

Bridging Ceremonies

Moving On to New Adventures

Bridging is an important transition in a Girl Scout's life. It's a defining moment when a girl becomes aware of her achievements and is ready for new adventures and responsibilities. Celebrating this change should be fun, personalized, and memorable for everyone involved. And most of all, it should be designed by the girls in true partnership with adults.



Bridging ceremonies usually take place at the end of a Girl Scout year or may be done at the beginning of a Girl Scout year and have three parts - Opening: guests are welcomed and the tone is set; Main Section: the ceremony is explained and the girls celebrate moving from one level to the next; Closing: girls participate in friendship circles and thank their guests. Each of the ceremony's parts offers plenty of room for the girls' creativity and individuality. And whether the ceremony includes an actual bridge or a symbolic one, or if it includes props like candles, flowers, or flags, it should always focus on paying tribute to the girls as they move forward.

HONORING CHANGE

During bridging ceremonies, girls are honored for their progression and growth. Girl Scout resources like the *Girls Guide to Girl Scouting* and *Ceremonies in Girl Scouting* (available in the service unit library or from River Valleys) provide information on bridging activities and ceremonies.

Following are recognitions Girl Scouts may earn when they bridge to the next program level:

Daisy Girl Scouts receive their Bridge to Girl Scout Brownie Award patch, their Girl Scout Brownie Membership Pin, their Troop Crest (if one is chosen) and a Daisy Girl Scout ending certificate.

Brownie Girl Scouts receive their Bridge to Girl Scout Junior Award Patch, their Brownie Wings as they "fly up" to Junior Girl Scouts and their Girl Scout Membership Pin. Brownie Girl Scouts carry their Brownie Wings onto their Junior uniform.

Junior Girl Scouts receive their Bridge to Girl Scout Cadette Award patch to signify their bridging into new age-level activities and/or middle school. Junior Girl Scouts carry their Brownie Wings onto their Cadette uniform.

Cadette Girl Scouts receive their Bridge to Girl Scout Senior Award patch as a bridge into high school and marking their readiness to work toward the Girl Scout Silver or Gold Awards.

Senior Girl Scouts receive their Bridge to Girl Scout Ambassador Award patch, which is worn directly above the Bridge to Girl Scout Senior Award patch.

Ambassador Girl Scouts do not officially bridge; however, many councils honor graduating Girl Scouts with a special ceremony for "bridging" or transitioning to adult Girl Scouts. Girl Scout Lifetime membership is available to girls upon graduation from high school.

EASING THE TRANSITION

In addition to the ceremony itself, there are other ways you can help your Girl Scout's move on to the next level. Troop Leaders and other adult volunteers can help girls work through bridging activities as outlined in age-level resources and leader guides. This usually involves:

1. **Working on proficiency awards at the next level** - Look at the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting and Journey books for the next program level with the girls and see what they'd like to work on. Encourage girls to consider earning their Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.
2. **Connect with other Girl Scouts** - Arrange troop visits and plan activities with Girl Scouts at the next and/or previous program level to learn what's coming up or share what the girls have learned at their current program level.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

www.scoutingweb.com/scoutingweb/ceremoniesgirl.aspx

www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_central/ceremonies

Google *Girl Scout ceremonies* (be specific with the type of ceremony you need)