

Girl Scout Ways and Traditions

Below are just a few fun Girl Scout Ways and Traditions you can incorporate in your Girl Scout meetings and activities as a way to connect the girls with the long standing Girl Scout Sisterhood!

The Quiet Sign

The **Quiet Sign** should be taught to even the youngest Girl Scouts. If you wish to get the group's attention, calmly raise your right hand in the air. When the group sees this, they raise their hands too, and "**when the hand goes up, your mouth goes shut.**" Traditionally, the quiet sign is the raised hand with five fingers. The fifth law in the old Girl Scout Law was "to be courteous." So, when girls raise their hand in the Quiet Sign, they are being courteous to the speaker. Sometimes you'll see people using the three-fingered sign raised. This is a newer tradition, and it works too!

The Talking Sign

Years ago, Brownies had a special two-fingered sign when they said their own Brownie Promise. Now, Brownies say the same Promise as all other Girl Scouts. Now the two-fingered sign is called the **Talking Sign** and is used when girls are sitting in their Daisy Circle. When a girl has something to say, she makes the two-fingered sign and taps the floor in front of her.

Girl Scout troops often use a **Talking Stick** when having discussions. The talking stick is actually a Native American tradition, and can be plain or decorated. Only the person holding the talking stick may speak – if a girl wishes to speak, she would use the talking sign to signal that she would like to have the talking stick passed to her. Sometimes troops use some other sort of object such as a stuffed animal as a "talking bear" or other object.

The Do It/Did It Cans

Many troops use “**Do it/Did It**” cans to fairly take turns for special opportunities. Put a popsicle stick with each girl’s name in the “Do It” can. When one of those situations comes up, pick a stick and put that one in the “Did It” can. When all girls have had a chance, put them all back in the “Do It” can and start over. When girls know that eventually it will be their turn to be the first for something, “It” in a game, the flag carrier, or even the person who gets to sit next to the leader, they can wait more patiently when it isn’t their turn. You’ll know which things to use the cans for when the girls are all raising their hands wanting to be picked!

The Girl Scout Handshake

This is a formal way of greeting other Girl Scouts and Girl Guides. You shake hands with the left hand and give the Girl Scout sign with your right hand. The left handed handshake represents friendship because the left hand is closer to the heart than the right.

Girl Scout Motto:

BE PREPARED Here’s how our motto was explained in the 1947 *Girl Scout Handbook*: “A Girl Scout is ready to help out whenever she is needed. Willingness to serve is not enough; you must know how to do the job well, even in an emergency. When you read tales of great heroism or lives of men and women who gave great service to humanity, you will notice that these people were able to do so much only because they had trained themselves along the way.

Girl Scout Slogan: Do a Good Turn Daily.

The Girl Scout slogan has been used since 1912. Girl Scouts in that era would tie a knot in their neckerchiefs. The knot could not be untied until a good deed was done! Before they went to sleep at night, girls were to think of the good deed that they did that day. Today, the slogan is a nice reminder of the many ways – both large and small – we can contribute to the lives of others.