



Brownie Household Elf Badge Activity Plan 1

Badge Purpose: When girls have earned this badge, they'll know how to make their home clean and green.

Planning Guides Link: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

Fun Patch Link: Planet Saver

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 Brownie 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 Brownie 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 *Brownie 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 can identify ways to save energy and water
- They can explain how reusing, recycling and using natural products are better for the environment
- They can identify one way to keep the air clean

Tips and Tools

- Prior to the meeting, check with the manager of your meeting facility to find out how much of the building you can explore for your scavenger hunt.
- 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 Brownie Skill-Building Badge set for the *It's Your Planet—Love It!* Household Elf 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. Sing the Brownie Smile Song. Use repeat-after-me or sing as a group if girls know it by heart.

The Brownie Smile Song
I've got something in my pocket It belongs across my face I keep it very close at hand In a most convenient place I'm sure you wouldn't guess it If you guessed a long, long while So I'll take it out and put it on It's a great big Brownie Smile!

Activity #1: "Energy Eater" Hunt

Badge Connection: Step 1—Save Energy

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Print and cut out "Energy Eater" cards. For additional cards, print multiple sets of cards or come up with additional ideas.
- Remove any "Energy Eater" cards that are not applicable to your meeting space.

Materials Needed:

- "Energy Eater" Cards
- Writing utensils

Steps:

1. Divide girls into groups of two–three. Give each group an "Energy Eater" card.
2. Explain that you're going to work as a group to figure out how you can save energy at your group meetings. Give the girls a few minutes to find the places (if any) in your meeting space that are the "energy eater" on their card. They can mark on the card to keep track.
3. After they have checked the whole meeting space, have the girls talk in their groups about what changes can be made to save energy.

4. Have girls take turns sharing what they found and their ideas for solutions.

Activity #2: Sing in the Shower

Badge Connection: Step 2—Save Water

Time Allotment: 10 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Stopwatches, watches with second hands or other items that keep time
- Paper
- Writing utensils

Steps:

1. Split girls into groups, so that each one can have a stopwatch or clock.
2. Explain that you can save water by taking shorter showers. Often, people lose track of time in the shower and waste water. Girls can keep their showers shorter by singing their favorite songs.
3. Have girls take turns timing how long it takes each girl to sing her favorite song.
4. Once everyone knows the length of their songs, have them use the pen and paper to figure out how many times they have to sing the song to time out a three-minute shower.
 - For example: If it takes a girl 30 seconds or .5 minutes to sing her favorite song, she would sing it six times in a three-minute shower (3 minutes/.5 minutes = 6 times).

Activity #3: Snack Chat

Badge Connection: Questions link to multiple badge steps

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Buy locally grown produce for the girls to enjoy for snack, if possible.

Steps:

1. Have girls wash their hands for snack. Tell them to practice saving water by turning the faucet off while they are lathering up their hands with soap. They can ask a friend to turn it back on.
2. Have each girl get her snack. While enjoying snack, here are some things for girls to talk about:
 - We learned ways to save energy at our meeting place. Are there other ways you can think of to save energy at home or school?
 - If the snack is locally grown, share that local food saves energy and often tastes better, as well.
 - Are there other ways you can brainstorm to save water at school or home?
 - Have you ever reused something for another purpose? What was it and how?
 - What other items around your home do you think you could reuse instead of throwing away?

Activity #4: Green Shopping Bags

Badge Connection: Step 3—Go natural and Step 4—Reuse or recycle

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.
- If you don't have enough extra pillowcases, you can find inexpensive options at local thrift stores.

Materials Needed:

- Old light-colored pillowcases (one per girl)
- Permanent or fabric markers
- Sharp scissors

- Tablecloths or newspaper to cover tables

Steps:

1. Explain to girls that plastic bags not only take energy to make, they also end up in landfills and the ocean where they harm the environment. Explain that they are going to make reusable bags out of old pillowcases. Then, they'll not only use fewer plastic bags, they'll also keep the pillowcase out of the garbage.
2. Have each girl color her pillowcase with the markers. Encourage girls to incorporate some of the things they've learned about saving energy.
3. As girls are coloring, have an adult cut two holes (one on either side) of the pillow case near the open end that will act as handles for the bag.
4. Encourage the girls to keep track of how many times they use their "new" bag rather than a plastic bag.

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 a 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 or state park and learn about maintaining natural resources.
 - Visit a water treatment plant to see what it takes to get dirty water clean again.
- Speaker Ideas
 - Have a sustainable farmer talk to the group about how they conserve resources when growing food.
 - Have someone from the natural resources department or forestry service talk about why it is important to conserve resources.

Suggestions

Do you have any suggestions to improve this activity plan? Do you have ideas for other possible badge-earning activities? Please email troopsupport@girlscoutsrv.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 different ways to protect our environment and conserve resources and are on our way to earning the Household Elf Badge.

We had fun:

- Finding “Energy Eaters” in our meeting place
- Learning how to time our shower with our favorite song
- Making a reusable shopping bag from an old pillowcase

Continue the fun at home:

- Search for “energy eaters” in your own home! Look for items that are wasting energy and make corrections.
- Have your Girl Scout time her showers using her favorite song. Ask her to teach the whole family how to do it.
- Use the shopping bag your Girl Scout made instead of getting a plastic bag the next time you go to the store together.
- Look through the *Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* with your Brownie to find other activities you can try at home.

Thank you for bringing your Brownie to Girl Scouts!

Energy Eater Cards

<p>Electronics that are left turned on, but are not in use Hint: The worst offenders are computers.</p>	<p>Doors that leak air Hint: If light can get through the cracks, so can air.</p>	<p>Lights that are left on when not in use</p>
<p>Windows that leak air Hint: Try feeling for air leaking through.</p>	<p>Traditional light bulbs Hint: Ask your leader what a new, energy efficient light bulb looks like.</p>	<p>Electronics that are off, but still plugged in and using power Hint: Things with remote controls use the most power when off because they're waiting for the remote to send a signal.</p>
<p>Appliances (refrigerator, stove) made before 1994. Hint: Look around the outside and inside of the object for a date. Does it look old?</p>	<p>Air conditioning or heating turned on in rooms that aren't being used</p>	<p>Air vents blocked Hint: Check behind curtains, drapes, under furniture and under rugs.</p>
<p>Summer: Window shades open during the day or closed at night Hint: Shades block light and trap heat.</p>	<p>Winter: Window shades closed during the day or open at night. Hint: Shades block light and trap heat.</p>	