

Troop Money-Earning Guide

The basics of what troop leaders need to know about money-earning philosophies, potential methods and resources!



Money does not grow on trees. It is disguised with plastic and paper, it may take the form of barter or trade, it magically appears at machines but money is not free. Money is a reward for hard work and requires financial planning and discipline. It is important for girls to learn money management skills such as goal setting, budgeting and saving. This guide will help you make “cents” of troop money-earning.

SHIFTING PERSPECTIVE!

Troop money-earning represents something far greater than an additional method for supporting troop activities. It is an opportunity for girls to learn about all aspects of money management: setting financial goals, budgeting, saving, and aspects of entrepreneurship, including creating a product, marketing and customer service. Troop money-earning can be fun and interesting while building important skills for the future. This handout provides the **basics** of what troop leaders need to know to keep within the Girl Scout guidelines.

TROOP MONEY-EARNING: Activities following a planned budget and carried out by girls and supported by adults, in partnership, to earn money for the troop treasury. (Safety-Wise Standard 28, pg. 74)

First Things First... the Goal of Troop Money-Earning Activities

Developing self-potential, relating to others, developing values, and contributing to society are at the heart of Girl Scout Goals for girls. Focus on what skills girls will develop by participating in troop money-earning. Earning the money should be secondary.

Developing a Plan

As the girls decide on activities they would like to accomplish during the year, the troop will create a troop budget. (Yearly membership dues may be included.)

Using the troop budget can then determine:

1. The total cost of the activities that are planned.
2. The total money available through current sources. (i.e. dues, cookie sale earnings, etc.)
3. The troop money-earning goal.

The money-earning goals should be realistically achievable for the age and skill level of the girls involved. If not, this is an indication that the troop plans are not appropriate for this troop.

A Great Place to Start: Product Sales

Troop participation in Girl Scout sponsored product sales is the safest, most effective way to participate in troop money-earning, while ensuring good program support for the money-earning activity. Although girls are not required to participate in Girl Scout sponsored product sales before undertaking other methods of troop money-earning, it is **strongly** recommended. Girls benefit from the cookie sale in many ways:

1. Girls earn money for troop funds.
2. A portion of the cookie sale funds go towards council operations such as subsidizing and maintaining program opportunities, summer camp opportunities, financial assistance, troop support and much more.
3. Girls learn about goal setting, project planning, communication and teamwork.
4. Brand recognition. For example, customers recognize and love Girl Scout cookies and know they are supporting a good cause.

Coming Up with Ideas

Ask your girls to **brainstorm different ideas**. Troop money-earning should be planned around the girls' interest and should be based on the girls' abilities. Allow them the freedom to come up with a variety of ideas. Choose a topic the girls are interested in, have enthusiasm for, and that has potential for additional learning. Consider the following:

- How much time will be dedicated to developing your plan?
- How much support (time and effort) will the girls need?
- Will the leader and other parents be willing to dedicate?
- Are there badge requirements that could be fulfilled? For example, Girl Scout Juniors can work on earning the Pet Care Badge and also earn money by offering to pet sit an animal.
- Will the troop goals require the girls to spend too much of the year focusing on money-earning activities?
- Can you reduce costs listed in the troop budget?

When can additional money-earning projects be carried out?

Troop money-earning projects can take place throughout the year. However, there are a few blocked dates. Additional money-earning cannot take place during council-sponsored money-earning activities and United Way black-out dates. Please see the Volunteer Resource Guide for more information!

What Money-Earning Activities are Troops NOT allowed to Participate in?

- Games of chance (i.e. raffles, gambling, carnival games, etc.)
- Direct solicitation of cash; such as walk-a-thons, rock-a-thons, etc.
- Endorsement of commercial products like Avon, Pampered Chef, Tupperware, M&M's...

Can troops work in booths at fairs, ballparks, festivals, etc. as staff support to earn money?

Though there is no "one-size fits all" answer, ask yourself a couple questions:

- What are the girls gaining besides income?
- Are the girls being exploited by a commercial organization as a member of Girl Scouts?
- Does the display or promotion suggest that Girl Scouts have a preferred relationship with that company?

Troop Money-Earning Activities

Get creative! Money-Earning shouldn't be boring, girls should have fun building new skills and helping the troop or group achieve their goals for the year. Money-Earning activities should be based on the needs and interests of the girls. Here are some ideas to help you think about getting started:

- Sell Girl Scout Cookies®
- Provide childcare at a special event
- Make handmade greeting cards
- Have a themed car wash
- Do face-painting at a community event
- Hold a drive for returnable cans
- Hold a lunch, dinner or dessert party
- Have a craft fair
- Collect and sell used books
- Make and sell recipe books
- Have a lemonade stand
- Offer holiday gift wrapping services
- Offer tutoring services

Making Decisions about Money WITH the Girls in the Troop

Troops can choose to set up troop funds in a variety of ways. Some examples include:



All earned money goes into a “common pot” to be drawn from equally. This method works particularly well with younger Girl Scouts. This is where every troop should start and is the most common approach.



A portion of money earned goes into a “common pot” to be used equally to cover common expenses or activities in which the majority of girls plan to participate. An additional portion of the money is tracked individually to save towards a long term, bigger troop activity or to be used for individual council-sponsored activities like resident camp.



Girls track all troop money-earning individually and agree to subtract equal amounts for all troop activities. The troop as a body still makes decisions about how the money should be spent. This accounting method does not imply that the money is the property of an individual girl.

To determine which method is right for the girls in your troop and the specifics of how it will be managed the leader and girls should ask themselves the following kinds of questions:



What is meaningful to the girls right now?

How actively involved are they in managing their troop funds? If they are just learning about setting financial goals and managing their money as a group, they are probably not ready to make decisions about individual activities.



What is our philosophy about the way that we run our troop?

Do we believe that everyone should do everything equally or do we believe that different girls contribute in different ways? (For example, one girl may sell a lot of cookies, but another may show up for every troop service project.) How do we recognize that girls often have different “access” to money-earning opportunities?



What are we trying to learn from the way we manage our money?







To work better as a group? To cooperate in achieving troop goals? To develop individual interests that can strengthen the troop in the long run? To develop individual accountability towards the troop goals?



What will we do with our money if one or more girls join the troop with no money or a different amount of money?

What will we do if one or more girls leave the troop? What if she/they go to another troop?

Money-Earning Progression by Age Level

	<p>Girl Scout Daisies should not be handling money or the budget directly. However, they should be making decisions about the activities they are doing as a troop, and learning that those activities cost money. As a result, they should also help make decisions about how they will earn money to do the activities they have chosen. A good approach is for leaders to narrow down a few money-earning options for the girls to vote on.</p>
	<p>Girl Scout Brownies will want to make decisions about the activities they are doing as a troop, and how they will earn the money to do those activities. They want to be able to finish everything they start, but will be slow to do so. Leaders should offer up money-earning ideas that they know the girls are capable of doing so they will be able to complete the task and feel a sense of accomplishment.</p>
	<p>Girl Scout Juniors should be able to come up with some of their own money-earning project ideas. Help them brainstorm some ideas and have them vote as a group. Girl Scout Juniors should also begin to learn the basics of a budget. Teach them the basics of setting up a budget for the activities that they want to do for the year and how to earn money to accomplish those activities.</p>
	<p>Girl Scout Cadettes should be able to put together a general budget for activities and money-earning projects with guidance from leaders. They should also be able to plan and carry out the money-earning projects that they decide on as a group. Girls at this age will need support and guidance from leaders to stay focused on the task at hand.</p>
 	<p>Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors should be able to organize a budget, put together the troop itinerary and assist in record keeping. They should also be able to plan and carry out the money-earning projects that they decide on as group. Girls at this grade level will need minimal guidance. Leaders will act more like advisors during this time</p>

Record Keeping

Leaders are required to fill out the Troop/Group Financial Report by June 30th of each year. Filling this form out will be much easier if good records are kept all year long.

Managing your troop bank account and finances is not unlike your own personal checking account. Your troop will have income and expenses which you can keep track of through your bank account. Document the income and expenses as they happen.

How exactly you keep your records is up to you. However, here are some guidelines to get you started:

- Always keep your receipts and label them. For example, if you went camping and have a receipt for food, label it “camping food.”
- Keep all of your bank statements and check them against your receipts and checkbook ledger.
- Organize everything by month in an accordion folder.
- Have a file for expenses and one for income.

Did You Know?

- ✓ All troop funds must be handled by registered members of Girl Scouts.
- ✓ All funds for the troop must be deposited in the troop bank account.
- ✓ As a troop leader, you must submit a financial report for your troop annually (by June 30th).
- ✓ Troop funds are the property of a troop and not an individual person.
- ✓ Proper accounting of troop finances sets an example for girls and will help them properly manage their personal finances.
- ✓ Troops cannot raise money for another organization (Safety-Wise Standard #33.)
- ✓ Troops cannot sell products, like cookies and nuts, online.
- ✓ Girls should not solicit money from local clubs or organizations. It is the job of an adult to make the official ask.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance provided to **individual** applicants, based on specific financial need and the applicant's compliance with the financial assistance philosophy and guidelines. For more information on financial assistance, please see the financial assistance information in the *Volunteer Resource Guide*. Some guidelines include:

- Applicant must be a currently registered with GSUSA
- Request needs to be submitted on the Financial Assistance Form
- Adults are eligible to apply for financial assistance for troop activities, only when the participation of that adult is required to ensure that Safety-Wise guidelines are fulfilled.

What can Financial Assistance be used for?

- Girl Scout Membership
- Council-sponsored opportunities
- Summer camp opportunities
- Destinations
- Troop trips
- Council-sponsored adult educational opportunities

The Bottom Line

“The income from group money-earning activities never becomes the property of individual members - girls or adults.” (*Safety-Wise*, Standard #29, page 75)

- Decisions about how troop money will be accounted for and spent should be made by the girls in the troop and communicated in writing by the girls to parents to ensure clarity.
- No account may be set up in a girl's name that is replenished through troop funding efforts or donations. No matter what accounting method is used, money earned by girls in Girl Scouting is the property of the troop.
- Money donated to the troop may not personally benefit one member of the troop.

- When a girl moves from one troop to another, her portion of the funds may follow her to another troop based on the decisions previously made by the troop members about how money will be handled. When a girl leaves Girl Scouting, the funds remain property of the troop.
- Funds from disbanding troops remain the property of Girl Scouts, and may be collected by the service unit manager or mailed directly to the Girl Scout Center. Money received from disbanding troops is used to provide financial assistance to Girl Scouts.

Forms

Below is a list of forms that you might need in the troop money-earning process. These forms can be found online in the Volunteer Resource Guide.

- **Approval for Additional Troop/Group Money-Earning Project** - A troop/group would use this form to have additional money-earning projects approved, such as garage sales, bake sales, car washes, etc. The form needs to be signed by your service unit manager.
- **Project Funding Approval Form** - This is to be used for mini-grants/financial support from companies up to \$1,000. Mostly, these funds are attained when a company donates funds to a not-for-profit group as a volunteer matching campaign. The form needs to be submitted to the regional Girl Scout Center for approval BEFORE the check is deposited into the troop's bank account.
- **Girl Scout Donor Form** - When a person/company donates items to the Girl Scouts, this form needs to be filled out, with the donor, giving the dollar amount of the donated items. Once filled out, the form needs to be sent to the regional Girl Scout Center. A donation letter will then be generated for the donor's tax purpose.
- **Financial Assistance Request Form** - Financial assistance is provided to individual applications, based on specific financial need. The form has two sections, one to be completed by the parent/guardian and the other by the leader. The form needs to be sent to the program event registrar or regional program manager.
- **Troop/Group Financial Report** - Once a year (Due June 30th), a financial report is due to the regional office. In the report, you are asked to account for all income and expenses. The report gives you a place to note all monies earned from additional money-earning activities.
- **Troop Bank Account Request** - All troop monies need to be deposited in a troop account. This form will help to assure proper procedures are being followed when opening a troop bank account.

Additional Resources

Girl Scout Resources:

Handbooks and badge books
 Money Smarts (Studio 2B)
 Safety-Wise
 Volunteer Resource Guide

Other Resources:

An Asset Builder's Guide to Youth and Money
 Women who Dare: Exploring Entrepreneurial Adventure
 No More Frogs to Kiss: 99 Ways to Give Economic Power to Girls

