



Junior Gardener Badge Activity Plan 1

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

- Allina Health's Health Powered Kids program provides additional lesson plans that go along well with this badge, including "Gardening – Growing Goodness".

To use these plans:

- Visit healthpoweredkids.org
- Log in using:
 - Username: gsrv
 - Password: allinahealth
- Find lessons for this badge on the Girl Scouts page.
- This activity plan has been adapted from the *Junior Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting Gardener Badge*, which can be used for additional information and activities.

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.
 - Pile Up: Girls sit on chairs in a circle. Choose a leader who will have a list of “yes” or “no” questions, such as “Do you have on brown shoes?”, “Are you wearing a ring?”, “Is your favorite color purple?” As the questions are asked, those that can answer “yes” move one chair to the right. Those that answer “no” don’t move. Girls will end up “piled-up” on chairs.

Activity #1: Garden Tour

Badge Connection: Step 1—Visit a garden

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Look at the neighborhood around your meeting spot to find gardens. Plan a walking route to see as many different gardens as you can in 20 minutes.

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Flower field guide. Ask parents if they have a guide that the girls can borrow. You can also check your local library. Recommended guides are:
 - *The Audubon Society Pocket Guides; Familiar Flowers of North America*
 - *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Wild Flowers and Trees of North America*
 - *A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs: Northeastern and north-central United States and southeastern and south-central Canada*

Steps:

1. Walk around the area near your meeting place and look at different types of gardens and flowers.
2. Optional: Give the girls a flower ID guide and have them identify plants they really like. This can also be done once the girls return from their walk.
3. On the tour, ask the girls questions about the gardens they see:
 - What kind of flowers do you see? Are there any you really like?
 - Have you seen these plants before or are they new to you?
 - Are there flowers and plants that are growing well? Are there any that aren’t?
 - What kind of soil are the plants in? Does it look like the rest of the soil in the area or do you think the person who planted the garden added it? Is there mulch or any other ground covering?

- How are the gardens laid out? Is there a pattern?
- What about the gardens are the same? What is different?
- Which garden is your favorite? Why?
- Have you seen any animals in the gardens? Were they around any specific plants or flowers?

Activity #2: Zen Gardens

Badge Connection: Step 2—Explore garden design

Time Allotment: 10 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies. Girls will need:
 - Stones for their Zen gardens. These can be collected during your meeting, brought by girls from home or purchased at a craft supply store.
 - Zen garden containers. Some options are:
 - Small plastic food takeout containers
 - Disposable storage containers
 - Altoids tins
 - Small cardboard boxes with the top taped shut and one wide side removed. If needed, cut the box sides off prior to the troop meeting.

Materials Needed:

- Small stones
- Sand or salt
- Toothpicks
- Zen garden containers

Steps:

1. Pass out one garden container to each girl. Explain they are going to make a special kind of garden to take home that doesn't have any plants. It's called a Zen garden and is used to promote peace and tranquility.
2. Have each girl pour some sand or salt into her garden container. It should be about ½–1 inch deep, depending on the garden container.
3. Have the girls choose rocks and arrange them in the container.
4. Give each girl a toothpick and show the group how to "rake" their garden in small wave patterns. This action is naturally calming.

Activity #3: Snack Chat

Badge Connection: Questions link to multiple badge steps

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials needed:

- Radio (optional)

Steps:

1. While enjoying snack, here are some things for girls to talk about.
 - What kind of gardens did you see on the tour? Which was your favorite one?
 - What was your favorite plant? Why?
 - Does anyone have a garden at home? What kind of plants are in it?
 - Has anyone been to a botanical garden? Were the plants there the same or different than what we saw?
 - What is your favorite kind of flower?
2. For the last few minutes of snack, put on relaxing music (optional) and let girls rake their Zen Gardens.

Activity #3: Experimenting with Seeds

Badge Connection: Step 4—Experiment with seeds

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

Cut the tops off the egg cartons. Cut the bottom portion into sets of two cups.

Materials Needed:

- Egg cartons (one per six girls)
- Sharp scissors
- Soil
- Seeds
- Small cups

Steps:

1. Give each girl one section of egg carton and four seeds.
2. Have each girl use the small cups to scoop soil into each hole in the egg carton. Then, she should gently put two seeds into the soil of each section.
3. Explain to the girls that they are going to do an experiment at home and report back at their next meeting. When they go home, they're going to water both sections of their seeds, but they should give one side one teaspoon of water each day and the other one tablespoon to see what will happen.
4. Ask the girls what they think will happen.

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@girlscoutsv.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 learning about making gardens and are on our way to earning the Gardener Badge.

We had fun:

- Exploring gardens in our community
- Making our own Zen Garden
- Planting seeds to experiment with at home

Continue the fun at home:

- Help your Girl Scout water her seeds each day. One side should get one teaspoon of water each day and the other should get one tablespoon each day. Be sure to mark which side gets how much water. Throughout the week, make observations and comparisons of the two sides with your Girl Scout.
- Visit gardens in your neighborhood as a family.
- Help your Girl Scout find pictures of gardens to use as inspiration for her own garden.
- 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!