

Safety Activity Checkpoint

Slingshot

HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITY: Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form Required
First-Aider Required

Council Approval: Required

Activity Permitted For: D B J C S A

About Slingshots

Slingshots are actually descendants of the trebuchet and the sling—weapons used for centuries! For Girl Scouts, they serve as a progression step for target range activities like archery by teaching the girls about following range rules and commands as well as helping them to build aim, target skills, and hand-eye coordination.

Learn More: To learn more about Slingshot skills, view these links:

- [5 Proven Ways to Improve Skills](#)
- [How to Aim a Slingshot](#)



Making Activities Accessible

In order to make your activity accessible to girls of all abilities, it's important to communicate with all girl attendees and their caregivers to learn about and accommodate their varied support needs. For resources and information on accessible sport and adventure activities, visit [Move United](#).

Equity

In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities, consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the girls in your troop that could affect a girl's ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with girls and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all girls and their families feel comfortable that they have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as the proper equipment, prior experiences, and skills needed to enjoy the activity.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Assess participants' maturity level. Participants must be old enough to understand safety procedures and handle equipment so as not to endanger themselves and others.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl or adult, missing girl, or sudden illness.

Standard Safety Guidelines. Refer to the "Standard Safety Guidelines" in the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) which apply to all Girl Scout gatherings and activities. When the adult-to-girl ratio, or other safety

parameters, are stricter for a specific activity than in the Standard Safety Guidelines, always follow the stricter parameters in the activity chapter.

COVID-19 Guidelines. Review the “Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouts” section in the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) under the “Standard Safety Guidelines” section and be certain to consult with [GSNorCal’s specific COVID-19 guidance](#). When applicable, always call ahead to the vendor, property or facility involved to check for their COVID-19 safety requirements as you prepare to take girls for this activity.

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. Because slingshots are intended to serve as a progression step for target sports, one adult needs to be a certified USA Archery instructor or have equivalent certification or documented experience. Ensure that there is a ratio of one instructor for every ten girls for Juniors and older. For Daisies and Brownies, please have one instructor for five girls.

Select a safe site.

- Equipment is stored when not in use and is in good repair.
- Clear safety signals and range commands to control the activity are posted and taught to all participants in advance of stepping on to the range.
- Backstops or a specific safety zone are set behind the targets.
- Shooting line is clearly defined.
- Clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers are known to the entire facility population.

At an outdoor range, check that:

- Targets are not placed in front of houses, fences, roads, trails, or tents.
- Areas with pedestrian traffic are avoided.
- The shooting area and the spectator area behind the shooting area are clearly marked.
- The range is not used after nightfall.

At an indoor range, make sure:

- Targets are well-lit.
- Doors or entries to the range are locked or blocked from the inside.
- Fire exits are not blocked
- Ensure equipment is properly sized for the girls.
- “Shot” is appropriate for the range

Girls should learn about shooting. Girls develop skills based on proper procedures and form, handling the equipment, getting the correct stance, sighting, aiming, and observing safety practices.

Always keep the slingshot pointed in a safe direction. This is the primary rule of target sport safety. A safe direction means that the slingshot is pointed toward the target or toward the ground, so that even if it were to go off it would not cause injury or damage.

Ensure that equipment to be used is in good condition. Make sure that the equipment is clean, in good working order, and nothing is broken, brittle, or loose. Targets and backstops for targets need to be in good repair.

Dress appropriately for the activity. Make sure girls and adults avoid wearing loose sleeves, dangling earrings, bracelets, and necklaces that may become entangled in equipment. Also, have girls tie back long hair. Girls are required to wear close-toed shoes.

Ensure the instructor reviews the rules and operating procedures with girls beforehand. The instructor covers safety procedures, including:

- No “dry” firing, as it can damage equipment

- Always keeping the slingshot pointed in a safe direction
- Notice form to avoid snapping wrist or hand with the band.

Basic Slingshot Range Rules

- This range may be opened only by qualified instructor.
- Listen to and follow all commands on the range.
- Don't pick-up, load, or fire your slingshot until given the commands.
- Stand behind the firing line. Do not straddle the firing line.
- Absolutely no running on the range.
- No extra talking on the range.
- Step back from the firing line when you finish firing.

Basic Slingshot Safety Rules

- Hold slingshot pointed in a safe direction, toward the target or the ground.
- Keep the pouch ammunition free until given permission to load and fire.
- Leave the bands at rest until you are ready to shoot.

Safety and Required Gear

- Stable slingshot
- Ammunition appropriate for the targets: dog food kibbles, ping pong balls, marshmallows, [½" paint balls](#)
- Range Rules poster

Target Sports—Slingshot Progression Chart

Shooting Type	Grade Level/ Minimum Age	Participant-to- Instructor Ratio	Instructor/Expert Certification
Slingshot	D B J C S A	D, B - 5:1 J C S A - 10:1	One adult instructor is trained in slingshot safety, form, and technique, range rules, and emergency procedures.

Girl Scouts of Northern California’s Approval Process for Slingshots

Slingshots is considered a high-adventure activity 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. Gather the following information to complete this form:
 - Confirmation that your chaperones are registered members of Girl Scouts of Northern California, have a current background check, completed the troop chaperone course and troop driver course (if transporting girls), and completed the [California State Mandated Reporter Training](#). Troop Leaders can find this information in their [Volunteer Toolkit](#).
 - Name of First Aider and a copy of their current CPR/First Aid certification card. Certification needs to be renewed every two years. If you are hiking or backpacking farther than 30 minutes from a medical facility, please have the information of the member, who is certified in Wilderness First Aid, accompanying your troop.
 - Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for these courses in your [MyGS Account - GSLearn](#) in the section called Trip & Outdoor Advisor.
 - The **Trip & Outdoor Advisor Course** is required for all overnight and [high-adventure activities](#).
 - The [Camp Out course](#) is required for all camping trips that involve advanced outdoor cooking or camping trip with girls to a campground or other non-GSNorCal outdoor facility for longer

than 1 night without indoor plumbing and electricity. Girls should have already had practice sleeping and cooking outdoors.

- The **Extended Trips course** is required for troops traveling three (3) nights or more.
 - The **Girl Scout Small Craft Safety Training** is required before you take girls on a small craft water adventure.
- **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.

High-Adventure Approved Vendor List: GSNorCal troops are not required to use an approved vendor.

