

The joy of the trail is not the distance covered but in the scenes, adventures, and discoveries along the way.

—Girl Scout Handbook, 1933



Ultimate Recreation Challenge

You're at the peak of your exciting Girl Scouting career and ready to do something big. You're no stranger to the outdoors—you've been camping, hiking, canoeing—but the Ultimate Recreation Challenge is a chance to deepen your experiences. You'll go on five adventures where you can step up your outdoor skills and do awe-inspiring things you've never done. You decide what you'll do, where you'll go, and what your goals will be. And there's no race to earn this badge! Take time to savor each adventure—and to create the stories you'll be telling for a lifetime.

Steps

1. Experience an ultimate adventure on a trail
2. Take the ultimate camping trip
3. Dive into an ultimate water adventure
4. Go on the ultimate offbeat adventure
5. Do an ultimate recreation challenge unique to your area

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll have planned and taken five adventures that transformed and challenged me.

Made possible by a generous grant from the Elliott Wildlife Values Project

Why hurry? Enjoy each step and soak up every experience. Adventure like you mean it!

Adventure Profile

What kind of adventures do you want to have? Are you looking for something adrenaline-fueled ... exotic and unfamiliar ... nature exploring ... or a survivor-type experience? Think through these questions to get in touch with your adventure personality and help shape your challenges:

I am most excited by ...

The skills I'm most proud of are ...

I am most afraid of ...

I admire women who challenge themselves by ...

My dream trip would take me to ...

My dream adventure would be ...

The person I'd most like to travel with is ...

I'd like to be able to teach younger girls to ...

Before You Start

CHOOSE YOUR TRIP.

This badge says "challenge" for a reason! It's your chance to try new things. Go further than you've gone before. Or take something you know and do it better. Some ideas:

- ▶ If you've gone on day hikes, plan a multi-day hike.
- ▶ If you've canoed or kayaked only on still water, try doing it on moving water.
- ▶ If you've never gone zip-lining or rock climbing—now's your chance.

GET READY.

Learn new skills or brush up ones you know before you set out. Some ideas:

- ▶ Practice navigating with your compass.
- ▶ Learn how to repair gear or equipment. How would you fix a ding in your surf board or a rip in your tent, for example?
- ▶ Get certified, if it's a requirement (like for scuba diving).

MAKE A PLAN.

Planning and anticipating are half the fun of going on an adventure. Once you decide on your outdoor challenge, take the steps to make it happen. Some ideas:

- ▶ Find some friends to share the fun.
- ▶ Check out trips offered by your Girl Scout council or local outdoors groups.
- ▶ Come up with a budget, and figure out how to pay for your trip. (For example, your group may want to use your Girl Scout cookie earnings.)
- ▶ If needed, get trained by an expert or take them with you!



STEP **1** Experience an ultimate adventure on a trail

Why a trail? Because there are hundreds of spectacular trails throughout America—ones with majestic views, challenging treks, and wildlife at every turn. You can hit a trail for a day, several days, or more ... it's up to your personal plan.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS:

- ☐ Ride a horse on a trail.
- ☐ Clear brush or help repair a trail.
- ☐ Do a 5K or 10K trail race.
- ☐ Mountain bike on a trail.
- ☐ Hike on part of a famous trail, like the Appalachian Trail, Continental Divide Scenic Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, Buckeye Trail, or John Muir Trail.
- ☐ Go snowshoeing on a trail.
- ☐ Go cross-country skiing on a trail.
- ☐ Explore waterfalls along a trail.
- ☐ Hike a trail that challenges you—it could be hilly, remote, or covered in snow.





Challenge Checklist

- Pack your camera.
- Do a safety check on your gear and equipment.
- Find out how to do emergency repairs to your gear and equipment.
- Put together a first-aid kit.
- Have an emergency plan with contact numbers.
- Check out the Girl Scout safety guidelines.
- Make sure to have all your permission slips.*
- Go over the Leave No Trace rules.
- Check the weather before you head out.
- Bring snacks!

*You may need permission from your council and parent/guardian to take part in some of the suggested activities.

STEP 2 Take the ultimate camping trip

You may know the joys of pitching a tent and sleeping under the stars, cooking a scrumptious campfire meal, and listening to the sounds of wildlife. Now find ways to break new ground with your camping.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS:

- ☐ Go backcountry camping.
- ☐ Take a trip to the coast, and check out different beachfront campsites.
- ☐ Experience survival camping: Learn how to make or find your own food, navigate by the stars, collect and purify water, make a shelter, build a fire, and camouflage yourself.
- ☐ Take a multi-day canoe trip down a river.
- ☐ Take a multi-day trip in a national or state park.
- ☐ Sleep in a rain forest.
- ☐ Camp out in snow.

More to Explore

Endless Trails The Girls Scouts is proud to partner with the National Park Service, which was started in 1916 and protects more than 400 places across the USA. There are park sites in every state, as well as the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



STEP 3 Dive into an ultimate water adventure

Dip into an adventure challenge with a water activity—it could be taking an action-packed white-water rafting trip or stretching your skills with long-distance canoeing. Find a new activity to try out, or up your game if you’ve already done it.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS:

- ☐ Scuba diving
- ☐ Snorkeling
- ☐ Water-skiing
- ☐ Jet skiing
- ☐ White-water rafting
- ☐ Canoeing or kayaking
- ☐ Stand up paddleboarding
- ☐ Surfing
- ☐ Windsurfing
- ☐ Swimming somewhere new: across a lake, or in an ocean





STEP 4 Go on the ultimate offbeat adventure

Take an adventure that grabs your imagination—something you may have heard about but never done. Or something you dare yourself to do. It doesn't have to be heart stopping, just experience the outdoors in a totally different way.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS:

- ☐ Go zip-lining.
- ☐ Snowmobile across a wilderness terrain.
- ☐ Glide down an alpine slide: Deer Valley in Utah has one of the longest slides in the world.
- ☐ Camp out in a cave.
- ☐ Participate in a mud run—an obstacle course with mud-soaked inner tubes, mud pits, and balance beams.
- ☐ Hike up and into a dormant volcano, like ones in California, Hawaii, and Mexico.
- ☐ Go sandboarding down sand dunes.
- ☐ Bike down a ski trail in the summer.
- ☐ Go underwater cave diving.



STEP 5 Do an ultimate recreation challenge unique to your area

Step outside and explore an outdoor specialty in your neck of the woods. What activities set your region apart? Try something new, or if you've done it before, take it up a notch.

SOME EXAMPLES:

REGIONAL FEATURE	ULTIMATE RECREATION CHALLENGE IDEAS
Ocean	Surfing, sea kayaking, scuba diving
Caves	Overnight camping
Mountains	Climbing, biking, trekking, skiing
Snow	Snowshoeing, cross-country or downhill skiing, ice climbing
Desert	Desert camping, sandboarding
River	White-water rafting
Forest	Backpacking, hiking, camping, bird-watching

Careers to Explore

- Adventure tour guide
- Adventure travel writer
- Athletics coach
- Camp director
- Environmental journalist
- Environmentalist
- Fish and game warden
- Mountaineer
- National Park director
- Outdoor educator
- Paddling instructor
- Park ranger
- River-rafting guide
- Sports photographer
- Travel agent
- Wilderness survival instructor
- Wildlife photographer





Add the Badge to Your Journeys

Your Journeys invite you to find solutions for justice, advocate for others, and to live your dreams while you help others do the same. As you embark on your adventure challenges, keep your heart and mind open to all the opportunities where you can do something to make a real difference. You'll find Take Action projects through the stories you hear and the things you see.

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Teaching Cadettes or Seniors how to get mentally prepared for a high-adventure activity.
- Creating a presentation or video that tells the story of my favorite recreation challenge and how it stretched or inspired me.
- Volunteering or Taking Action to preserve and protect the outdoor spaces unique to my region.



I'm inspired to:

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