

Council Style Guide

Girl Scouts across the country are working together to speak with one voice! Join the Movement by following specific style guidelines and using the resources below when creating Girl Scout materials. All materials, including patch designs and t-shirt designs, need to be approved by Marketing and Communications Department. Email MarCom@nccostalpin.es.org with your requests and artwork design.

Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law

The Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

The Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be

honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,

and to

respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

About Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts is the first and largest girl-led organization. Girl Scouts' founder, Juliette Gordon "Daisy" Low, believed in the power of every girl. She organized the first Girl Scout troop on March 12, 1912, in Savannah, Georgia, and every year since, we've made her vision a reality by helping girls discover their strengths, passions, and talents.

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) is a proven framework for building girls of courage, confidence, and character. As part of the GSLE girls:

- **Discover** who they are, what they care about, and what their talents are;
- **Connect** through collaboration with other people, locally and globally;
- **Take Action** to make the world a better place.

The Girl Scout DNA

At Girl Scouts, we know leadership is not defined by who you are or what you want to be, **but what you do**. Becoming a strong and successful leader is part of the Girl Scout DNA*. Benefits of being a Girl Scout include:

- Successful at conflict resolution;
- Setting ambitious goals and thinking about the future;
- Advocating for herself and others;
- Being solution oriented and entrepreneurial;
- Building a strong female network of all ages;
- Caring about (and taking action against) social injustices;
- Self-identifying as a leader and taking on leadership roles;

- Becoming financially literate and self-negotiating;
- Embracing new experiences and overcoming failure.

Take the Lead Like a Girl Scout

If we want more leaders, we need more Girl Scouts. Together, we'll show the world:

- We're for every G.I.R.L. (Go-Getter, Innovator, Risk-Taker, Leader);
- We prepare girls to empower themselves;
- Leadership is practiced as an everyday lifestyle;
- We're a membership with a lifetime value.

**According to the Girl Scout Research Institute.*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Use of acronyms should be avoided in all communications, especially external.*

Do not use GSNCCP or GS

While it may feel easier to write GSNCCP or GS, please spell them out. GS-NCCP may be used in certain situations with approval from the council, however, it is mostly used as an internal reference and shouldn't be used for outside communications. Always spell out Girl Scouts, and don't use GS. If "Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines" is too long, please use Girl Scouts. *

GSUSA is OK to Use

It is acceptable to use GSUSA in external communications. The first reference should be written as follows: Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA). It should never be written as Girl Scouts of America. Example:

- The headquarters for Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) is in New York City.

G.I.R.L. General

GI.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)TM

- go-getters, innovators, risk-takers, and leaders (lowercase in running text when used sans G.I.R.L.—e.g., We're a community of go-getters, innovators, risk-takers, and leaders making the world a better place)
- Note: The first reference to our new brand platform in a given document/piece gets the TM symbol. Subsequent references can skip the parenthetical: G.I.R.L.
- Avoid language in the vein of "Girl Scouts empowers girls"; instead, emphasize that Girl Scouts prepares girls to empower themselves.

Don't use Title Acronyms like SUM, CEO

Acronyms for positions such as CEO, COO, or CFO should also be spelled out in the first reference, and should only be abbreviated if they are accompanied by a name. For communications with anyone other than volunteers or staff, no other staff or volunteer position should be used as an acronym, including SUM, etc.

Addresses

When writing out addresses, spell out Street, Road, and Drive, etc.

Time

Always use a.m. or p.m. Use figures except for noon and midnight. Examples:

- The programs run 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- The programs run 9 a.m. – noon.

**See Exceptions.*

Capitalization and Titles

Publications

Titles of publications should be capitalized and italicized.* Italics are used for large works, names of vehicles, and movie and television show titles. Quotation marks are reserved for sections of works, like titles of chapters, magazine articles, poems, and short stories.

Seasons

Do not capitalize spring, summer, fall, or winter except when part of a formal title.

Awards, Badges, Patches, and Petals

Always capitalize the full names of Girl Scout awards, badges, patches, petals, etc. Examples:

- Girls will earn badges including Computer Expert and Home Scientist.
- The girls earned their Computer Expert badge.
- The girls will earn a fun patch.

Additionally, Girl Scouts' highest awards should be referred to as Girl Scout Gold Award, Girl Scout Silver Award, and Girl Scout Bronze Award.

Events, Activities, and Programs

Only the exact titles of events, activities, and programs should be capitalized. Examples:

- The TechnoQuest event was a success.
- Girl Scout volunteers attended the Annual Meeting.

Troops and Service/Area Units

Troops and service units should only be capitalized when a number is included. Always use the # in front of a troop number. Additionally, always use Girl Scout and grade level when describing troops.

Examples:

- Girl Scout Daisy Troop #123 stayed up later than other troops at the sleepover.
- Did anyone from the service unit call?
- Area Wake 20 does a lot of community service projects.

Campaigns, Taglines, or Special Initiatives

Titles of campaigns, resources, taglines, or special initiatives are capitalized. For instance, always use initial caps for Girl Scout Cookies or the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Additional examples:

- The volunteers were eager to use the new Journey books. They plan to pay for their books using proceeds from the Girl Scout Cookie Program.
- The Girl Scout Leadership Journeys were developed based on what girls said they wanted from their Girl Scout experience.

Additionally, certain campaigns like Early Bird Registration, Volunteer Appreciation Month, and Girl Scout Week may be capitalized.

**Some publication titles or certain council documents may be bold or called out in other layouts and formats based on readability and use. Use of titles in this way must be approved by the council.*

Symbols and Punctuation

Numbers

Spell out whole numbers below 10, but use figures for 10 and above. Examples:

- They had 10 dogs and six cats.
- Four four-room houses, 10 three-room houses, and 12 10-room houses.
- First-grade girls are full of energy.

Except at the beginning of a sentence when every number should be spelled out. Example:

- Fifty people showed up for training last night.

Periods

Use only one space after a period, not two.

Superscript

In general, do not use superscript. Examples:

- Girls in grade 8, NOT 8th grade girls.
- June 8, 2017 NOT June 8th, 2017.

Telephone Numbers

Use dashes between numbers, and always include the area code. Example:

- Call 800-284-4475 to speak to Jane.

Commas

Always insert a comma before the “and” or “or” in a series. Example:

- Girls learned goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics during the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

Quotation Marks

Periods and commas always go within quotation marks. Dashes, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

Examples:

- She said she was “very impressed with their service project.”
- What did she mean when she said she “handled the situation”?

Other Symbols

Write out percent, rather than using % sign. Write out the word “and” rather than using the “&” symbol, unless it’s part of a slogan or title.*

**See Exceptions.*

Technical Words

Website and Online References

Don’t use a dash in the words online, email, or eNews. Write website, not Web site or Web Site, and write internet, not Internet.

The Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines website should be used on all promotional materials as www.nccoastalpines.org. Do not capitalize the website address.

Additionally, when referring to a specific page on the website, capitalize the name. Example:

- Visit our Donate page on our website to make a gift to the council.

Activities

Activities is capitalized when referring to our online activity registration system for events, trainings, and conferences.

My GS

My GS should be capitalized, with GS in all caps and there should be a space between the two words. This is the only instance in which using GS by itself is approved as it’s part of a technical naming convention for the Movement.

Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) should be written out at first reference and then can be abbreviated by VTK. Example:

- The new Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) allows troop co-leaders to easily plan meetings and activities.

Girl Scout Titles and Specialty Words

Do not use Scouts or Scouting

Please do not say Scouts or Scouting when referring to Girl Scouts. Always say Girl Scouts or Girl Scouting.

Girl Scouts

The Girl is first in Girl Scouting. Always use the terms Girl Scouts, Girl Scout, and Girl Scouting.

Girl Scouts should always appear on one line and should never be broken up within a paragraph.

Use the proper terminology when describing Girl Scouts. Example:

- Girl Scout Brownies, not Brownies.
- American Red Cross, not Red Cross.

Camps

Always use Girl Scout before the name of the camp such as Girl Scout Camp Mary Atkinson, unless a Girl Scout logo or the name “Girl Scouts” or “Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines” is prominent in the same document/communication.

Population Groups

Refer to U.S. Census designations for population groups: Hispanic, African American, Caucasian, Asian, Native American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

Job Titles and Volunteer Roles

Job titles and/or volunteer positions should only be used in initial caps when used before a person's name. Use all lowercase otherwise. Examples:

- Our chief operating officer met with Membership Director Jane Doe.
- The program director spoke with Jane Doe, membership director.
- The service unit manager is going to lead the meeting.
- The award was presented to Troop Co-Leader Jane Doe.
- Jane Doe, troop co-leader, runs the meetings.

Exceptions: the sitting U.S. President and the Girl Scout – North Carolina Coastal Pines Board of Directors.

Additionally, when referring to the Girl Scout council, the word “council” should also be lowercase.*

Example:

- The council is developing a new volunteer training resource.

**See Exceptions.*

Graphics and Branding

Colors

Use the three Girl Scout colors only – black, white, and green.

Clip Art

Avoid clip art whenever possible. Add a “pop” using approved photography or approved illustrations. Do not “borrow” any licensed or copyrighted art.

Photos

All photos of girls and adult members must have confirmed photo releases. Members can opt-in to have photos used by the council and by designated volunteer roles when they register and/or renew membership through their My GS account. Written confirmation is needed if the photo opt-in cannot be confirmed. The council can also provide photo release forms if needed.

The Trefoil

The trefoil should not be made into a character,

Font

Use Arial. Girl Scout councils across the country use the GSUSA branded font, Trefoil (previously Omnes), on marketing and promotional materials. This font is used in graphics and templates for volunteers, as well as approved council vendors for marketing, product, and merchandising purposes. Arial is the only other acceptable font. As Trefoil is a Girl Scouts proprietary font, it should only be used for Girl Scout materials and will only be accessible by council staff and select vendors.

Service Mark (or Logo)

Put the Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines service mark (logo) at the top left of every document/communication. Make sure it has at least the same amount of white space around it as the “g”. The logo text should be larger than any other text except the title.

When using the two color logo, it should contrast

made to hold photography, or re-rendered in any way without council permission or in alignment with Movement-wide campaigns. The trefoil should always be a trefoil – not a flower, a leaf, or a snowflake. Green and white color combinations are preferred. That said, the trefoil icon can be used to emphasize words or phrases including the mission.



with the background.



Exceptions

Social media and certain digital formats face unique challenges around brevity and text/character limitations. The exceptions below apply only to council social media channels like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, the council blog, etc. and do not apply to email communications or newsletters. The exceptions to the rules outlined above include:

Aliases/Usernames

The preferred username for the blog is Girl Scouts – NC Coastal Pines to help with search engine optimization. GS-NCCP may also be used online or in certain council documents for brevity and space. **GSNCCP, GirlScoutsNCCP, and NCCoastalPines may also be used by the council only for social media account creation. These names should not be used by anyone outside council staff and should be approved by the Marketing and Communications Department.**

Unless authorized, **do not create any social media account on behalf of the organization.** Additionally, troops, service unit teams, and other volunteers should refer to the social media guidelines prior to creating an online account. Account creators should email social@nccoastalpines.org with the name and link to their social media accounts.

When referring to the council's Twitter presence, it is appropriate to say @GirlScoutsNCCP. In this use case, the @ symbol should come immediately before the alias without a space in between. Please maintain the capitalization structure outlined here. These same rules apply to the council's Instagram account, @GSNCCP.

Organization Name

Though GSNCCP and GirlScoutsNCCP are acceptable for council social media usernames, they should not be used anywhere else. The preferred name is Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines; if you face additional character limitations you may also say Girl Scouts – NC Coastal Pines or GS-NCCP, but this should only be used when facing severe text restrictions.

Numbers

Unless necessary to ensure message understanding, do not spell out numbers in social media use. Use numerals.

Shortened Links

Use shortened links when possible by copy/pasting a link into one of the free web-based link-shorteners. The preferred link-shortener is Bit.ly: <https://bitly.com>.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

In common language use, acronyms can and should be used on social media posts to save space. (Common popular acronyms include CEO, COO, CFO, etc.). Even in social media, do not use acronyms that apply to Girl Scout jargon unless communicating with internal staff or volunteers (SUM, etc.).

Use good judgment in deciding when to abbreviate other words, as each will be a case-by-case challenge to balance clarity and brevity. Common sense abbreviations (e.g. changing Director to “Dir.” or “Association” to “Assoc.”) are appropriate in these platforms.

Symbols

For brevity on digital platforms, you may use the “&” symbol when facing text limitations. However, the “&” symbol should not be used in any print documents or formal communications unless part of a format title.

Titles and Specialty Words

Girl Scout council; council (Remember, it's only appropriate to capitalize “council” when it's used as part of a proper name—e.g., Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines Council

Girl Scout troop; troop (But: Pippa is in Manhattan's Girl Scout Troop 3484.)