



BRIDGING GUIDE

What is Bridging?

Bridging is the special ceremony where Girl Scouts officially move from one level to the next. Girl Scouts can move from Daisy to Brownies all the way through Ambassadors to Adults. Within a troop only some girls may bridge, if it is a multi-age troop, or an entire troop can bridge at the same time.

Most troops choose to bridge at the end of the Girl Scout year and the ceremony can serve as an event to share what the Girl Scouts have learned with family and friends. The ceremony can be on a special day or incorporated into the final troop meeting of the year. Troops may also choose to come together and hold a bridging ceremony for an entire community.



Bridging Award

To earn a Bridging award, Bridging Girl Scouts complete two steps: **Pass it on!** And **Look Ahead!**. Check your Girl Scout Guidebook to find how your Girl Scouts can earn their Bridging Award.

Plan a Ceremony

Make your Bridging Ceremony Girl-led. The girls should be actively engaged in designing what *their* ceremony will look like, and it should reflect their personalities and interests. To help guide them, leaders may want to prompt girls with a general outline of common bridging elements. These can include:

Opening – Ask the girls what they think would be a good way to welcome guests and set the tone for their ceremony. This could be a flag ceremony and a reciting of the Girl Scout Promise.

Presentation– This is a great opportunity for girls to share something they learned or accomplished during their Girl Scout year. It could be a favorite Girl Scout memory, song, or dance. To add a layer of formality to the ceremony, girls can take turns lighting candles or turning on flashlights when it is their turn to speak or share.

Crossing – This is where girls symbolically travel from one level to the next. Girls often walk over a bridge, under an archway, or some other creative way to show girls traveling from one side to another. A leader should greet each girl with the Girl Scout Handshake (shake with the left hand and make the Girl Scout sign with the right) once she reaches the other side.

Closing – How do the girls want to wrap-up their time in their former level? If there's something that the troop usually does to close their meetings or events, they may want to share this troop tradition with a bigger audience.

Girl Scouts who are not bridging play an important role in the Bridging Ceremony. Girls may handout programs, share stories about their bridging troop sisters, and even stand on either side of the bridge to help the bridging Girl Scouts cross.

TIPS & IDEAS

In Girl Scouts, the rainbow is a symbol of bridging. Here are just a few ways to incorporate rainbows into your bridging ceremonies.

- Make and wear rainbow art such as friendship bracelets with multicolored beads or thread.
- Create a rainbow arch using balloons or pool noodles that girls walk under during the ceremony.
- Add a rainbow of color to your refreshment table by serving fruit kabobs, colorful cupcakes, and other bright treats.
- Create rainbow invitations using colorful ribbon, paint or glitter.
- Does your troop have old craft supplies to use up? Let the girls create colorful decorations for the ceremony venue.
- Rainbow SWAPS! If holding a community bridging ceremony, each troop can bring rainbow SWAPS to share.

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Don't have a bridge to cross? That's okay. An archway of streamers, a row of carpet squares or garden pavers, or even chalk on a driveway can be used to mark a path for girls to travel.

Ceremony Location Ideas

- School auditorium
- Community Center
- Local Park

Bridging gifts don't have to be expensive. Try using special treats to signify the girls new troop level. For example, a box of Junior Mints is a great gift for Brownies crossing over to Juniors.



Other Ideas for your ceremony

- Create a memory booklet full of pictures and stories that can be given out to guests at the ceremony.
- Create a slideshow with pictures and comments from the girls.
- Combine the award and bridging ceremonies to recognize the amazing things your Girl Scouts have accomplished during the year.
- Don't forget to ask for audience involvement—perhaps with a song with easy actions!

Resources

Girls around the world have been bridging for years, and there are lots of useful resources to help you plan this event. Online communities such as (www.pinterest.com) and (www.youtube.com) have photos and videos of ideas from previous ceremonies—such as themed snacks, level-based décor, invitation templates and sample scripts. Use keywords “girl scout bridging” for a variety of info.

