The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) helps troop leaders deliver easy, fun troop meetings year-round! With this step-by-step guide, you’ll discover how your volunteers can take their troop experience to the next level!
### Who Has Access to the Volunteer Toolkit?

**SERVICE UNIT/ADMINISTRATIVE VOLUNTEERS:**
Volunteers who hold a service unit or administrative role and support troop leaders and families in their respective geographical area. Access is granted through the council based on placement in designated support roles.

**TROOP LEADERS AND CO-LEADERS:**
Active volunteers registered for the current Girl Scout membership year in a troop leadership role. There should be at least two volunteers with access to the same troop account in the VTK.

**CAREGIVERS OF GIRL SCOUTS IN A TROOP:**
Each primary caregiver has access to their troop's VTK account. They have read-only permission for the meeting schedule and agendas, plus additional resources. (Caregiver accounts can only be accessed if the troop leader has set up a year plan.)

**CAREGIVERS OF GIRL SCOUTS NOT IN A TROOP (I.E., INDIVIDUALLY REGISTERED MEMBERS):**
Each primary caregiver of a currently registered Girl Scout who is not part of a troop will get troop leader-like access with their girl(s). Access is granted through the council based on confirmation of individually registered status.

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Where To Find the Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) can be used from any computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet access. For best results, use a VTK–friendly browser such as Chrome or Firefox with a cleared cache and visit www.gshnj.org.

In the upper right-hand corner of your screen, click My GS.

Select Volunteer Toolkit to log in using the credentials provided by the council.

**NOTE:** The VTK does not work on Internet Explorer.

Basic Navigation

Welcome to the Volunteer Toolkit! We’ve outlined everything you need to know to set up your troop volunteers for success!

The Volunteer Toolkit is divided into tabs that feature unique tools to help you plan a troop year and manage each meeting. If you’re on a computer, you’ll see the **GREEN TABS** across the top of your browser window.

Mobile users will see a grey dropdown menu at the top of their screen, with each tab beneath.

**NOTE:** Not all councils have a FINANCES tab.

**TIP:** Print – Download – Help

You’ll notice these three icons on almost every page of the VTK.

- **Print** your current screen by clicking the green printer icon.
- **Download** the page or resource by clicking the green down-arrow bracket icon.
- Seek out additional **help** by clicking the green question mark icon OR by clicking the binoculars next to Take a Guided Tour.

**TIP:** Do you hold more than one role? If you are a troop leader or parent too, access each account from the dropdown menu at the top of your screen.
The MY TROOP tab displays sample girl information for administrative volunteers. This is the space where troop leaders and troop caregivers find their complete girl roster, along with primary caregiver names and contact information. They’ll click the green arrow next to each name for a snapshot of achievements and attendance, as well as personal information about each girl. From this tab, troop leaders can:

- Email caregivers
- Print a troop roster with achievement and attendance information
- Renew memberships

Don’t worry; you can always easily revise your options! Select the “X” to exit the “Try it” area. To see an overview of all prerequisites, click on the “Preview” link.

The EXPLORE tab displays all the exciting options for the upcoming Girl Scout year on the troop’s girl scout grade level. From this tab, you’ll be able to:

- Browse prebuilt tracks of badge and Journey activities
- Create your own activity track
- Preview tracks and badge requirements before adding them to a year plan
- See an overview of all preselected tracks at the bottom of the page (it’s even printable, so you can easily review your options!)

Don’t worry: you can always add, remove, or change your plan as you go, one meeting at a time. If you select a year plan, it will automatically populate the YEAR PLAN tab. Setting up a year plan allows caregivers to see their side of the Volunteer Toolkit, too!

The FINANCES tab helps troop leaders easily share financial info with local Girl Scout staff. Each council can customize questions and required documentation; watch for additional guidance and resources locally.

The RESOURCES tab is where you’ll find the answers you need on badge and Journey requirements, as well as resources and guidance for every aspect of the Volunteer Toolkit. Here, you’ll find:

- Suggested scripts
- Material lists
- Printables
- Meeting aids
- A customizable meeting schedule
- A year plan
- Prebuilt meeting aids
- Meeting ideas
- Suggested scripts
- More!

Once you select a year plan, it will be displayed in the MEETING PLAN tab. This is where you’ll make every troop meeting a success! Here you’ll find:

- Suggested scripts
- Meeting ideas
- Meeting aids
- A customizable meeting schedule
Set Up a Year Plan

When you log in to the Volunteer Toolkit the first time, you’ll need to select a year plan before you can customize meetings or activities. The EXPLORE tab displays available prebuilt year plans for you to choose from based on the grade level you select.

▶ IMPORTANT: Each time you choose a new year plan from the EXPLORE tab, it will reset your entire year. Any activities, meeting dates, and customizations will be lost. To add badges and Journeys or edit your existing year plan in any way, use the buttons on the YEAR PLAN tab.
BUILD YOUR OWN

Search to Add a Petal, Badge or Journey Meeting

Search for a badge or journey award by name

BUILD YOUR OWN allows troop leaders to mix and match badges, Journeys, and activities with the interests of their girl(s). Build Your Own will also allow you to search through all badges and Journeys regardless of grade level.

Use the filters to sort through all the available programming and the Select Meeting checkboxes to choose badges and Journeys to add to your year plan. Once you’re finished, click Add Year Plan at the bottom.

PRESELECTED TRACKS

BUILD YOUR OWN

PRESELECTED TRACKS are a preset selection of meeting plans for a specific Journey or set of badges. Click View Popular Tracks, and from there you can preview each combination of awards. Once you’ve found the right one, click Select Track and your year plan will be created.

Once you’ve made your selection in the EXPLORE tab, you’ll automatically be taken to the YEAR PLAN tab. This is also the tab you’ll be brought back to each time you log in.
Add Meetings to the Year Plan

Girl Scouts are ready for whatever comes their way—and that includes changes in meetings or their year plan. Start by using the green Add badge/Journey link at the top of the year plan or Search to Add Meetings at the bottom of the year plan.

Use the search feature or filters to sort through available meeting types and choose which ones to add to your year plan. Meetings already in your plan will be clearly marked.

Once you’ve made your selections, click Add to Year Plan.

**TAKE NOTE:** meeting titles with numbers at the end are part of a series and you’ll want to add all of them to meet the requirements for the award.

**TIP:** View Past Year Plans

(Administrative volunteer year plans do not archive. This feature is for troop and caregiver users only.)

Each July the VTK resets. Your year plan will be archived and you’ll no longer be able to make changes. However, you’ll still be able to view the plan through the green Past Years link at the top of your YEAR PLAN tab.

Achievement and attendance records DO NOT archive. Troop volunteers and caregivers should download a copy of this information for their records.
Add Dates and Locations

As an administrative volunteer, you may not need to set dates for meetings, but to continue planning your year, the system requires that you set meeting dates for your year plan.

At the top, click the green Manage Calendar link. Using the pop-up widget, choose a date and time for meetings to start and set the cadence for your meetings. Click Update Calendar when finished. Don't worry, you can still make changes after this.

Once you've set this up, when you use the Manage Calendar link again, you'll notice it looks entirely different! Now you can customize each individual meeting, add the location, or even reset the entire schedule.
CALENDAR: To edit the schedule, select the green calendar icon to the left of each meeting date to change the date or time of that specific meeting.

You can also choose to cancel one or more meetings or combine meetings. Select the two meetings you’d like to combine, then select the new date that meeting will occur. After you’ve made any changes, click Save and your year plan will be updated.

To the right, you’ll see a green gear icon. This takes you back to the original view of the Meeting Date and Location widget, where you can reset the entire cadence of your meetings if needed.

LOCATION: Now that your dates are set, you can connect an address to each one. If you're meeting in multiple locations, add each address then connect it to the appropriate meeting using the checkboxes. Click Assign or Apply and then close out of the window.

TIP: Manage Your Meetings
Select the calendar icon to change date or time, or cancel or combine meetings.

Select the gear icon to reconfigure calendar from a specific date forward.

TIP: You can also get to the Meeting Date and Location widget simply by clicking on a date in your year plan. Change a date quickly or select See More Calendar Options.
Add Activities to the Year Plan

Meetings and badges are only one part of a go-getting Girl Scout’s troop year! You can also add things like field trips, service projects, or cookie booth sales to your year plan. And the Volunteer Toolkit connects to your council website so you can browse and add council events, too. Any activity you add will appear in blue and show up chronologically.

Back at the top of the year plan, click Add Activity.

CUSTOM ACTIVITY: Add your activity name, date, time, location, and details to your year plan. From the administrative volunteer view, no one else can see this event.

COUNCIL ACTIVITY: [Edit paragraph based on your council’s event registration processes.] Search or filter through council events and add them to your year plan. Important: this feature does not register you for the event, so be sure to check out your council website for full event registration details.
Tools for Planning a Meeting

Set yourself—and your troops—up for success at each meeting! The **MEETING PLAN** tab has a robust collection of tools and information for planning an engaging meeting every time.

### PLANNING MATERIALS
High-level resources show you from start to finish what your girls will achieve during the meeting (1. Meeting Overview), what you'll do and say (2. Activity Plan), and the meeting aids plus the materials you'll need (3. Material List).

### MANAGE COMMUNICATIONS
Emails are prepopulated with relevant meeting information, but you can customize them based on your needs. You can even attach meeting aids or other relevant documents from your council website at the bottom of the email before sending. Troop leaders can also record attendance and achievement* in this section. Use the checkboxes to mark who's at the meeting—and if it's a meeting where you're finishing a badge or award, you can mark that too. You can see the full picture of what a girl has earned on the **MY TROOP** tab, with the option to download.

### MEETING AIDS
These documents and videos are the leg-up troop leaders need! Some are geared toward the adult supporting the meeting and some are for each girl completing the activities. You can find more information on how to use these resources in the activity plan under Planning Materials.

### AGENDA
Wondering how to kick off your meeting activities? Here, you'll find instructions and details for each activity, including materials needed, time it takes to complete, and recommended sequencing. You'll also find opening and closing activities to round out your meeting.
There are lots of ways to customize your meeting agenda:

▶ Drag and drop activities to reorder in the agenda.

▶ Use the dropdown on an activity to change the amount of time allotted for a certain activity.

▶ Delete an activity by clicking the “X” to the right of it. Be careful you aren’t deleting a required activity to earn an award though!

▶ Click Add Agenda item at the bottom to add your own activities too!

▶ Add a note at the end to remind yourself about important things to remember for that meeting.

If at any time you want to replace or delete an entire meeting, just use the respective links at the top of the meeting plan.

And remember: if at any time you want to download or print your year plan or meeting plan, look for these icons at the top of the page:

Questions?

Looking for more Volunteer Toolkit support? Contact Customer Care at 908-518-4400 or info@gshnj.org.