

Winter Adventure

Patch Program

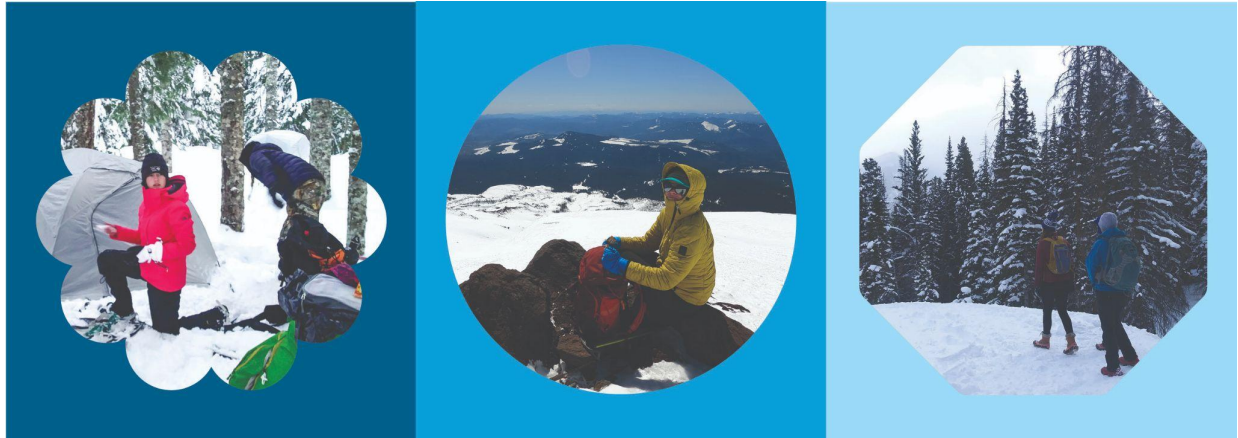


Let's adventure ... in the winter!

Many people get nervous to go explore the wild in the winter, which is understandable. It's colder and darker, and sometimes requires extra gear and clothing. But if you learn how to feel comfortable adventuring in the winter, you open a whole new world of outdoor skills and fun!

According to the [Girl Scout Research Institute](#), Girl Scouts who get outdoors at least once a month are stronger challenge seekers and better problem solvers. Most Girl Scouts in Oregon and SW Washington can access snow a handful of months a year, so learning snow skills expands opportunities to learn and explore. Plus, you get to visit new areas you don't always get to see in the summer!

By completing this patch program, you'll feel confident to get started with winter hiking or snowshoeing. You'll know how to stay safe and warm in cold weather and what extra gear you might need in winter. There are five steps in this self-guided program. Each of the five steps of this patch program is meant to help you work towards a winter adventure goal you set for yourself.



How To Earn Your Patch

1. First, watch the video linked in each step and do any extra research to help you understand the topic. (Be sure to complete the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#) before heading online!)
2. Then, complete the suggested activity written in each step.
3. Remember to work through the steps in order! You'll start by setting a goal. Then, you'll plan an adventure to help you reach your goal. Next, you'll learn about winter safety and gear to keep you happy and safe on your adventure. Finally, you'll get to go on your adventure to reach your goal! The last step is to reflect on your adventure and share it with others.

Once you complete all of the steps, congratulate yourself on a job well done—you're now a winter adventurer, and can add a patch to your vest to show it!

Patches are available for purchase through any Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington shop. [Visit your local Girl Scout shop](#), email shop@girlscoutsosw.org or call 503-977-6802 or to purchase.

Ready to get started? *Let's go!*





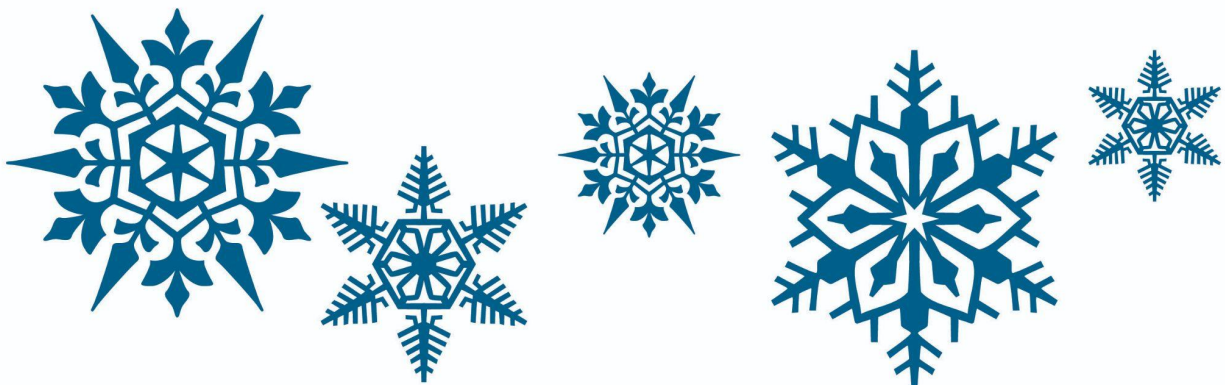
Volunteer's Note

If you don't have much experience in winter recreation, we hope you learn a lot from these activities, too! Even without extensive winter hiking or snowshoeing experience, you can facilitate a memorable and safe experience for your Girl Scouts by focusing on [progression](#), practicing existing outdoor skills and calling on outside resources (like books, how-to videos and outdoor guides). The goal is to ease the intimidation of winter recreation; that might mean simply going for a cold weather hike this year, and trying snowshoeing the next.

Please be sure to follow [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) (SACs) for all activities. We recommend reviewing SACs for both hiking and snowshoeing before starting this program.

It is possible to align each step with a troop meeting. If your Girl Scout is a Daisy, Brownie, or Junior, we suggest watching the videos *with* them to help answer any extra questions they may have. If your Girl Scout is a Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador, they can likely grasp the video content on their own and complete the activities individually or as a group.

Each step will offer a Volunteer's Note, identified by a snowflake icon, to help adults facilitate this program. Have fun!



Step 1: Discover Your Winter Dream

Before you can explore the winter wonderland, you have to decide what your goal is!

If you're new to hiking or spending a lot of time outdoors, you might choose a winter hiking goal that doesn't require any special equipment. If you feel comfortable hiking already, you might decide to set a goal around snowshoeing.

[Watch this video](#) to learn a bit about what makes snowshoeing different from winter hiking and get tips about how to go snowshoeing for the first time. It covers:

- Winter footwear
- Traction devices to keep you from slipping in winter weather
- Snowshoe basics

Activity to Complete Step 1

Daisies, Brownies and Juniors: Create a Winter Vision Board

Time to get crafty! A vision board is a collage that uses pictures or words to represent a wish or goal you set for yourself. Every time you look at it, you can get some motivation to continue your journey toward your goal.

For this activity, you'll make a vision board around a winter goal. First, spend some time thinking about what your winter goal is. Do you want to hike, or snowshoe? Do you want to go to a certain place or trail? Do you want to go for a certain amount of

time or distance? Think about a goal that you could accomplish this winter, and write it down here:

Now, grab some materials that you can use to make a poster full of winter inspiration. Find images and words that remind you of reaching your winter dreams. You could use old magazines, markers, paint, ribbon, maps, stickers, or anything else that inspires you. You might need glue, scissors, pins or other tools to help you assemble your materials onto a posterboard, cardboard or corkboard.

Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors: Create a SMART Winter Goal

Let's dig into what your winter dream is! When you're setting a goal, you want clarity and boundaries to help you reach it. You can use the acronym SMART to help you set a goal to earn this patch!

S: Specific. What exactly will you achieve? Make sure the who, what and where are crystal clear.

M: Measurable. How can you measure your progress? You need to know how to compare your current status to the end goal and when you've reached it.

A: Achievable. How will you realistically accomplish the goal? List all action steps, big and small, and ensure you have the resources for them.

R: Relevant: Why do you want to reach this goal? It should be a worthwhile goal you want to reach and that will help your future.

T: Time-based. When do you want to meet this goal? Have a specific date and time frame in mind, and have shorter deadlines for steps to get there.

Example of a non-SMART winter goal: "I want to learn to snowshoe."

Example of a SMART winter goal: "I want to complete a 3 mile snowshoe hike on Mt. Hood by this April, because I want to be able to enjoy the forest all year round."

Time to set your SMART goal! Fill in the blanks:

S: What do I want to accomplish?

M: How will I know I've reached it?

A: Is this goal realistic?

R: Why is this important to me?

T: By when will I reach this goal?

Finally, put it all together in full sentences:



Volunteer's Note

If you are completing this program as a troop, be sure Girl Scouts select a goal that's attainable for the whole group. The [Hike Selection Guide](#) can give you an idea of what type of trails may be doable for your troop.

Not all trails or trailheads that are accessible in summer are accessible in winter. A good place to start is to familiarize yourself with nearby Sno-Parks in Oregon and Washington. These are parking lots that are maintained in the snow season so you can access trails. You can also call a local outdoor store to ask for recommendations on trails for your group's level and goal.

Step 2: Plan Your Winter Adventure

Planning and preparing for your winter adventure is what will allow you to have the most fun while staying safe!

Any time of year, planning for an adventure can be a long and detailed process. There are many factors to consider when heading outdoors, and winter can add even more to think about! One of the best parts of being a Girl Scout is that you have other people to plan with you, and of course go on the adventure with you, too!

[Watch this video](#) to learn about what preparing in advance for a winter adventure looks like. It covers:

- Seven steps to help you plan any adventure
- How to determine the What, Where, When, Who, Why and How of an adventure
- Resources to help you research for your adventure



Activity to Complete Step 2

Draft your Adventure Plan

Ready to get into the nitty-gritty of your goal? Remember, planning these details will set you up for success when it's time to head outdoors! Use the video to help you understand each step of the planning process. Then, fill in the blanks below to help you draft your unique trip plan. If you're going in a group, get the entire group involved in this process!

1. Your Adventure's Framework

Jot down what your adventure goal will look like.

What?	
Where?	
When?	
Who?	
Why?	
How?	

2. Research for Your Adventure

Now that you know your destination, take note of any special factors you'll need to keep in mind before and during your adventure.

Climate	
Daylight	
Terrain	
Vegetation	
Navigational aids	

Exposure	
Water availability	
Wildlife	
Remoteness	
Natural hazards	

3. Plan Your Gear

Use this space to make a list of any gear, clothing or equipment you might need on your adventure.

4. Plan Your Food

Take note of what kind and how much food you'll need to bring with you.

5. Collect Helpful Resources

What other resources might you need in order to support your adventure? Take note of any maps, books, or people you want to consult.

6. Practice Your Skills

Start honing your skills now! Whether it's practicing using your gear or gaining fitness, it's never too early to start. Write down 1-3 things you can start practicing now, before your adventure.

7. Run-through Your Systems

Schedule some time for after you complete the next step (Step 3) to check through your entire adventure plan. Within one week before your adventure, you will check your equipment, keep an eye on the weather and send your completed trip plan to an emergency contact.



Volunteer's Note

This may be a great time to build your own outdoor skills. You can [search for classes](#) (often both free and paid) at your local REI, [learn about avalanche awareness](#) (even though you won't go into avalanche terrain with your group), [read free articles](#) about snowshoeing, or, if you have outdoor experience and want a very comprehensive guide to all things winter and alpine recreation, you can [read books](#) like this.

Step 3: Know Your Gear and Safety Tools

The biggest difference between summer and winter adventures is usually the cold! Thankfully, your clothing and gear can help you stay toasty on your adventure.

Watch these videos to explore skills to stay safe and warm on winter adventures.

- [The Winter Ten Essentials](#) covers the ten categories of gear to take on every adventure, with a winter focus.
- [Layering Winter Clothing](#) covers how to dress for a cold-weather adventure.
- For Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors, [First Aid Kits](#) covers winter considerations for packing a first aid kit.

Activity to Complete Step 3

Daisies, Brownies and Juniors: Practice Layering Head-To-Toe

Practice getting all bundled up! Using the tips in the Layering video, put together a full outfit to wear on your adventure. Remember to try on all three layers together, then add accessories. Once you've designed a warm winter adventure outfit, draw a picture of yourself wearing it here! Make the background of the drawing the location of your planned adventure:

Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors: Dive into your Ten Essentials

Do you have all your needed safety gear? Let's find out! Next to each category, write down what you HAVE and what you NEED.

When you go out with a group, you can distribute the essentials amongst everybody there. So don't fret if you don't yet have every single essential—you can likely share with somebody else! Of course, you'll need enough layers, food and water for each person.

Ten Essentials Checklist		
Category	What I Have	What I Need
Navigation		
Sun protection		
Insulation		
Illumination		
First aid		
Fire		
Tools		
Extra food		
Hydration		
Shelter		



Volunteer's Note

Finding affordable gear is often a barrier to entry for winter sports. Here are some options to explore:

- Check used gear and consignment stores.
- Find discounts on new gear at store outlets (in person or [online](#)) or on discount [websites](#).
- Some big outdoor brands offer used gear for sale [online](#).
- Rent gear from a local outfitter or ski area (and ask if they offer a discount to Girl Scouts).
- Check your local "Buy Nothing" [group](#).
- Ask to borrow from friends, family and other Girl Scouts.

Step 4: Go On Your Adventure

It's finally time for what you've been waiting for: the big adventure!

You've done so much to prepare for the goal you set. Take a deep breath and know that you've already accomplished so much by setting a goal, completing a thorough plan and learning how to pack and use gear for your amazing winter adventure.

[Watch this video](#) before you head out. It covers tips to stay warm through gear, movement and food and water.

Activity to Complete Step 4

Enjoy your adventure!

Now that everything is in place, you can have fun attempting your winter goal! Even if you don't exactly reach the goal you had originally planned, it's still a big accomplishment to explore the outdoors during winter. Not everything will go exactly to plan, so use what you've learned to maximize the experience and practice your leadership skills.



Volunteer's Note

This should be a fun activity for you, too! Remember, Girl Scout experiences are girl-led, so allow girls the chance to problem-solve while you're out on the adventure. You can find elements of magic to surprise them with, like a thermos full of hot cocoa to bring out halfway through the hike.

This is also a good opportunity to remind Girl Scouts of [Leave No Trace](#) principles. As the saying goes, "take only pictures, leave only footprints"—and we'd love to see any photos you take during the adventure! You can share them by emailing answers@girlscoutsosw.org.

Step 5: Reflect On Your Adventure

High five! You went on a winter adventure—and hopefully had a blast doing it. [Watch this video](#) to start reflecting on what you accomplished and to think about what you can do in the future during the winter.

Activity to Complete Step 5

Daisies, Brownies and Juniors: Make a Creative Representation of Your Adventure

Get your creative juices flowing! Choose a way to document the journey of your adventure so that you can look back on it or share it with others. You might create a piece of artwork, comic book, scrapbook, poem, song, sculpture, or anything else that can represent your winter adventure and the steps you took to get there.

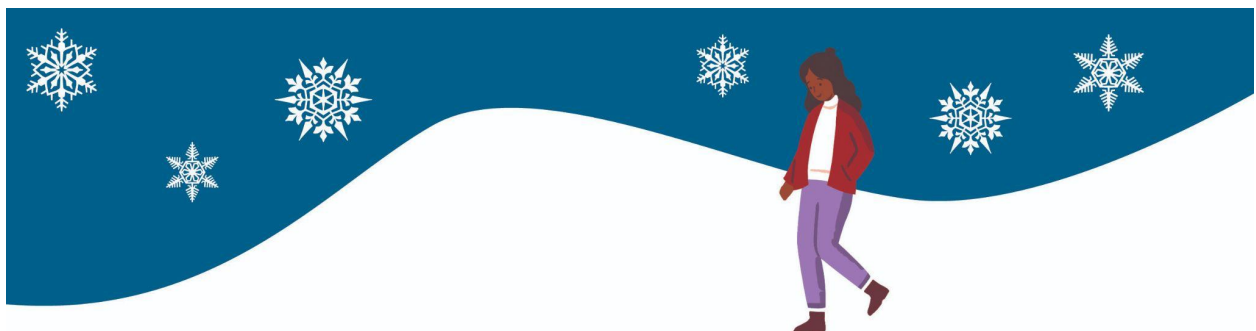
Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors: Share Your Adventure Story

Use your adventure to inspire other Girl Scouts! Determine a way to share your journey with an audience. Maybe you make a website that documents the steps of your adventure. Maybe you create a storytelling presentation to give to younger Girl Scouts, or even lead a skills workshop for them. You could have a friend interview you and record it as a podcast. Find whatever way excites you to share your story!



Volunteer's Note

Thank you for facilitating a memorable experience for your Girl Scouts! As you know, Girl Scouting is built on progression. Take a moment to figure out where your troop is currently on the [Outdoor Progression Chart](#), and ask Girl Scouts what they could do in the near future to work towards the next step. You might already decide what your next winter adventure will be for the next winter season; it's never too early to dream up more goals!



Track Your Progress

Did you complete each of the five steps? Check off the boxes to make sure:

- Step 1: Discover Your Winter Dream
- Step 2: Plan Your Winter Adventure
- Step 3: Know Your Gear And Safety Tools
- Step 4: Go On Your Adventure
- Step 5: Reflect On Your Adventure

Done? Purchase your patch through the [Girl Scout shop](#), then add it to the back of your vest or sash.

What's Next

Got an itch to keep exploring in winter? Here are some ways to keep the adventure going:

- Check out winter program opportunities like guided snowshoe tours or winter hikes in seasonal *Program Guides* or on the [GSOSW Events page](#).
- Curious about skiing or snowboarding? Check out the [Snow Adventure Badge](#) for any program level.
- Dreaming of a future in the outdoors? Work on the [Outdoor Career Exploration patch program](#).
- Want to work on your emergency preparedness? Work on your [First Aid badge](#) or, if you're 14 or older, [get certified in first aid](#).

We'd love to hear about your experience. Email us at answers@girlscoutsosw.org or use #gsoutdoors and tag us (@girlscoutsosw) on social media.

Way to go, Girl Scout! Get excited for all your future winter adventures to come.