



Ambassador

# Trail Adventure



**I**n this badge, you have a choice between two different outdoor challenges. Do you have the patience and desire to coach another girl in trail running? Or do you want to be an outdoor warrior and take a multiday backpacking trip? Whichever adventure you choose, push yourself and watch your potential unfold.

It's your choice—so get started by exploring both of your options with your Girl Scout friends or family members.

## Steps

1. Choose your outdoor adventure
2. Plan and prepare
3. Gather your gear
4. Set a goal and train for your adventure
5. Go on your outdoor adventure

## Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I will have planned and learned the skills to help coach another girl in trail running or planned, prepared, and completed a five-day, four-night backpacking trip.



## Think Big

If you're in a location where there are few trail-running or challenging hiking trails, why don't you and your troop save up your Girl Scout Cookie™ money and plan a trip together?





## STEP

# 1 Choose your outdoor adventure

Every step has three choices. Do ONE choice to complete each step. Inspired? Do more.

Do you feel confident in your trail-running ability—enough that you could coach another girl? Or do you dream about taking a multiday trekking adventure? Explore both of these options in this step and then make your choice!

## ADVENTURE OPTIONS

- **Trail-Running Coach:** You will help guide another girl in the sport of trail running. Aim to have at least eight training sessions over a two-month period.
- **Trekking:** You will plan, prepare, and complete a five-day, four-night backpacking trip. Aim for hiking a minimum of 20–25 miles on your trip. This can include a rest day, if needed—especially if it's hilly or arduous.

## CHOICES—DO ONE:

- ☐ **Talk to a trail-running coach and experienced trekker.** A good runner does not automatically make a good coach! Find someone who has real expertise in training. For trekking, speak to someone who has experienced many different terrains and conditions. Find out what they like best about what they do. Which one are you more interested in trying for yourself? Share your thoughts with your family or Girl Scout friends.

OR

- ☐ **Watch videos or read books about coaching trail running and multiday backpacking treks.** Find a story about one female competitive trail-running coach and one female backpacker story. You can watch videos or read books. (Outdoor organizations and retail websites are excellent resources for videos featuring women with inspirational trail-running and backpacking stories.) Which activity do you think you'd enjoy the most? Share your thoughts with your family or Girl Scout friends.

OR

- ☐ **Explore what you will do for coaching trail running and a multiday backpacking trip.** (See “Adventure Options” above.) Do your own research too! You might find out about trail-running training in your area and watch a coaching session, if possible. You can also go online to see what it takes to coach another person in a sport. For a multiday trek, pick up a trail guidebook from your library, or visit a nearby park to look at a topographical trail map. Can you complete the trek in your area, or would you need to travel? Decide on the activity that sounds most intriguing to you. Then pitch why you selected it to your family or Girl Scout friends.







## Destination Discussions

- ▶ Difficulty of the trail, including elevation changes, altitude, distance, and terrain
- ▶ Fitness level needed for the trail
- ▶ Ideal time of year, keeping weather in mind
- ▶ Water sources along the trail
- ▶ Wildlife along the trail
- ▶ Remoteness of the trail
- ▶ Access to outside assistance in the event of an emergency
- ▶ Travel distance to the trail. If you need to stay overnight, check lodging and available activities in the area. (Check with your council for travel guidelines.)

## STEP 2 Plan and prepare

Now that you've decided on trail-running coaching or trekking, it's time to lay down the groundwork. Where will you coach your trail runner? Where do you plan to trek? How far will you go? Get your plans and preparation in place with this step.

### TO COMPLETE THIS STEP, MAKE SURE YOU:

- **Pick your destination.** Once you've done that, think through the list on this page.
- **Explore your destination.** Look online for trail reports from fellow hikers and trail runners. Reach out to the land management agency overseeing the area, such as the Bureau of Land Management or National Park Service. The more you know about your destination, the better your experience will be.
- **Come up with a budget.** Make a list of all the expenses for your outdoor adventure. What will you need for food, travel, and gear? How will you pay for it? You and your troop or group may want to use Girl Scout Cookie earnings.

### CHOICES-DO ONE:

- ☐ **Know the language for your adventure.** We've given you some basic terms to know for your outdoor adventure; add more to the list.

OR

- ☐ **Talk to an outdoor expert to get planning tips.** This could be an adventure travel planner, an outdoor retail expert, an experienced running coach, or trekker.

OR

- ☐ **Explore the anatomy of muscles used in trail running and hiking.** What are the main muscles used? What are the secondary muscles? Why is it important to do exercises specific to these muscle groups? Take this knowledge and apply it to your training plan in Step 4.





## WORDS TO KNOW for Trail Running and Trekking

- ▶ **Backcountry:** An isolated area without roads
- ▶ **Blaze:** A colored marker, usually painted or nailed to a tree, used to help guide runners/hikers along the trail
- ▶ **Cairns:** A human-made pile of rocks found along a trail, marking the trail's path
- ▶ **Chafing:** Skin that becomes irritated, usually from rubbing against clothes. To prevent, apply a thin layer of lubricant on these areas, wear longer shorts, or use talcum powder.
- ▶ **Ditty Bag:** A small bag with smaller gear you might take, such as spare matches/lighter, camera card, ear plugs, spare eyeglasses/contacts, or duct tape
- ▶ **DOMS** (delayed onset muscle soreness): Pain or stiffness you feel in your muscles one to three days after a run or hike. Light training or going for a walk can help you feel better.
- ▶ **Fartlek:** A training method for a run or hike where you mix a slow and moderate pace with fast bursts. It helps to increase speed and endurance.
- ▶ **Hitting the wall/bonking:** Feeling very fatigued
- ▶ **Pronation:** Natural side-to-side movement of your foot as you run or hike. Overpronation (rolling your foot inward) and supination (rolling your foot outward) can lead to injuries. Having the right running/hiking shoes and inserts can help you reduce injury.
- ▶ **Switchback:** A steep trail that zigzags
- ▶ **Time control plan (TCP):** Determining where you should be on the trail at certain points of the day, taking into account elevation changes, fitness level, weather, and terrain







## Wilderness First Aid

Take a wilderness first-aid training course. Expand your first-aid knowledge so you can provide care for yourself and others in the backcountry when emergency personnel are not close by. Learn how to treat conditions such as hypothermia, head/neck and spinal injuries, burns, wound infection, and bone and joint injuries. Check with your Girl Scout council to see if they can recommend a course in your area.

### STEP 3 Gather your gear

If you're coaching a trail runner, make sure she has the right gear. You may need your own gear, too, like a stopwatch to time her runs. For a trek, make a list and gather the gear you'll need for a multiday adventure. What can you borrow instead of buying?

#### BEFORE YOU BEGIN: TEN ESSENTIALS FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

➤ **Use this list to help create a checklist of things you need for your outdoor adventure.** And add things too! For backpacking, you will need a backpack, tent, sleeping bag, and a portable stove to prepare food. You may also want to use trekking poles on your adventure.

- Proper clothing and footwear
- Sun protection
- Water
- Food
- First-aid kit
- Navigational tools
- Lightweight portable shelter
- Light source
- Fire starter
- Repair kit

#### CHOICES—DO ONE:

☐ **Visit an outdoor adventure retailer.** Ask someone who works there to go over your list of essential gear and find out how and why each item is used. Make sure to ask what else should be on the list. Do you need any special gear or equipment for your adventure?

**OR**

☐ **Go online to find out the gear you will need.** Make a list of essential gear, learn what everything is used for, and then find where and how to get it.

**OR**

☐ **Compare and share.** Bring essential gear to a troop meeting to share and compare. See if you can borrow some things from friends and family. Do you know an adult with experience in your outdoor adventure who could help guide your meeting?



## STEP

# 4 Set a goal and train for your adventure

**What do you hope to accomplish as a trail-running coach? How far do you want to trek and what challenges do you want to do along the way? Think of things like rock climbing, kayaking, scoping out a waterfall, and more!**

### TO COMPLETE THIS STEP, MAKE SURE YOU:

- **Use the training tips.** Referring to the list on the next page, come up with a training plan and put together a schedule.
- **Follow safety tips.** Train only with a trusted adult or friend. Make sure another adult (one who is not with you) knows your route and the estimated time you should return home.
- **Practice your navigational skills.** See some suggestions on page 11.
- **Practice your first-aid skills.** Know how to treat injuries such as sprains, cuts, and sunburn.

### CHOICES-DO ONE:

- ☐ **Learn how mental imagery can help you with your outdoor adventure.** This means visualizing your coaching sessions or backpacking trek. Find an experienced coach or trekker and ask them how they use mental imagery with their outdoor adventures. Incorporate mental imagery into your coaching sessions and backpacking training.

OR

- ☐ **Do a trail run with an experienced trail-running coach, or take a day hike with an expert hiker.** Observe what they do, ask for tips about your form, and find out about their best practices.

OR

- ☐ **Get expert training tips.** Ask a running coach or experienced trekker to give you tips on goals and training. Or go online to search outdoor organizations, publications, and retail websites that offer valuable information and advice.

“Always plan to be out longer than you expect. I carry extra food, a jacket, hat, gloves, and a space blanket. I’ve never been sorry to have extra food and warmth.”

—Stephanie Violet,  
ultra trail runner







## Training Tips

Follow these for your coaching sessions or to build endurance for your trekking trip.

- Aim for doing cardio workouts (walking, jogging, running, hiking, cross-training) two to three times a week for six weeks before your outdoor adventure to help build endurance.
- Practice good form for trail running and hiking. Keep your eyes on the trail ahead of you, hold your body tall (try not to slouch), swing your arms up and down, keep your feet under (not in front of) your body, and use a shorter stride.
- Make sure to train in different weather conditions—cold, rainy, hot. You never know what the weather will bring the day of your adventure!
- **For more fun:** Find an app to log your workouts and keep track of your progress.

## Training Tips for Trekking

- Complete some day hikes. Aim for three separate day hikes, each four to six hours covering at least five miles.
- Wear your hiking backpack on your day hikes. Slowly increase the weight so it is no more than a quarter of your body weight.
- Show your Girl Scout friends or a family member that you know how to use your gear, like your water purifier, tent, and stove.

## Training Tips for Cross-Training

Cross-training involves combining exercises to work different parts of the body. Here are some ways you can cross-train:

- Work out at a gym or outdoor circuit-training course.
- Take a personal fitness class.
- Hop on a bike and go for a ride.
- Swim laps.
- Do yoga for flexibility.
- Dance.
- Play sports like soccer, basketball, and tennis.
- Find a cross-training workout video or app to follow.
- Use your environment to strength train. You can lift canned goods from your pantry, help your parents carry groceries, or stand on one foot while brushing your teeth.







## Coaching Guide

- Communicate clearly.
- Be encouraging at all times.
- Get to know your trainee's fears and weaknesses.
- Set goals with your trainee and celebrate when she meets them.
- Share your own experiences.



## Volunteer at Races

Help hand out water, work at an aid station, or volunteer for anything that puts you near the heart of the action.





## Risk Management Plan

With your troop or family, write a risk management plan and leave a copy with at least one person you trust who will not be on the outing. Include the following in your plan:

- Full name, date of birth, and guardians of everyone on the outing
- Two emergency contacts for each girl on the trip, including names and phone numbers
- Important medical information for anyone on your outing, such as allergies, medications, conditions, and so forth
- Trip itinerary, including names, addresses, and phone numbers of all locations. If you're on a campground, highlight where you plan to camp on a map.
- Check-in times and the designated person you will be checking in with. Come up with a plan for what to do if a check-in is missed.
- Phone numbers and addresses for the area's emergency contacts, such as sheriff's department, park office, fire department, nearest hospitals, and so on.

### STEP 5 Go on your outdoor adventure

All your planning and training has led up to this moment. You're ready to see how your hard work will make this an adventure to remember!

#### BEFORE YOU TAKE THIS STEP, REVIEW THIS:

- **Safety:** Always train and go on outdoor adventures with at least one buddy. Create a risk management plan; see details in the box on this page.
- **Permission:** Get permission slips, if needed, from your Girl Scout council, parent, or guardian.
- **Gear check:** Make sure you have all the gear from Step 3 with you, including snacks and water in reusable containers and a first-aid kit.
- **Weather:** Always check the weather before leaving. Be sure your gear and clothing choices are right for the weather.
- **For trekking:** Obtain permits, if required. Check with the land management agency for the area of your adventure for updates on trail conditions.
- **For trekking:** Do a test run: Set up tents, check zippers on tents and sleeping bags, try out your water purifier, test light sources, and light your stove before your trip.



## CHOICES-DO ONE:

- ☐ **Create your action portfolio.** Have a friend or family member take action photos or videos of you from your training sessions and on your adventure. Afterwards, analyze your technique and form and see what you would improve. You can also use the images or videos to show others how it's done.

**For More FUN:** Find a photo you like, then print it and decorate a frame with inspirational words, like “Stronger Than Ever!” or “I did it!” Or create a collage of your images.

OR

- ☐ **Engage and explore.** Your outdoor adventure is about more than just accomplishing the activity. While you're on your adventure, try something new—like exploring nature, trying out a camping skill, or doing an activity a different way.

OR

- ☐ **Keep an adventure journal.** How far did you run or hike? What did you like most about running on the trail or hiking? What do you want to improve for next time? Write your notes in a journal or find a free app where you can document your journey, including how you felt at each phase of your adventure.

## Navigational Skills

- Review how to use a compass and GPS with a trail map.
- Learn the trail sign markings for the trails you'll be using.
- As a trail-running coach, teach your trainee basic navigational skills, such as how to use the Sun and stars to find cardinal directions (north, south, east, west) and how to read a basic trail map.
- For trekking: learn how to do triangulation with a map and compass.





## Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Creating a quiz game to teach other girls about the words to know for trail running or trekking
- Teaching younger girls how to create a risk management plan
- Helping a friend or family member build an action portfolio of an outdoor adventure

I'm inspired to:

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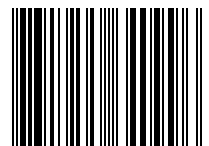
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