

Virtual Bridging Guide

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

Troop Leaders should consider: Include your troop in the planning of their unique Bridging ceremony this year. There are great resources for virtual meetings and ceremonies on the [Girl Scouting at Home](#) page of our GSWNY website and the [Girl Scouts at Home](#) page of the National Girl Scout website.

NOTE: The GSUSA bridging deadline for this year has been extended until **December 31, 2020**.

Watch for a Virtual Bridging Celebration and Bridging Award programs from GS USA to be announced later.

PLANNING YOUR VIRTUAL CEREMONY

- Talk with the girls and their families about how they would like to move forward with their virtual bridging ceremony. Split up planning tasks among your girls to make this as girl-led as possible.
- Plan a ceremony that fits your troops' personality. Think about how the girls will help with this ceremony. Will there be speaking parts or gestures? Be sure to include them in the planning process. Ask them what they think what they think is important in their ceremony.
- Choose a date, time, and format for the virtual bridging ceremony. There are great resources for virtual meetings on the Girl Scouts at Home page of our website.
- Create an invitation for the girls to send to their families and friends. The invitation can be printed, hand-made, or even online!
- Plan what the virtual ceremony will look like. Are you using a video or audio-conferencing tool? Will the girls want to decorate their own home with a sign or poster?
- Here is a great [GSWNY Zoom Tutorial](#) for setting up and using virtual meetings.
- Host your virtual bridging ceremony! Be sure you have a reliable internet connection and distraction free environment so you can focus on the girls and their accomplishments.
- Congratulations! You did it!

Girl Scout Bridging Resources

Bridging from one level of Girl Scouting to another are important transitions in the life of a Girl Scout. They are opportunities for girls to look back at their accomplishments and look forward toward the new adventures and challenges that lie ahead. Each level of Scouting, from Daisy to Ambassador includes a Bridging Award that can be earned by a Girl Scout. The Brownie level is unique in that there are also Brownie Wings. The



wings signify that the girl has been a Brownie Girl Scout. Girls have received these “wings” when bridging up from Brownies since the 1920’s. When Brownies “fly up” to Juniors they earn their wings to wear on their uniform throughout all their levels of Girl Scouting.

At every level of Girl Scouting the Bridging Award has two steps:

Step 1 - Pass It On!

Girls share their talents, skills and Girl Scouting experiences with younger scouts. They can teach younger scouts a skill, song, or game. They can share memories of the Journeys and Badges they have earned. OR let the girls come up with their own unique way of passing it on!

Step 2 - Look Ahead!

Girls explore what it means to be a Girl Scout at the next level. They can ask older Girl Scouts about their experiences, talk to girls who have earned Higher Awards such as Bronze, Silver or Gold. They can attend a Girl Scout meeting of an older girl troop to see first-hand what the next level is all about.

A final step to Bridging is to celebrate!

Bridging is a defining moment when a girl becomes aware of her achievements and is ready for new adventures and responsibilities. Celebrating this change should be fun, personalized, and memorable for everyone involved. Most of all, it should be designed by the girls in true partnership with adults.

Bridging ceremonies usually take place at the beginning or end of the Girl Scout year and can have three parts:

- **Opening:** Guests are welcomed and the tone is set.
- **Main section:** The ceremony is explained and the girls celebrate moving from one level to the next.
- **Closing:** Girls can participate in friendship circles and thank their guests.
- Each of the ceremony's parts offers plenty of room for the girls' creativity and individuality. The ceremony should always focus on paying tribute to Girl Scouts as they move forward.

Tips, Hints, Ideas, and Resources for Your Next Bridging Ceremony:

- Devote sufficient time for planning the ceremony. Good ceremonies have a clear purpose and enrich the meaning and mood of the event.
- Add personal elements to traditional ceremonies. Use favorite poems, songs, stories, and sayings, or have the girls write something new.
- Make it symbolic but keep it fun. It can be sentimental but should also be fun for the girls. Including a flag ceremony, a poem recitation, girls saying what they’ve learned

through the year are all great but if the girls are really not into all that, follow their lead and maybe encourage just one symbolic element.

- Include a physical bridge. There are a lot of ways to represent a bridge: an actual bridge in a park, a homemade bridge in a back yard, stepping stones, an archway, or you can simply walk from one end of the room to another!
- Don't go too crazy! Encourage the girls to keep it simple and meaningful rather than overdone and stressful.
- Above all, be thankful. The ceremony should include a few minutes where girls and leaders give thanks to their parents and family members who have helped them through the years. As the troop leader, you can take a moment to give them a special Girl Scout pin or certificate.

Bridging Resources:

- When our Service Centers reopen, Flag Ceremony and Girl Scout Ways Resource Boxes can be borrowed at a small fee from our Girl Experience Department, submitting a [Resource Kit Request Form](#).
- A Brownie Bridging Ceremony that is easily adaptable to other age levels is available through GSWNY website: [Brownie Bridging Ceremony](#)
- There are many Bridging Ceremonies shared on the internet by Girl Scout Councils across the nation:
 - Bridging ceremonies for Daisy, Brownie and Cadette levels from [GS Spirit of Nebraska](#)
 - A [Cadette to Senior Bridging Ceremony](#) from UseResourcesWisely.com
 - A 12 [Candle Bridge to Adult Girl Scout Ceremony](#) from UseResourcesWisely.com
- [GS USA Bridging Resources](#)



For more information on Girl Scout Bridging contact the GSWNY Girl Experience Department.

Girl.Experience@GSWNY.org

Volunteer Toolkit ~

The Volunteer Toolkit* is a digital planning tool that gives volunteers the resources and program content to get their year started! It is a great way to browse badge requirements and set up a new year plan for your troop. The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) can be used from any computer or electronic device with internet capability.

The tool can be accessed our main website or our volunteer by clicking the “MY GS” tab in each site’s top navigation.



microsite

Additional Leader Resources ~

As girls grow older their conversations and concerns grow as well. Here are some resources to help you through these “growing pains.”

[Difficult Conversations](#)

[Leading Conversations about Current Events](#)

[Conversations About Bullying](#)

More information about Bridging patch activities for each level can be found in the Girl’s Guide to Scouting or with the links below:

[Daisies: Blast Off to Brownie!](#)

[Brownies: Fly Up to Junior!](#)

[Juniors: Climb Up to Cadette!](#)

[Cadettes: Step Up to Senior!](#)

[Seniors: Soar to Ambassador!](#)

[Ambassador: Cross the Bridge to Girl Scout Adult!](#)



Kits for Girl Scout Bridging Ceremonies

[Bridging Kits](#) are great for Girl Scouts flying up to the next level! Each kit comes with a special pencil and bridging fun patch, along with a Bridging Certificate, Membership Star, Disc for Membership Star, and Bridging Arc. Kits for Junior and Cadette Girl Scouts include Brownie Wings. Select your Girl Scout level below, then show the world she's had another great year of Girl Scouting!

**RESPONSE TO COVID-19: We are making all efforts to process and deliver orders as best we can in light of COVID-19 (coronavirus). However, there may be delays up to several weeks. We will do our best to keep you informed. Thank you for your support.*

In addition, we can offer troops that our GSWNY retail shops can mail out small orders. To place an order please email customercare@gswny.org

[Bridging Kits](#) are available to purchase for Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior and Ambassador levels.

Leaders bridge as well as Girls!

Here are some links to help you, as a leader, prepare for bridging:



Brownie Girl Scouts ~ Grades 2 - 3

[Brownie Grade Level Home Study Course](#)

[Brownie Badges, Journeys, and Other Awards](#)

[Brownie Uniform & Insignia Placement](#)



Junior Girl Scouts ~ Grades 4 - 5

[Junior Grade level Home Study Course](#)

[Junior Badges, Journeys, and Other Awards](#)



[Junior Uniform & Insignia Placement](#)

[Junior Bronze Award](#)



Cadette Girl Scouts ~ Grades



6 - 8

[Cadette Grade Level Training](#)

[Cadette Badges, Journeys, and Other Awards](#)

[Cadette Uniform & Insignia Placement](#)

[Cadette Silver Award](#)



Senior Girl Scouts ~ Grades 9 - 10



[Older Girl Grade Level Training](#)

[Senior Badges, Journeys, and Other Awards](#)

[Senior Uniform & Insignia Placement](#)

[Gold Award](#)



Ambassador Girl Scouts ~ Grades 11 - 12



[Older Girl Grade Level Training](#)

[Ambassador Badges, Journeys, and Other Awards](#)

[Ambassador Uniform & Insignia Placement](#)

[Gold Award](#)

[Scholarships](#)



Adult Girl Scouts ~

[The benefits of a Girl Scout Life Membership](#)

[GSWNY Alumni Association](#)

Join the [Girl Scout Network](#) – a community of Girl Scout Alums and supporters who feel passionately about coming together in support of girls.