The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) helps troop leaders deliver easy, fun troop meetings year-round! With this step-by-step guide, you'll discover how your volunteers can take their troop experience to the next level!
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**Who Has Access to the Volunteer Toolkit?**

**SERVICE UNIT VOLUNTEERS**
Volunteers who hold the following service unit roles are granted access: Leader Support Manager (LSM), Membership Support Manager (MSM), and Program Support Manager (PSM).

**TROOP LEADERS & ASSISTANT TROOP LEADERS**
Active volunteers registered for the current Girl Scout membership year in a troop leadership role. Volunteers in this role have full access to all VTK functionality.

**TROOP TREASURERS**
Active volunteers registered for the current Girl Scout membership year as the troop treasurer role. This role will only have the ability to edit and submit the finance report found on the Finance tab. All other tabs will be read-only.

**CAREGIVERS OF GIRL SCOUTS IN A TROOP**
Each primary caregiver has access to see their troop’s VTK account. They have read-only permission for the meeting schedule, agendas, troop finances, and resources. (Caregiver accounts can only be accessed if the troop leader has set up a year plan.)

**CAREGIVERS OF GIRL SCOUTS NOT IN A TROOP (JULIETTE/INDIVIDUALLY REGISTERED GIRL MEMBERS)**
Each primary caregiver of a currently registered Girl Scout who is not part of a troop will get troop leader-like access with their girl(s). Access is granted through the council based on confirmation of individually registered status.

TIP: If you hold multiple roles, you’ll have a Volunteer Toolkit account for each—all under one login! Look for the grey drop-down box in the upper left-hand corner of your screen to navigate between accounts.
Where To Find the Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) can be used from any computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet access.

1. Go to our website, www.gsnorcal.org, and click the MyGS link at the top of the screen.
2. Log in using the username and password you created when you set up your Girl Scout member account.
3. Once logged in, click My Account in the upper right-hand corner of your screen.
4. Select Volunteer Toolkit from left side menu.

VTK Troubleshooting

For best results, use a VTK-friendly browser such as Chrome, Firefox, or other browser with a cleared cache and visit www.gsnorcal.org.

NOTE: Avoid using Internet Explorer.

Steps to resolve VTK access issues on a desktop/laptop

- Clear browser cache and browsing history
- Ensure cookies are enabled
- Add cdns.gigya.com as a safe URL to any privacy/security extensions or settings on your device and/or browser
- Still need assistance? Contact member services at info@gsnorcal.org or call 800-447-4475, ext. 0
LOOK WHAT’S NEW!

Demo Access

Available for troop and service unit roles that need access to the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) for training purposes. Demo access mirrors troop functionality but does not contain girl or troop information. These users will have two demo accounts under the gray drop-down—“Troop Demo – Troop Leader” and “Demo – Parent”—and can see both sides of the troop experience. Access is granted through the council based on placement in designated support roles.

Service Unit View: Service units and troops you are affiliated with will show up first. This is where you can set up a year plan, troop meetings, and manage troop rosters and communications. If you are not affiliated with specific troops or service units you will only see the Demo Troop Leader and Demo Parent views described below.

Demo Troop Leader: 7 – Multi-Level View: This view is available so that service unit volunteers have easy access to program materials and troop meeting content for all program levels. Note: This is the same view that troop leaders, Individually Registered Girls (IRGs) and multi-level troops see.

Demo Parent: 7 – Multi-Level View: This view is available so that service unit volunteers can see and experience the Parent View in VTK. Note: This view is linked to the Demo Troop Leader: 7 – Multi-Level view and you will need to set a year plan in the Demo Troop Leader: 7 – Multi-Level in order to see the Demo Parent: 7 – Multi-Level.

First-Year Troop Leader Experience

The First-Year Troop Experience supports new leaders with additional guidance to get them acquainted with the Volunteer Toolkit. After logging in and navigating into the Volunteer Toolkit, you’ll be prompted answer the question, “Is this your first year as a Girl Scout troop leader?” If you only have a service unit account, just click “I am not a troop leader” to bypass this. If you answer “Yes” you will follow a guided path with recommended steps to navigate the VTK.

If you would like a refresher on the VTK, you can click “Take a Guided Tour” on any of the Volunteer Toolkit tabs to see the same guidance that a new leader would.
Basic Navigation

Welcome to the Volunteer Toolkit! We've outlined everything you need to know to set up your troop volunteers for success!

The Volunteer Toolkit is divided into tabs that feature unique tools to help you plan a troop year and manage each meeting. If you're on a computer, you'll see the **GREEN TABS** across the top of your browser window.

You'll also find exciting Girl Scout partnerships and promotions in the rotating banners at the top of your screen. Tired of seeing them? Just click the “X.”

**Mobile users** will see a grey drop-down menu at the top of their screen, with tabs beneath.

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**TIP: Print – Download – Help**

You'll notice these three icons on almost every page of the VTK.

- **Print** your current screen by clicking the green printer icon.
- **Download** the page or resource by clicking the green down-arrow bracket icon.
- Seek out additional **help** by clicking the green question mark icons

OR

- **Take a Guided Tour**.
The MY TROOP tab displays sample girl information for service unit volunteers. This is the space where troop leaders and caregivers find their complete roster, along with primary caregiver names and contact information. They'll click the green arrow next to each name to expand and see each girl's personal information and a snapshot of achievements and attendance.

Troop Leaders can also:
- Email caregivers
- Download and print a troop roster with achievement and attendance information
- Renew memberships
- Customize the page with a troop photo

NOTES:
- Caregiver users and individually registered girl users will only see their own Girl Scout information.
- Demo users will see sample information for placement only, which is not tied to any specific troop or girl.

The EXPLORE tab will display a year plan. Explore the MY TROOP tab, select a year plan, and Troop Leaders will submit their year plan.

The FINANCES tab is where troop leaders will submit their Annual Troop Financial Report to GS NorCal, by the due date. The Finance tab ensures clear reporting and oversight for all troop income and expenses.

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FINANCES

Troop leaders can also:
- Access support resources and attendance information and a snapshot of previous years and meetings to plan a meeting.
- Compare your troop to others with achievement and success metrics.
- Download pre-built badges and Journeys.
- View previous years.
- Get your questions answered.

The RESOURCES tab displays:
- Service unit volunteer.
- Volunteer Tool Kit User Guide.
Set Up a Year Plan

When you log in to the Volunteer Toolkit the first time, you’ll need to select a year plan before you can customize meetings or activities. The EXPLORE tab displays available prebuilt year plans for you to choose from based on the grade level you select.

▶ IMPORTANT: Each time you choose a new year plan from the EXPLORE tab, it will reset your entire year. Any activities, meeting dates, and customizations will be lost. To add badges and Journeys or edit your existing year plan in any way, use the buttons on the YEAR PLAN tab.

TIP: Quickly access the Award and Badge Explorer from the bottom of the tab to mix and match potential award options. Use this to come back and create a custom plan as unique as your group.
EXPLORE MEETING PLANS

▲ EXPLORE MEETING PLANS allows troop leaders to mix and match badges, Journeys, and activities with the interests of their girls. As well as, search through all badges and Journeys regardless of program level.

Use the filters to sort through all available programming and the Select Meeting check boxes to choose which badges and Journeys to add to your year plan.

Once you’re finished, click Add to Year Plan at the bottom.

TIP: Click the badge Preview button to see the badge meeting overview, activity plan, materials list, meetings aids, and agenda BEFORE you add it to your year plan. If you like what you see, add it to your Year Plan.

PRESELECTED TRACKS

▲ PRESELECTED TRACKS are a preset selection of meeting plans for a specific Journey or set of badges. Click View Popular Tracks, and from there you can Preview each combination of awards. Use the printer icon under each preview to download or print a copy of the Year Plan. Once you’ve found the right one, click Select Track and your year plan will be created.

Once you’ve made your selection in the EXPLORE tab, you’ll automatically be taken to the YEAR PLAN tab. This is also the tab you’ll be brought back to each time you log in.

TIP: Click on the badge images to the right. Some meetings will give you an overview of the badge requirements.

Check out New Badges and Journeys and see which Badges and Journeys are currently available in the VTK.
Add Dates and Locations

As a service unit volunteer, you may not need to set dates for meetings, but to continue planning your year, the system requires that you set meeting dates for your year plan.

At the top, click the green Manage Calendar link. Using the pop-up widget, choose a date and time for meetings to start and set the order of your meetings. Click Update Calendar when finished. Don’t worry, you can still make changes after this, simply select any combination to get started.

Once you’ve set this up, when you use the Manage Calendar link again, you’ll notice it looks entirely different! Now you can customize each individual meeting, add the location, or even reset the entire schedule.
**CALENDAR**:
To edit the schedule, select the **green calendar icon** to the left of each meeting date to change the date or time of that specific meeting.

You can also choose to cancel one or more meetings or combine meetings. Select the two meetings you’d like to combine, then select the new date that meeting will occur. After you’ve made any changes, click **Save** and your year plan will be updated.

To the right, you’ll see a **green gear icon**. This takes you back to the original view of the **Meeting Date and Location** widget, where you can reset the entire order of your meetings if needed.

**LOCATION**:
Now that your dates are set, you can connect an address to each one. If you’re meeting in multiple locations, add each address then connect it to the appropriate meeting using the check boxes. Click **Assign** or **Apply** and then close out of the window.

**TIP**: You can also get to the **Meeting Date and Location** widget simply by clicking on a date in your year plan. Change a date quickly or select **See More Calendar Options**.

**TIP**: **Virtual Meetings**
Instead of a physical address, you can add links for your virtual meetings here.
**TIP:** View Past Year Plans (service unit volunteer year plans do not archive. This feature is for troop leader and caregiver users only.) Each July the VTK resets. Year plans will be archived and you’ll no longer be able to make changes. Renewed troop leaders and caregivers will still be able to view the plan through the green Past Years link at the top of your YEAR PLAN tab. Achievement and attendance records DO NOT archive. Troop leaders and caregivers should download a copy of this information for their records.

**Year Plan Tab**

The **YEAR PLAN** tab appears first each time you sign in, once your track is chosen. Your typical view will display the following:

**Gray boxes:** Past meetings & activities. Past events cannot be moved or edited.

**Orange bars:** Milestones set by GSNorCal to remind troops of important dates in the Girl Scout year. Some may include links.

**Blue boxes:** Added activities. You can list council, service unit, or troop activities such as cookie booth dates.

**Orange box:** Next meeting.

**Green boxes:** Future meetings. Upcoming meetings can be moved using the bar in front to drag and drop into a new place.

**Add Badges, Journeys, and Awards**

Girl Scouts are ready for whatever comes their way—and that includes changes in meetings or their year plan. Start by using the green **Add Badge/Journey** link at the top of the year plan or **Search to Add Meetings** at the bottom of the year plan.

Use the search feature or filters to sort through available meeting types and choose which ones to add to your year plan. Meetings already in your plan will be clearly marked.

Once you’ve made your selections, click **Add to Year Plan**. Get tips on choosing and customizing your year plan.

**TAKE NOTE:** meeting titles with numbers at the end are part of a series and you’ll want to add all of them to meet the requirements for the award.
Add Activities to the Year Plan

Meetings and badges are only one part of a go-getting Girl Scout’s troop year! You can also add things like field trips, service projects, or cookie booth sales to your year plan. Any activity you add will appear in blue and show up chronologically.

At the top of the year plan, click **Add Activity**.

**CUSTOM ACTIVITY:** Add your activity name, date, time, location, and details to your year plan. From the service unit volunteer view, no one else can see this event.

**COUNCIL ACTIVITY:** GSNorCal does not use this tab. You can view all GSNorCal's Activities and events on GSNorCal's website, under Events, click on **Events Calendar** or go to events.gsnorcal.org
Tools for Planning a Meeting

Set yourself—and your troops—up for success at each meeting! The MEETING PLAN tab has a robust collection of tools and information for planning an engaging meeting every time.

PLANNING MATERIALS: High-level resources show you from start to finish what your girls will achieve during the meeting (1. Meeting Overview), what you’ll do and say (2. Activity Plan), and the meeting aids plus the materials you’ll need (3. Material List).

VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON SAFE MEETING RESOURCES: Holding meetings over video or virtual platforms? These specially designed resources offer guidance on how to adapt activities, add more social time, and handle materials at home. Caregivers can also access these resources.

MANAGE COMMUNICATIONS: Send emails to caregivers to remind them of meetings and keep them up to date on what’s happening. Emails are pre-populated with relevant meeting information, but you can customize them based on your needs. You can even attach meeting aids or other relevant documents from your council website at the bottom of the screen before sending.

ATTENDANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS: Troop Leaders can record attendance and achievements. They’ll use the check boxes to mark who’s at the meeting—and if it’s a meeting where you’re finishing a badge or award, they can mark that too.

You can see the full picture of what a girl has earned on the MY TROOP tab, with the option to download the report.

MEETING AIDS: These documents and videos are the leg-up troop leaders need for each meeting! Some are geared toward the adult supporting the meeting and some are for girls completing the activities. You can find more meeting aids to add to your meeting by clicking Add Meeting Aids at the bottom of the section. You can find more information on how to use these resources in the Activity Plan.

If at any time you want to replace or delete an entire meeting, just use the respective links at the top of the meeting plan.

Don’t forget, if at any time you want to download or print your year plan or meeting plan, look for these icons at the top of the page:
Looking for a virtual meeting? Want to get girls outside or think globally? - There are several meetings that offer alternate activity options for virtual, outdoor, or global activities. This option is represented by a wi-fi, tree, or globe icon when you choose to Add Badge/Journey. You will find activity options in the agenda, just click on the arrow to see available options. Once you select and activity your planning materials will adjust automatically.

**AGENDA:** Here, you'll find instructions and details for each activity, materials needed, time it takes to complete, and the recommended sequencing.

You'll also find opening and closing activities to round out your meeting.

There are lots of ways to customize your meeting agenda:

- Drag and drop activities to reorder in the agenda.
- Use the drop-down on an activity to change the amount of time allotted for that activity.
- Delete an activity by clicking the “X” to the right of the activity. Heads up: if you accidentally delete a required activity for earning an award, you won’t be able to add that activity back without first deleting the meeting.
- Click Add Agenda Item at the bottom to add your own activities!

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:** Take your meeting topic to the next level with these additional resources! These include videos, documents, or suggested events that go beyond the required steps for a badge or award, and they can help your girls do a deeper dive into the content they’re most excited about. Here you’ll also find links to the Girl Scout Shop to purchase printed award booklets or the award themselves. Finally, you can Add Additional Resources, as long as you have a URL. These materials connect to the Manage Communication email templates, so you can share them with families.

**NOTES:** Add a note at the end of a meeting plan with any important reminders or meeting details for yourself or other troop leaders.
Resources

The **RESOURCES** tab provides several GSUSA and GSNorCal resources. The resources are grouped by program level and other helpful topics.

**TIP:** Be sure to click on the ▶ to see additional resources under each section.

Finances

The **FINANCES** tab provides an easy and secure way for troop leaders to submit their Annual Troop Finance Report every year by the due date. As a service unit volunteer, you'll only have access for demonstrative purposes. Troop leaders will be able to do:

▶ Access instructions and links to helpful council financial documents in the **Troop Finance Report Resources**.

▶ Enter their troop's income and expenses in detailed categories and view their troop's finance summary (automatically calculated).

▶ Timestamp and autosave information, so troop leaders and troop treasurers can work on the financial report and see who last saved the information.

▶ Attach any documents they are required to send (April bank statement and supporting documentation).

▶ Once troop leaders/treasurers submit their troop's finance report, parents and troop support adults will have a read-only view of the troop's income, expenses, and financial summary.

**TIP:** For instructions on how to support your troops as they complete their Annual Troop Finance Report, visit the **Troop Finance Report** course in the Volunteer Learning Portal.

Questions?

Looking for more Volunteer Toolkit support? Check out the **GSNorCal VTK Webpage** where we have gathered all the resources you need to learn more about the badges and Journeys available and get the latest news, information, and resources. Contact Member Services at **info@gsnorcal.org** or call 800-447-4475, ext. 0 for additional assistance.