

# Starting a Troop

## Q. How do I start a troop?

A. You must complete all of the following steps to become a Girl Scout Leader.

- a. In order to become a Girl Scout volunteer, you need to fill out the New Volunteer paperwork and return it to Council.

You can download the form here: [http://www.gscsnj.org/pdf\\_docs/VolunteerApp.pdf](http://www.gscsnj.org/pdf_docs/VolunteerApp.pdf)

Then mail the form to:

Girl Scouts of Central and Southern New Jersey  
108 Church Lane  
East Brunswick, NJ 08816

- b. Next contact the organizer for the level of girls you wish to start a troop for. The best way to do so is to use the [Join Now](#) form on the EWAGS website ([www.ewags.org](http://www.ewags.org)), this form sends an email directly to the appropriate organizer based on the grade you select from the dropdown. Please make note that you are interested in becoming a leader in the “Comments” box.
- c. Once your paperwork has been approved you will receive confirmation from Girl Scouts of Central and Southern New Jersey. They may request you come in for an interview. Once this process has been completed, you will need to sign up for and take Orientation training. (See [“How do I register for trainings?”](#))
- d. Once you have completed Orientation, you can then contact your Organizer for your new troop number. You will need a troop number to open a checking account, register your troop, and reserve a location for your meetings.
- e. Next choose a time, day and location for your troop meetings. Troops generally meet once or twice a month, and can meet at libraries, churches, schools, private facilities, and in some cases, although not suggested, the leader’s home. Contact the location you wish to have your meeting and fill out any paperwork they require. If you wish to meet at a school, you will need to fill in a Facility Usage Form which is available from the office of Facility Usage located in the Annex Building at Hightstown High School. You can contact them directly for availability by calling 609-443-7717 x:2013.
- f. You will also need to open a checking account. Accounts can be opened at the bank of your choice as long as you follow the guidelines below.
  - i. Your account name must read “GSCSNJ Troop # \_\_\_\_\_” .
  - ii. Your mailing address must be:  
GSCSNJ Troop # \_\_\_\_\_  
PO Box 306  
Hightstown, NJ 08520
  - iii. You need to have two signors on the account, the leader and one other adult in your troop. Whomever the other adult is, they must be registered with your troop and have a background check (See [“Helping Parents”](#)).

- g. Once your meeting location and your checking account is established, you can contact your organizer for a list of girls that are waiting to be placed in a troop. Your organizer will provide you with a list of girls who are available to meet at the time and day you've chosen. She will provide you with contact information for each of the girls so that you can call and introduce yourself.
- h. Next you should organize a Parents meeting. This means that the parents preferably leave their children at home; this meeting will strictly be about filling in important paperwork.
  - i. All parents should be instructed to bring either their checkbook or \$12 per person with them to register their daughter, and possibly themselves, as a Girl Scout. All girls and adults must be registered before they can participate in the program. You can obtain a new troop registration packet by contacting April Fierro, the Service Unit Registrar.
  - ii. You may also opt to collect yearly troop dues as this meeting. The amount collected is set by the leader and varies from troop to troop, but on average is about \$20.00 per girl which covers the cost of arts & crafts supplies for troop meetings.
  - iii. You should also set the expectations of the parents, as well as ask for additional volunteers. This would be a good time to set up your expectations in regards to parents and/or siblings at meetings.
  - iv. Explain to the parents that every troop is required to have two fully trained adults at every troop meeting. You may want to have extra copies of the Volunteer Application on hand in case other parents volunteer to help you run the troop. Additionally, troops should have a Cookie Parent and a Troop Treasurer.

Note: Any adult who volunteers to help at troop meetings, chaperones trips or is involved in any way with troop finances needs to be registered and have a background check (see "[Helping Parents](#)").
  - v. All parents should fill out a blanket permission form for their child. You can download a copy of this form here: [http://www.gscsnj.org/pdf\\_docs/Blanket%20Permission.pdf](http://www.gscsnj.org/pdf_docs/Blanket%20Permission.pdf)
  - vi. All parents should fill in a photo release form for their child. You can download a copy of this form here: [http://www.gscsnj.org/pdf\\_docs/Photo\\_Release\\_Form\\_-\\_English.pdf](http://www.gscsnj.org/pdf_docs/Photo_Release_Form_-_English.pdf)
- i. Once your parents meeting has been completed, you should take all of the money collected and deposit it into your troop checking account.
- j. Submit all of your registrations to the Service Unit Registrar (See "[Registering my troop](#)") Once your registrations have been submitted, you are now able to have your first meeting with your girls.
- k. Be sure that you keep up on your trainings! (See "[What training am I required to take?](#)")
- l. Plan to attend the leaders meeting each month so you are kept up to date on what's going on within the Service Unit and at GSCSNJ. (See "[Communications](#)")