



# Girl Scout Patrols and Clubs

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

Below are frequently asked questions for adult volunteers and Girl Scout members regarding the formation and purpose of a Girl Scout patrol or club.

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### **What is the difference between a patrol/club and a troop?**

While most of the structures of a troop, patrol, and club are the same, the intended activities of these groups are different.

Both patrols and clubs are a group of girl members supported by adults working towards a specific task, activity, or special interest focus. They may expect to stay open in perpetuity or for a specific duration.

The primary difference between a club and a patrol are:

**Club:** Girls share a common interest. While the group may take action towards activities or specific objectives, that is not their *primary* objective. The group may decide to engage in take-action projects or other activities, but they aren't working on something that will get "done."

Examples of club types could be an interest in botany, wildlife preservation, civic action, or any other topic.

**Patrol:** Girls come together to accomplish a specific task, action, or objective and will have an official measurement of “done.” Once the specific task is accomplished, the patrol can stay active and identify a new task or goal to work towards. A few different types of patrols are [travel patrols](#) which have a travel focus, trailblazer patrols that have an outdoor focus, girl advisory groups, and product patrols that experience the ins and outs of Girl Scout entrepreneurship from the perspective of an adult volunteer. These patrols are just examples—the options are limitless!

### **Who can be part of a patrol/club?**

Any registered girl member. Girls can experience Girl Scouting through a variety of options, including being part of multiple troops and groups.

### **Why do we need patrols/clubs?**

Patrols/clubs allow girls choice and flexibility in their participation in Girl Scouts. A girl may be in a troop and love it, but also wants to explore aspects of Girl Scouting that the troop as a whole isn't interested in. Girls may choose to be Girl Scout Juliettes, but want to travel with a group of girls. Patrols/clubs give girls options outside of their regular participation to explore their interests and realize their dreams.

### **How are patrols/clubs formed?**

The first step is to reach out to [answers@girlscoutsosw.org](mailto:answers@girlscoutsosw.org)! Our customer support team will connect the adult leader with the staff point person for the type of group being created. The patrol/club leader will receive a link to a form that collects the information needed to build the patrol/club. Some things to think about are: Does the group have a second volunteer willing to help with the patrol/club? Will the patrol/club need a bank account? How will girls get into the patrol/club? Will the patrol/club be invite-only or localized vs. open to members across the council?

### **How do girls get into the patrol/club?**

Some patrols/clubs are formed by volunteers who have already been in communication with the girls who have expressed interest in the same focus. In this case, the patrol/club is created and the girls assigned. Additional girls can be added at a later time either by contacting [answers@girlscoutsosw.org](mailto:answers@girlscoutsosw.org) or by the patrol/club leader inviting them through their My GS account. A patrol/club might begin with a few girls already identified, but remain open to accepting additional members. Your patrol/club can elect to be displayed in the participation catalog for girls to join.

### **Are the requirements for a patrol/club the same as a troop?**

This varies based on club or patrol formation and the requirement in question.

Please see the [Patrol and Club at a Glance](#) diagram in this document for further detail.

**Patrols:** Like a troop, the patrol must have two adult volunteers in the Troop Leader role who have completed the same trainings required of a troop leader. There must be a minimum of five girl members.

**Clubs:** A club must have two adults for supervision. At least one adult must hold the Troop Leader role for the club and have completed the same trainings that are required of a troop leader. The second adult supporting the club can be in the Friends and Family Volunteer role, or any other role that has at least the same training requirements. There is no girl membership minimum for a club.

**Both:** Both patrols and clubs require at least two adults who are unrelated, from separate households, and one of them must be female. All adults must have verified background checks on file. Meeting girl/adult ratios is required in all situations. Please see [Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Council Volunteer Policies and Procedures](#) for more information on ratio requirements based on grade levels and group size, and associated adult training requirements. If the group leaves their meeting place, any related trainings required for that activity are required of the adults.

### **Does a patrol/club need a bank account?**

Clubs are unable to have a bank account. Patrols must have a bank account if they intend to collect/hold more than \$100. A patrol with a bank account must adhere to all usual financial policies and submit an annual [Troop Financial Report \(form #108\)](#).

### **Who supports a patrol/club?**

If the group is only open to its local service unit, it will be primarily supported by its local service unit team. If the group is open to multiple areas or the whole council, they will be supported by a combination of staff and the service team.

### **Can a patrol/club participate in product programs?**

A club cannot participate in a product program. A patrol can participate in the Fall Product Program or Girl Scout Cookie Program. To do so:

- The patrol must meet all of the same pre-qualification criteria expected of troops, including adult training, girl minimums, and financial eligibility.
- The patrol must have a group bank account and be up to date with financial report submissions to remain financially eligible to participate in product programs.
- Girls can only sell with one group. If a girl sells with a patrol, they cannot also sell with their troop or as a Juliette for a given season/program.

- All “troop” proceeds received by product program participation become the property of the group and must stay with that group. Group funds are not earmarked for individual girls and are the property of the group.
- At least one adult must take required product program training to serve as the troop product manager. That adult would be required to support the girl’s individual sales the same way a troop would including the possibility of handling product inventory.
- The patrol must self-identify their interest to participate in the product program with the Product Program department. All timeframes and deadlines apply to their participation as are true for troops.

**Where do I go if I have questions?**

Please email [answers@girlscoutsosw.org](mailto:answers@girlscoutsosw.org) for support.

Please see the next page for the [Patrols and Clubs at a Glance](#) resource.

<b>Patrols and Clubs at a Glance</b>		
	Patrol	Club
Purpose of group?	Collection of girls working towards a specific outcome/activity and will have an official measurement of “done/complete.”	Collection of girls with similar interests. There is not a formal objective/activity. No measurement of being “done/complete.”
Requires a minimum of five girls?	✓	
At least two adults required to meet ratio***?	Two adults, each in the Troop Leader role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ At least one adult in the Troop Leader role.</li> <li>▶ Second adult in Friends and Family role, or roles with comparable training requirements.</li> </ul>
Adults required to have training**?	In alignment with their role assignment.	In alignment with their role assignment.
Adults required to have background check?	✓	✓
Can participate in money-earning/handling/product programs?	✓	
Can participate in travel/activities outside the meeting location?	Yes, providing that all applicable training** is complete (Indoor Overnights/Extended Travel/etc.).	Yes, providing that all applicable training** is complete (Indoor Overnights/Extended Travel/etc.).
Can Girl Scout funds* be used to facilitate the activities of this group (travel, supplies)?	Yes, as long as they have a Girl Scout bank account.	This group would have to become a patrol in order to use Girl Scout funds or to handle and hold more than \$100*.
<p>*Girl Scout funds = program credits, proceeds from product programs, money-earning activities, or funds earned in the name of Girl Scouting.</p> <p>** Please see <a href="#">Volunteer Essentials</a> and <a href="#">Council Volunteer Policies and Procedures</a> for guidance on training requirements.</p> <p>*** Please see <a href="#">Volunteer Essentials</a> and <a href="#">Council Volunteer Policies and Procedures</a> for guidance on meeting ratio based on grade levels, group quantity, and training requirements for adults.</p>		

