- Bridging
- Investiture
- Rededication

- The troop observed at least two of the following:

- Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday (October 31)
- World Thinking Day (February 22)
- Girl Scout Week (week the includes March 12)
- Girl Scout Birthday (March 12)
- Girl Scout Leader Appreciation Day (April 22)



- The troop participated in at least 1 GSMISTS-organized activity (listed on the [Event Calendar](#)).

What was the activity?

- The troop participated in at least 1 age-appropriate outdoor activity during the year

What was the activity?

- The troop completed at least 4 badges for their grade level during the year.

Which badges were completed?

Troop Choice Activities

Daisy troops must complete 5 troop choice activities. Brownie and Junior troops must complete 7 troop choice activities. Cadette, Senior, Ambassador, and Multi-Level troops must complete 9 troop choice activities. Provide a **brief description** of how the activity was accomplished in the space below each activity.

- A minimum of 50% of girl members and 2 adult members are renewed by June 30, 2026 for the 2026-2027 membership year.
- The troop participated in a recruitment event to encourage new girls to join their troop or to start a new troop.
- Troop members hosted a “Bring a Friend” troop meeting.
- The troop conducted at least 2 flag ceremonies, with at least 1 being a public flag ceremony (i.e. PTA meeting, community club meetings, ball game, etc.).
- The troop participated in an activity that promoted community awareness of Girl Scouts.
- The troop participated in at least 1 service unit event.
- The troop participated in at least 1 activity with another Girl Scout troop.



- The troop completed a community service project.
- The troop completed a Take Action project.
- Troop member selected and completed their own [Leadership Award](#).
- The troop completed their [Bronze](#) or [Silver](#) Award.
- The troop took at least 1 trip away from their regular meeting place for badge work.
- The troop visited a [GSMISTS property](#).
- The troop went on an [age-appropriate travel experience](#).
- The troop participated in a [Program on Demand](#).
- The troop planned and completed a summer activity.
- The troop participated in an activity that encourages environmental stewardship.
- The troop participated in an activity that explores STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math).
- The troop invited a subject matter expert to speak on a badge topic.

- The troop learned about [SWAPS](#), created some, and distributed them.
- The troop learned about Girl Scouting/Girl Guiding in other countries.
- The troop [Shared Their Girl Scout Story](#) with GSMISTS. – showcasing something the troop did. If including photos make sure you have permission from parents/caregivers.

Reflection

Why did your troop decide to work towards becoming a Troop of Excellence, and why do you feel they deserve this distinction?

Do you need an exception to any of the “Troop of Excellence Standards”? If so, please clarify and describe why you are requesting an exception.

By submitting the online application, our troop verifies the information submitted is truthful and accurate. We understand the Troop of Excellence program is based on the honor system and promise that we have conducted ourselves in accordance with the Girl Scout Law.

Frequently Asked Questions

What time frame counts for the Troop of Excellence checklist activities?

Please only include activities your troop completes between October 1 and September 30 each year.

Do all girls in the troop have to participate in each activity we do to qualify?

We understand that sometimes an illness or other circumstance may prevent all girls from participating in an activity. Girls who were not in the troop at the time of the activity are exempt. Please do not include activities on the checklist in which fewer than 75% of girls participated.

When can Troop of Excellence patches be purchased?

Troops can purchase the Troop of Excellence patches after their [online application](#) has been submitted and approved by GSMISTS. The online application will be available annually beginning on December 1.

What counts as “participation” in the product programs?

At least 75% of the girls in the troop must participate in the product programs. Girls should set a goal and work toward it.

If my troop was not established when the Fall Treats & Reads program or Girl Scout Cookie Program was occurring can my troop still qualify to be a Troop of Excellence?

Yes, the troop can still qualify as a Troop of Excellence. On the [online application](#) there is the opportunity to request an exception from a “Troop of Excellence Standard”.

What does it mean to be “girl-led” and how would we demonstrate that?

Girl-led means that girls are playing an active part in figuring out the “what, where, when, how, and why” of their activities. While a Daisy and Ambassador troop can demonstrate this in different ways, the opportunity to help create their unique troop experience should be available to all girls. How did girls plan their camping trip, ceremony, or troop meetings? Were girls given a choice as to what badges to work on? Did older girls help run an activity for younger girls? These are all ways you can demonstrate the troop is girl-led.

Do fun patches count for earned badges and awards?

No. Badges and awards may include GSUSA badges, Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards, Leadership awards, My Promise My Faith awards, etc.

Can an activity meet multiple requirements, such as a STEM camp?

The intent of the Troop of Excellence program is to provide girls with a variety of activities. Please choose the single best category for each activity.

Does the troop leader have to be the person attending the service unit meetings to qualify?

We encourage you to share this requirement with all troop volunteers. The troop may be represented by any adult at the service unit meeting who can then report the information back to the troop leader/assistant troop leader.

For additional questions contact us at customercare@gsmists.org