

Safety Activity Checkpoints (SACs)



Digital Technology

ACTIVITY	DAISY	BROWNIE	JUNIOR	CADETTE	SENIOR	AMBASSADOR	Is Prior Council Approval Required?	Is Activity Training, Certification, or Verified Experience Required?
Digital Technology and Virtual Meetings	D	B	J	C	S	A	No	No

Build a website, write a blog, research a badge, or create digital art—it's all at your fingertips.

General Checkpoints

Refer to the [Safety Standards](#) for general standards about supervision, transportation, first aid, and emergency plans, as well as inclusion and accessibility considerations.

Activity-Specific Checkpoints for Digital Technology

Follow these basic reminders for each phase of planning. Check off items as you complete them, making sure to consider each sub-bullet.

Note: This information does not replace the need for training and experience.

Decision-Making Phase

- ☐ **Consider readiness and interest.** Have a conversation about what the group would like to try or learn. They may wish to build on their experiences with their product program websites, or discover coding or artificial intelligence.
- ☐ **Balance virtual and in-person experiences.** Virtual gatherings can eliminate barriers due to busy schedules, physical ability, lack of childcare, transportation, and distance. Explore ways to bond the group in the digital space to ensure meaningful connections.

- ☐ **Make plans for access.** Source options for computer or internet access, especially for those without tech at home.
 - School, local libraries, college computer labs, or retail computer stores may have learning or screen-time possibilities.
 - Consider contacting your council office to see if they have a suggestion.
 - When arranging group activities, make sure assistive devices are in place for anyone who can benefit from visual, hearing, or other aids.

Planning and Preparation Phase

- ☐ **Distribute the Girl Scout [Internet Safety Pledge](#).** All youth, as well as their caregivers, must read, agree to, and abide by the pledge when participating in Girl Scout activities online.
- ☐ **Identify and use only secure sites.** Web applications and social media sites are used only if the identity of users can be verified. Keep an eye on participant postings.
- ☐ **Keep virtual meeting security top of mind.**
 - Keep meetings set to private; do not post meeting links or passcodes publicly.
 - Learn to turn off screen sharing and block intruders.
 - Keep devices updated. Patches and updates often include security enhancements.

Learn More

- Find out which emblems and words are protected on the [GSUSA Terms and Conditions web page](#).

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□ **Know the rules.**

- Get caregiver permission—and ensure all participants are at least 13—before setting up a social networking site for Girl Scout participation. Adult caregivers may use a social networking site to manage a younger group.
- Keep in mind that money-earning activities online are permitted for GSUSA-approved product programs only.

Day of the Activity

□ **Monitor websites.** Ensure Girl Scouts are using safe and actively controlled internet site.

□ **Safeguard privacy.** Protect Girl Scouts' information from unintended audiences who may have harmful intent. Remind Girl Scouts of these basic online safety principles:

- Use only first names.
- Never post addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses of members on any public site.
- Never post information about group meeting places, dates, or times, or post details of trips or events while still at that location.
- Be careful with captured images that have the potential to be misused in the future.
- Use a troop or group email address—or contact info for an adult—when public postings are required for program needs such as event listings.
- Get caregiver permission before using images of Girl Scouts on social media or other digital sites.
- Stay up-to-date on technology developments that could impact security.

□ **Establish virtual meeting norms.** Lead the group in deciding on respectful protocols like when to mute, keeping on task, checking in with each other, and so on.

□ **Remain engaged in meetings.** Continue to monitor for security and conduct even if members are conducting the meeting. Maintain **adult supervision** as if you were in person.

□ **Beware of shared content.**

- When linking to other websites, make sure the site contents align with Girl Scout Mission.
- Avoid linking to commercial sites selling merchandise, to avoid implied endorsement of those products. Instead, seek out sites that support Girl Scouting and are tasteful and program-level appropriate.

- As a courtesy, contact the site's webmaster for permission to link to the site.

□ **Respect copyrighted material.**

- The basic principle is: If it's not yours, don't use it. A group's website may not use copyrighted designs, text, graphics, or trademarked symbols without specific permission from the copyright or trademark holder.
- Some commercial products or animated characters are trademarked and can't be used on most websites.
- Get permission from the artist, author, or publisher before using videos or music on your website. This includes words from copyrighted songs, poems, or books.

□ **Protect the Girl Scout brand.**

- Girl Scouts may use trademarks owned by GSUSA, which include the trefoil shape, membership pins, badges, highest award, and other images.
- Certain terms, like Girl Scout Cookies or Junior Girl Scout, are safeguarded, too. Use them only in accordance with guidelines for their use. The Girl Scout trefoil, for example, may not be animated or used as wallpaper for a website.

□ **Follow legal protections.**

- Get caregiver permission before launching social networking sites that youth will use.
- Participants must be 13 years old—or older in some states—and must meet U.S. Child Online Privacy and Protection Act (COPPA) guidelines.

Girl Scout Programs

As part of Girl Scout programs, members may create their own unique websites to highlight their activities. These site links should only be shared with family, friends, and other people the Girl Scout knows. Keep in mind:

- A caregiver must review and approve a Girl Scout's website before it goes live.
- A caregiver must manage the website for a Girl Scout under 13 years old and be responsible for all content, communication, and information posted.
- A caregiver must review and approve any images before they are posted. If the Girl Scout is under 13 years old, the caregiver must post the pictures and videos themselves—youth under 13 are not permitted to do so.