The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is your official source for delivering easy, fun troop meetings year-round! With this step-by-step guide, you can start your troop year strong and spend more time adventuring with your Girl Scouts!
Who Has Access

SERVICE UNIT VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers who hold a service unit role and support troop leaders and families in their respective geographical area. Access is granted through the council based on placement in designated support roles: Leader Support Manager (LSM), Membership Support Manager (MSM), and Program Support Manager (PSM).

TROOP LEADERS

Active volunteers registered for the current Girl Scout membership year in a troop leadership role. There should be at least two troop leaders with access to the same troop account in the VTK.

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

(I.E., JULIETTE/INDIVIDUALLY REGISTERED 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 dropdown 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. For best results, use a VTK-friendly browser such as Chrome or Firefox with a cleared cache and visit www.gsnorcal.org.

In the upper right-hand corner of your screen, click MyGS.

Select Volunteer Toolkit to log in using the credentials provided by the council.

NOTE: The Volunteer Toolkit does not work on Internet Explorer.

Basic Navigation

Welcome to the Volunteer Toolkit! We’ve outlined everything you need to know to get started and have the best troop year ever!

The Volunteer Toolkit is divided into tabs that each have unique tools to help you plan your 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.

Mobile users will see a grey dropdown menu at the top of their screen, with tabs beneath.

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 by clicking the binoculars next to Take a Guided Tour.
This tab houses your complete girl roster along with each girl's primary caregiver's name and contact information. Click the green arrow next to each name to expand and see her personal information and a snapshot of achievements and attendance.

From this tab you can also:
▶ Email caregivers
▶ Print a troop roster with achievement and attendance information
▶ Renew memberships
▶ Download and print an overview of each reviewed track so you can easily review your proposed track as the troop plan is created.
▶ Print a troop roster
▶ Email caregivers

WONDERING HOW TO GET STARTED?
You can see all the exciting options for your troop year in the EXPLORE tab. You'll be able to:
▶ Browse prebuilt tracks of badge and Journey activities
▶ Create your own activity track with your girls
▶ Preview tracks and badge requirements before you add them to your year plan
▶ Download and print an overview of each preselected track so you can easily review your options with your girls at your first meeting!

Don't worry: you can always add, remove, or change your plan as you go, one meeting at a time. Your first meeting is due by May 15th. Each of these 芥 annual Financial Reports helps you keep track of your troop’s financial health. From this tab you can also:
▶ Make every troop meeting a success! Here you'll find:
  ▶ Suggested scripts
  ▶ Material lists
  ▶ Printable meeting aids
  ▶ A customizable meeting schedule
  ▶ Set meeting dates and locations
  ▶ Track attendance at each meeting
  ▶ Access attendance and badge data
  ▶ Add badges to your girl’s record
  ▶ Preview badge and Journey requirements
  ▶ Complete your year plan schedules
  ▶ Set meeting dates and locations
  ▶ Make every troop meeting a success
  ▶ Review badge and Journey requirements
  ▶ Complete your year plan schedules
  ▶ Set meeting dates and locations

Where do badges belong on her uniform? Which awards can your girls earn at the next grade level? What's an investiture ceremony? If you've got questions, you'll find the answers you need in the RESOURCES tab.
Set Up Your Year Plan

The first time you log in to the Volunteer Toolkit, you'll need to start a year plan before you can customize meetings or activities.

If you aren't seeing the correct grade level for your troop, please contact Member Services at info@gsnorcal.org.

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

**IMPORTANT:** Each time you choose a new year plan from the EXPLORE tab, your entire year will be reset. Any activities added, meeting dates, and customizations will be lost. To add badges and Journeys to your existing year plan, use the buttons at the top of the YEAR PLAN tab.
**BUILD YOUR OWN** allows you to build your year plan from scratch! You can mix and match badges, Journeys, and activities with the interests of your girls. Build Your Own also allows you to search through all badges and Journeys regardless of grade level.

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

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

▲ BUILD YOUR OWN

▲ 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.
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 the 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.

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 Dates and Locations

**CALENDAR:** To continue planning your year, you must set meeting dates for your year plan. What day will your meetings begin and how often will you meet? What time will your meetings generally start?

At the top, click the green Manage Calendar link. Using the pop-up widget, set the order of your meetings. Don’t worry, you can still make changes after this! Click Update Calendar when finished.

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.
**EDIT MEETINGS:** 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 checkboxes. 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:** You can also get to **Virtual Meetings** instead of a physical address, you can add links for your virtual meetings here.
Add Activities to Your Year Plan

Meetings and badges are only one part of a go-getting Girl Scout’s troop year! You can add things like field trips, service projects, or cookie booth sales to your year plan as well. 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. Remember: caregivers will see this information too, so be sure event details are clear and any special instructions are included here.

**COUNCIL ACTIVITY:** GSNorCal does not use this tab. You can view all GSNorCal’s Activities and events in the latest version of the Program and Event Guide or on GSNorCal’s website, under Events, click on Activity Finder.
Tools for Planning Your Meeting

Set yourself—and your troop—up for success at each meeting! The MEETING PLAN tab has a robust collection of tools and information to help you plan 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).

**MANAGE COMMUNICATIONS:** Send emails to caregivers to remind them of meetings and keep them up to date on what's happening. Emails are prepopulated 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.

You can also **Record Attendance and Achievements** in this section. Use the checkboxes to mark who's at the meeting—and if it's a meeting where you're finishing a badge or award, you 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.

**MEETING AIDS:** These documents and videos are the leg-up you 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:
AGENDA: Wondering how you’ll kick off your meeting’s activities? 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.

Getting Girls Outside and Thinking Globally—
There are several meetings that offer alternate activity options to get girls outside or think globally. This option is represented by a tree or globe icon on both the Year Plan view and in the Meeting Agenda. You can change your outdoor or global activity options by clicking on the activity title in the agenda and choosing the activity you would like to complete. The icon will fill with color (green or blue) if an outdoor or global activity is selected for that meeting and the meeting overview will automatically update.

There are lots of ways to customize your meeting agenda:

▸ Drag and drop activities to reorder in the agenda.

▸ Use the dropdown 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. Just be careful you aren’t deleting a required activity for earning an award!

▸ Click Add Agenda Item at the bottom to add your own activities!

▸ Add a note at the end to remind yourself and/or other troop leaders about important things to remember for each meeting.
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 troops to submit their Annual Troop Finance Report every year by May 15th. Here is what you’ll be able to do:

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

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

▶ Add detailed notes on your troop’s finances.

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

▶ Preview before submitting the troop financial report.

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

▶ Once you submit your troop’s finance report, parents and troop support adults will have a read-only view of your income, expenses, and financial summary.

**TIP:** For instructions on how to submit your Annual Troop Finance Report in the VTK Finance Tab, 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.