



## Junior Gardener Badge Activity Plan 2

**Badge Purpose:** When girls have earned this badge, they'll know how to help plants and flowers grow.

**Planning Guides Link:** Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

**Fun Patch Link:** Gardening

**Activity Plan Length:** 1.5 hours

**Involve Family and Friends:** Participation from family and friends can enrich your troop's Girl Scout experience, both for the girls and for you. Use the suggestions below to make it easier for you to connect with additional support.

- Before the meeting:
  - Send a note to families to find those with interest in or expertise with the topic. Ask them to lead or support an activity or two, or even lead the whole meeting.
    - Offer this activity plan as a starting place and point out that they may choose alternative activities using the *Customize It!* section as a guide. For example: If an activity plan directs girls to sit outside and observe animal habitats, you may choose to go to the zoo and learn about animal habitats there instead.
- At home:
  - Encourage families to ask questions about their girls' badge activities. Some examples that work for any badge include: What did you learn? What surprised you? What does it make you think of trying next?
- Throughout the year:
  - Suggest to families ways that girls can share or display their Girl Scout accomplishments. Possibilities include a bulletin board, a scrapbook, a special memories box or family sharing time.

**Girls Take the Lead:** Include girl leadership through long-term planning, short-term meeting prep and specific activities at meetings.

- Long Term Planning
  - If you use "Plan Your Junior Year", share this with the girls at the start of the year. Have them ask friends and family to help out with specific meetings or activities. Let the girls brainstorm ways to make the plans their own, such as thinking of related field trip activities. If a girl has experience with a field trip, ask her to be assistant tour guide.
  - If you are adapting the "Plan Your Junior Year", get the girls' input on which badges to choose. Offer just a few choices in each category or timeframe to make decisions easier. Every girl should have at least one badge or journey she's excited about.
- Short Term Planning
  - Ask a family to help lead a badge. Make sure they have access to activity plans and any resources you might have. Keep additional requested materials to a minimum.
  - Choose two helpers to stay after a meeting for 15 minutes. Give them each an activity to introduce and either instruct or help guide at the next meeting.
  - Before a meeting, ask everyone to vote on some aspect of the activity: draw posters or perform skits, open with a song or game, etc.

- Use a rotating list of helper tasks, called a 'kaper chart', to share responsibilities. Examples include acting as emcee of the meeting, leading an opening game, bringing a snack next meeting or taking attendance.
- At the Meeting
  - During the opening, have 1-2 girls share their answers to a get-to-know-you question.
  - Have girls fulfill their kaper chart responsibilities.
  - Try to find something in each activity that you can let girls decide or manage.

**Customize It:** If your group wants to expand work on this badge or simply try different activities, go for it! There are many ways to earn this award, including: completing the activities as listed in the *Junior Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*, completing two of these activity plans, attending a council-sponsored event or customizing activities. Pick the one(s) that work best for your group. Girls will know they have earned the award if:

- They have visited a garden and explored garden design.
- They can identify one factor that's important for choosing a plant for a garden.
- They have experimented with seeds and grown their own garden.

### Tips and Tools

- Check out ways to stay safe using Safety-Wise at <http://gsrv.gs/safetywise>.
- Ensure that your activities are accessible to everyone. Ask in advance if any special accommodations need to be made. If you have questions regarding specific adaptations, please contact River Valleys at 800-845-0787.

### Resources

- This activity plan has been adapted from the Junior Skill-Building Badge Set for the *It's Your Planet – Love It!* Gardener Badge, which can be used for additional information and activities.
- [www.extension.umn.edu/garden](http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden) look through this site for information on plants in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Can also phone a garden hotline or e-mail Ask an Expert for advice about plants and planting.
- <http://gsrv.gs/1DN2kkR> to show girls hardiness zones

## Getting Started

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Girl Scout Promise and Law printed out on poster board

Steps:

1. Welcome everyone to the meeting.
2. Recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Use repeat-after-me or say it as a group if girls know it by heart.

Girl Scout Promise	Girl Scout Law
<i>On my honor, I will try:</i> To serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law.	<i>I will do my best to be</i> honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, <i>and to</i> respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

3. Play a game so girls get to know each other better. Use the example below, if needed.
  - Flower Tag: Play this game if you can go to an open area such as a large room or yard. Designate one girl as "it" and set boundaries for the game. "It" chases girls to try to tag them. To avoid being tagged, girls may run away, or freeze and say the name of a flower, in which case "It" must chase another girl. Any girl tagged by "It" is out.

## Activity #1: Ways to choose garden plants

Badge Connection: Step 3—Learn how to choose garden plants

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Seeds
- Seed packets from activity #2
- A bulb such as a tulip or daffodil bulb, or a picture of a bulb
- A small un-potted plant to show girls the roots, or a picture of one
- Computer with Internet access (optional)

Steps:

1. Show girls the seeds, bulbs and plant with roots and discuss how different plants can be grown from these beginnings.
  - Explain that bulbs are typically planted in the fall
  - Explain that plants which are already growing, such as those purchased from a garden store, are typically planted in the late spring.

- Explain that seeds need to be watered in order to germinate, or start growing. When you plant them indoors the time of year might not matter, but if planting outside you plant them in the spring.
2. Describe how regions of the United States are divided into hardiness zones, which assists gardeners in determining which plants are most likely to thrive in their areas. Hardiness is based on average annual minimum winter temperatures. Most of the Twin Cities, southern Minnesota and western Wisconsin are in Zone 4. If you have access to a computer, show girls the website resource listed above and have them figure out which Zone they are in.
  3. Next, describe how some plants are annual, which means the plant grows and dies in one season and doesn't come back, while others are perennial, which means they come back every year.
  4. Have girls check the seed packets they will be using for their herb garden to find out what information is included on the packet (annual or perennial? Hardiness zone? How to plant? Etc.)

## **Activity #2: Plant an Herb Garden**

Badge Connection: Step 5—Grow your own garden

Time Allotment: 25 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Packets of 6 different seeds of herbs, for example oregano, basil, chives, dill, parsley, thyme
- Potting soil
- 6 small containers such as Dixie cups or one 6-pack egg carton per girl
- Spice jars of the same herbs being planted

Steps:

1. Fill each container with potting soil.
2. Dig a shallow hole in the center of each container and place 1 or 2 seeds in it.
3. Cover the seeds with soil.
4. Pour a couple of tablespoons of water over the soil.
5. Advise girls that the plants should be placed by a sunny window. Once the plants start sprouting, they should replant them in containers with drainage holes.
6. Open the spice jars and pass them around for girls to smell. Advise them these are dried versions of the herbs they are growing.
7. Explain how cooks use more of a fresh herb in cooking, and less of a dried herb because it's concentrated.
8. Have girls share which herb they think smells the best.

## **Activity #3: Snack Chat**

Badge Connection: Questions link to multiple badge steps

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials needed:

- Paper and pencil or pen

Steps:

1. While enjoying snack, here are some things for girls to talk about.
  - Remind girls that they took home plants in egg cartons at the previous Gardener meeting. Ask who experimented with different amounts of water. Was it better to give the seeds more water or less water, or did it make any difference?
  - Ask girls if they will do any experiments with their herb gardens.
  - Talk about different recipes or foods which could be flavored with the herbs they are growing.

## Wrapping Up

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Make New Friends printed on poster board

Steps:

1. Instruct girls to get into a Friendship Circle. Have girls stand in a circle and cross their right arms over their left, holding hands with the person on each side of them.
2. Sing "Make New Friends."

Make New Friends		
Verse One	Verse Two	Verse Three
Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver, the other is gold.	A circle is round, it has no end. That's how long I will be your friend.	You have one hand, I have the other. Put them together, We have each other.

3. After the song, ask everyone to be quiet.
4. Assign one girl to start the friendship squeeze by gently squeezing her neighbor's hand with her right hand. Then, that girl squeezes with her right hand. One by one, each girl passes the squeeze until it travels around the circle. When the squeeze returns to the girl who started, she says "Goodbye Sister Girl Scouts" and the girls unwrap and face outward instead of inward.
5. Optional: Have girls make a wish after their hand has been squeezed and before they pass the squeeze along. Girls can also put their right foot out into the circle when they receive the friendship squeeze, so that everyone can see it travel along the circle.

## More to Explore

- Field Trip Ideas:
  - Visit a local farmer to find out how they grow crops.
  - Visit a local park that has gardens.
  - Visit a botanical garden.
  - Visit a local nursery.
- Speaker Ideas:
  - Invite a gardener, landscaper or nursery owner to talk about what they do.

## Suggestions

Do you have any suggestions to improve this activity plan? Do you have ideas for other possible badge-earning activities? Please email [troopsupport@girlscoutsvr.org](mailto:troopsupport@girlscoutsvr.org).

## Family Follow-Up Email

Use the email below as a template to let families know what girls did at the meeting today. Feel free to add additional information, including:

- When and where you will be meeting next
- What activities you will do at the next meeting
- Family help or assistance that is needed
- Supplies or materials that girls will need to bring to the next meeting
- Reminders about important dates and upcoming activities

Hello Girl Scout Families:

We had a wonderful time today planting our garden and have earned the Gardener Badge.

We had fun:

- Learning about hardiness zones and annual vs. perennial plants
- Planting our own herb gardens

Continue the fun at home:

- Help your Girl Scout determine what to do with her egg carton plants and where to transplant them once they are big enough.
- Help your Girl Scout transplant the herb garden as it begins to grow. Make sure to keep it by a sunny window and use the fresh herbs in your cooking.
- Look through the *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* with your Junior to find other activities you can try at home.

Thank you for bringing your Junior to Girl Scouts!