

# 2023-24 Cookie Season

## Cookie Price Increase FAQs

## USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO)

### 2024 Cookie Price Changes

#### Frequently Asked Questions

##### Price Change Highlights

- The price of traditional cookie flavors will increase to \$6/package for the 2024 cookie program. Specialty cookies (Toffee-tastics + S'mores), which cost \$6, will remain at that price.
- Each community will now earn \$1.60 with each package sold; a \$.022 increase from last year.
- The last USAGSO cookie price increase took place five years ago during the 2017-2018 Membership Year.
- The cookie program is the world's largest girl-run business, financial literacy program, and the largest annual fundraiser which benefits both our local communities as well as our international organization and staff. Participating Troops fund their service projects and activities with cookie proceeds, and it also helps USAGSO maintain the level of service you have come to expect.
- Historically, the net cookie profit is the second largest income stream for the USAGSO operating budget. The operating budget provides staffing, facilities, services, marketing materials, recruitment support, camps, volunteer training, financial assistance, and program support for USAGSO members.

##### Why are we increasing our price?

To empower our overseas Girl Scouts, we must take a global view of membership, support, and program needs – and we must invest in the proven Girl Scouts' leadership development program that supports USAGSO members in their unique international environments. Like almost half of stateside councils, USAGSO has approved a price increase to \$6.00 per package for traditional cookie flavors to match the \$6.00 per package rate for the specialty cookies (which was increased five years ago during the 2017-18 membership year).

- Since 2019, the cost of the cookies from the Little Brownie Bakers has increased by 9%.
- Since 2019, the operating expenses for USAGSO have increased by over 50% in Europe and over 56% in Asia.
- Military funding, which represents almost a third of our operating expenses, is being reassessed by USA Military leadership and will decrease funding substantially in the future, starting MY24.
- USAGSO continuously seeks gifts of support and program sponsorships and grants.
- Cookie proceeds remain one of our largest sources of income, and funds 52% of our operating expenses.

##### Why is the US military funding decreasing for Scouting organizations?

The U.S. Military has a long history of providing financial and logistical support for Scouting organizations overseas and allowing us to operate on military installations across the globe. USAGSO currently has an office for council staff overseas in both Europe and Asia. Current funding from the military provides additional support for girls and volunteers, such as background checks for volunteers

on military installations, microgrant funds for training and programs, discounts for camp, and adult training opportunities. The US Military recently changed its funding model for Scouting overseas, resulting in a direct decrease in funds available to support girls, volunteers, and council staff. This also played a role in USAGSO's decision to increase the cost of traditional cookie flavors by providing additional funds so that local Girl Scout communities can receive more support for local activities.

### **Will there be an increase in troop proceeds?**

· **Yes!** Overseas Committees and Troops will receive an extra \$0.22 cent per package, a 16 % increase in proceeds over the previous year – with each package providing a total of \$1.60 to your community.

### **How many other Girl Scout councils sell cookies at \$6/package?**

· While Councils are given budget autonomy to support their individual troop needs, almost half of stateside Girl Scout Councils sell cookies at the \$6 price point.

### **Why not a \$0.50 increase to \$5.50 per package?**

Research shows that customers will continue to buy cookies because of the mission they know and love. Customers buy cookies because they want to support Girl Scouts, they love the taste, and they want to interact with the girls selling them. \$6 helps girls and troops raise more funds for Girl Scout activities and will make a huge difference in our ability to reach more girls and volunteers.

### **Will the price increase affect cookie sales?**

It is important to prepare your customer base for the new price for Girl Scout cookies. Now is the time to consider fun and unique ways to ensure your sales thrive:

- Educate your Girl Scouts and leaders on the price increase and the reason behind it
- Start educating your customer base
- Encourage your Girl Scouts to tell their customers what they plan to do with their earned money—connect them to the story of what they are providing to your girls!
- Promote donations to “Gifts of Caring” to support our deployed troops
- Ensure your customer understands that when they buy a package of cookies, they are getting more than a tasty treat – they are supporting the individual Girl Scout, her troop, and her community as well as helping to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place!

### **What is the impact of a retail price increase to cookie sales?**

Based on consumer research, for every \$1 increase in price, consumers buy on average one less package of Girl Scouts cookies. Due to this vetted research, we do anticipate a slight dip in sales during the first year of the retail price increase; however, results from councils which have implemented the same price increase have varied greatly. By keeping our prices competitive as well as the many benefits it provides your girls, we foresee that sales will continue to increase, over time.

### **How can we offset a potential dip in sales as a result of the price increase?**

If you are planning to remain consistent with historic sales volume, girls should seek to reach ~ 30% more customers than in previous years. For example, if a girl asked 10 customers to support the troop

cookie sale goals during the 2023 cookie sale, she should ask at least three more customers during the 2024 cookie sale in order to maintain consistent sales volume.

### Where does the money go?

- **In-person sales: \$6.00 package of Traditional Cookies:** (Thin Mints, Samoas, Trefoils, Do-si-Dos, Tagalongs, Adventurefuls, and Lemon-Ups) means that:
  - \$1.60 goes directly to the OCMT and troop— an increase of 22 cents over last year
  - \$1.22 goes to pay the baker and distribution agent
  - \$0.10 goes to recognitions and rewards for the girls
  - \$3.08 goes to leadership development for girls and adults
- **In-person sales: \$ 6.00 per package of Specialty Cookies:** (Toffee-tastics + S'mores)
  - \$1.60 goes directly to the OCMT and troop— a 22 cents increase over last year
  - \$2.30 goes to pay the baker and distribution agent
  - \$0.10 goes to recognitions and rewards for the girls
  - \$2.00 goes to leadership development for girls and adults
- **Digital Cookie sales: \$6.00 per package of Traditional Cookies:** (Thin Mints, Samoas, Trefoils, Do-si-Dos, Tagalongs, Adventurefuls, and Lemon-Ups):
  - \$1.60 goes directly to the OCMT and troop – a 22 cents increase over last year
  - \$1.41 goes to pay the baker and credit card transaction fees
  - \$0.10 goes to recognitions and rewards for the girls
  - \$2.89 goes to leadership development for girls and adults
- **Digital Cookie sales: \$6.00 per package of Specialty Cookies:** (Toffee-tastics + S'mores)
  - \$ 1.60 goes directly to the OCMT and troop – a 22 cents increase over last year
  - \$ 2.39 goes to pay the baker and credit card transaction fees
  - \$ 0.10 goes to recognitions and rewards for girls
  - \$ 1.91 goes to leadership development for girls and adults

Note that each Overseas Committee Management Team (OCMT) decides how to split the OCMT profit (\$1.60 per package) between the OCMT and troops. Make sure to include this amount in your Cookie Program Plans. USAGSO recommends that the troops receive the greater portion of the split. OCMTs who are not eligible to participate in the in-person sales receive a portion of the proceeds in the form of credit, *Cookie Community Coupon* to use towards Girl Scout merchandise, product, and programming in lieu of cash payments. To qualify for the *Cookie Community Coupon*, eligible communities must have at least 5 girls participating in Digital Cookie, 3 OCMT members and one serving as cookie manager. Use this [LINK](#) to complete the OCMT Commitment form. Eligible communities receive a \$160 coupon for every 100 boxes sold through Digital Cookie.

The OCMT and troop proceeds will increase from \$1.38 to \$1.60 per package – 22 cents more than last year. That's an additional \$220 for every 1,000 boxes sold! This means your OCMT and troops will earn more money to help girls in your community reach their goals.



Here are some ways troops and OCMT's can spend their additional cookie proceeds!

Troops:

- Travel & Activities
- Community Service Project
- Uniform components
- Membership Renewal
- Troop supplies

OCMT's:

- Membership Renewal
- Uniform components
- Supplies for the hut
- Create a scholarship fund to support Highest Award projects and/or girl travel
- Adult development opportunities, like first aid training
- Community events

Remember, how the funds are used is a decision made by the entire troop and/or Overseas Committee Management Team, not just the leaders, parents, or a few select girls from the troop. It is also important to know that troop funds belong to the entire troop and cannot be earmarked for individual girl use.

- As always, 100 % of proceeds from cookie sales are used to serve the girls and volunteers of USAGSO and to help Girl Scouts remain one of the most affordable and personally enriching activities a girl can choose while living overseas. While the cost of other programs like swimming and gymnastics can run upwards of \$200+ and do not last the whole year, Girl Scouts provides a lasting connection between international moves and offers a yearlong support system for girls and their families.
- The investment in the modernization of the new registration process and volunteer support, including digital resources to simplify and enhance the volunteer experience and provide more time to dedicate to the girls. Additionally, proceeds allow USAGSO to provide improved customer service, expand training opportunities to Overseas Committees and volunteers, and financial assistance and camperships to members who need it most.
- USA Girl Scouts Overseas' communications channels; bi-monthly community updates, quarterly gathering and organization wide updates, an updated and prolific USAGSO website, consistent and helpful social media resources and presence, as well as our annual Impact Report.

**Because of this increase, we are excited to be able to provide our Overseas Committees an additional \$0.22 cents per package to serve local Girl Scouts invest in local Girl Scout events. Additional Overseas Committee proceeds support:**

- Local investment into volunteer and girl recruitment, appreciation, and retention
- OC-level financial aid to USAGSO Girl Scouts in need
- Travel scholarships to OCMT and adult volunteers to attend training
- Expansion of local programming options at the Overseas Committee level

**Thank you for your continued support of the USA Girl Scouts Overseas through the Girl Scout Cookie Program!**