

Zip-lining: Safety Activity Checkpoint

HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITY: [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form Required](#)



Council Approval: Required

Activity Permitted For: B J C S A

Note: See [Climbing and Adventure Sports--Master Progression Chart](#)

About Zip-lining

A zip-line consists of a pulley suspended on a cable, usually made of stainless steel, mounted on an incline. It is designed to enable a user propelled by gravity to travel from the top to the bottom of the inclined cable by holding on to, or attaching to, the freely moving pulley. The various types of zip-lines include:

- **Playground zip-lines:** These are short and low, intended for child's play, and found on some playgrounds and recreation venues. All Girl Scouts are permitted to use them.
- **Zip-lines:** These are launched from a platform usually accessed by a staircase, ladder, or climbing wall. They are sometimes found as part of a challenge course. Participants must

be able to walk short distances and be able to climb stairs. Daisies are not permitted to participate in zip-lines except for playground zip-lines. In addition, check with the venue before arrival to determine their rules on age, height, and weight restrictions.

- **Canopy zip-line tours:** These are guided aerial explorations or transits of the forest canopy, most commonly done by means of a series of zip-lines or aerial walkways with platforms. Canopy tours are not permitted for Daisies and Brownies. In addition, check with the venue before arrival as many have minimum age requirements as well as height and weight restrictions.

Site Selection. Review [GSNorCal's Approved Vendor List](#) for a list of local facilities. Girl Scouts should use a venue that has professional accreditation by either the Professional Ropes Course Association (PRCA) or the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) to ensure a regulated experience. Both of these organizations are accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to develop industry standards and regulations.

Note that each venue sets its own rules regarding the age and weight of participants and some states regulate zip-lines as amusement rides.

Learn More:

- [Association for Challenge Course Technology](#)
- [Professional Ropes Course Association](#)
- [Specifications Amusement Ride Safety Act](#)

Include Girls with Disabilities

Communicate with girls with disabilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations. Learn more about the resources and information that the [National Center on Physical Activity and Disability](#) provides to people with disabilities. Some facilities may have specialized harnesses and a ramp (instead of stairs, a tower, or a wall) for people who use wheelchairs. Ensure that a member of the facility's staff has training and experience in helping people with disabilities participate in zip-lining. Note that some venues will not allow participation if a person has recent or recurring injuries, or muscular or skeletal disorders.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Arrange for transportation and adult supervision. See [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints 2018-2019](#) for recommended adult-to-girl ratios.

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. An instructor with Association of Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) certification, or similar documented experience, is expected to have knowledge and experience in the following areas:

- setting stop ropes
- tying required knots
- assisting guests in proper harness and helmet fitting
- demonstrating proper zipping techniques
- operating the zip-line activity
- breaking guest's speed upon incoming approach
- performing retrievals and rescues
- inspecting equipment, and
- educating guests about the venue.

Ensure that the instructor has provided written documentation of the completed training. In addition, note that there is a regular process of review and update for all instructors.

Dress appropriately for the activity. Wear long pants or biker-type shorts, sturdy closed-toe athletic-type shoes, and a close-fitting top with sleeves. Do not wear: dress shoes, sandals, water shoes, flip-flops, skirts, regular shorts, ponchos, or dangling jewelry of any kind.

All participants may be weighed and have their height measured before being issued zip-lining equipment.

Girls learn about and prepare for zip-lining. Instructors need to teach a set of readiness and action commands to all participants before beginning an activity. They must describe the objectives, safety procedures, and hazards to the participants before beginning.

Prepare for landing. Zip-line participants should be provided with a hands-on walk-through of what will happen at the landing zone when under full speed. Volunteers must attend the orientation session (even if they will not participate) along with the girls and learn what to watch for in order to supervise the girls in their care.

Girls practice safe zip-line course techniques. Zip-line participants should be provided with an explanation of how each piece of gear is used. Harnesses are designed to support the human body from the hips, and hanging upside down is not permitted.

Safety Gear

- Helmet (supplied by the venue)
- Harness (supplied by the venue)
- Sturdy closed-toed athletic-type shoes

Girl Scouts of Northern California's Approval Process for Zip-lining

Zip-lining is considered a high-adventure and must be pre-approved by the council.

Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form: Submit the online [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form](#) to council at least 4-6 weeks prior to your activity.

High-Adventure Approved Vendor List: GSNorCal troops/groups must select a [high-adventure vendor](#) from the High-Adventure Approved Vendor List, which consists of organizations that meet Girl Scouts safety and insurance requirements for the activity. For the safety of our members, before a troop uses a high-adventure site/vendor for a troop or service unit event, the council must approve the high-adventure site/vendor. This process is designed to ensure a safe experience and protect the council's and volunteer's legal interests.

Adding high-adventure facilities to the Approved Vendor List: If your preferred vendor is not listed on the High-Adventure Approved Vendor list, please follow the simple steps in the [Volunteer Essentials](#) for adding High Adventure Vendors.

Have a Troop First-Aider present. Troop First Aiders are required for troop/group activities as required for certain Safety Activity Checkpoints including camping, travel and high-adventure activities. [[SAFETYWISE: First Aid & First Aiders](#)] Learn more on how to become a Troop First-Aider by logging into your [Girl Scouts Volunteer Learning Portal](#).