

# Cookie Parent Meeting Guide



## WHY

New and returning troops are encouraged to have a parent meeting specifically about the Girl Scout Cookie Program® before the troop's initial order is placed. Families who understand the importance of the Cookie Program give it their full support and help their girls succeed. As a volunteer, you play a key role in communicating the importance of the program and in getting family buy-in.



## WHEN

Cookie parent meetings should take place before the initial cookie order is due to council in early January of each year (please check [girlscoutsnebraska.org/cookies](https://girlscoutsnebraska.org/cookies)). As a girl-led organization, girls should attend the meeting and their input should be considered.



## MORE ABOUT THE COOKIE PROGRAM

The Cookie Program supports all girls in the Spirit of Nebraska council and makes it possible to provide girl programs; low-cost council events; and training, resources, and support for volunteers. The Cookie Program powers new and valuable experiences for girls and teaches them these five essential leadership skills:

1. **Goal Setting:** Girls set sales goals and make a plan to reach them.
2. **Decision Making:** Girls decide how their troop will spend program proceeds.
3. **Money Management:** Girls learn how to run their own cookie business by taking orders, handling money, and creating budgets.
4. **People Skills:** Every new customer a girl meets is an opportunity to gain experience working with all kinds of people.
5. **Business Ethics:** Girls are encouraged to be responsible and honest at every step of their cookie-selling journey.



## BE PREPARED

You should have received a copy of the Cookie Program Family Guide for each family in your troop at cookie training. If you need more, they can be found online or requested from the council. You should complete the back page of the Family Guide (Important Cookie Details and Dates) before your parent meeting. Let families know a longer version with more information is available on [GirlScoutsNebraska.org](https://GirlScoutsNebraska.org).



## SAFETY FIRST

Girl safety is our top priority! Review the safety guides in the Cookie Program Family Guide as well as in the Safety Wise chapter of the Volunteer Guide.



## OUTCOMES

Before ending the meeting, ensure you have covered your agenda.

- Do girls and families understand the importance of the Cookie Program?
- Do they understand all program procedures?
- Have you secured the volunteer assistance needed?
- Did your troop set their group and individual goals?
- Do you have all the completed paperwork from each family?

You may not be able to answer all the questions that come up during the meeting, and that's OK! Our Member Support team and your Troop Support Specialist can help you find the answers.

Phone: 800.695.6690; Email: [MemberSupport@girlscoutsnebraska.org](mailto:MemberSupport@girlscoutsnebraska.org); Website: [GirlScoutsNebraska.org](https://GirlScoutsNebraska.org).

# Cookie Parent Meeting Checklist

Use this checklist as a meeting plan and agenda for your cookie parent meeting. Review the Cookie Program Family Guide and use it as a reference throughout your meeting.

## BEFORE THE MEETING

- Attend a council cookie training session in person or online.
- Make sure you have enough paperwork for each family.
- Set the dates you want troop cookie money turned in and add that information to your Cookie Program Family Guides.
- Make sure all girls are registered for this membership year.

## INTRODUCTIONS

- Introduce the Troop Cookie Manager (TCM) and any other volunteers assisting. Share their contact information and hours of availability.

## PAPERWORK

Review the following materials and collect completed forms at the end of the meeting:

- Cookie Program Family Guide, one per family
- Parent permission form, one per girl
- Order card, at least one per girl
- Recognition selections, one per girl
- Money envelope, one per girl

## COOKIE PROGRAM BASICS

- Cookie Program start and end dates
- Cost of cookies and where proceeds go
- The Five Essential Leadership Skills achieved through the Cookie Program
- Smart Cookies website

## GIRL SAFETY

Review the guidelines in the Cookie Program Family Guide to ensure the safety of each girl.

## GOAL SETTING

Every year, your troop should decide how to spend their cookie proceeds. Ask the girls what activities they want to do, estimate the cost of these activities, and calculate the number of boxes they need to sell to pay for the activities.

- Set a troop goal
- Have each girl set an individual goal
- Recognitions
  - Girls should choose their recognitions during this meeting
  - Explain the 500 and 1000 Club

## COOKIE SELLING

- Plan door-to-door sales
  - Try a cookie caravan! Have girls meet up and canvas a neighborhood together.
- Decide if your troop will participate in cookie booths
  - Choose dates, times, and locations.
  - Ask parents for help. (Parents must be registered members with completed background screens to handle troop money and products.)
- Discuss online sales.

## MONEY AND PRODUCT MANAGEMENT

Discuss the following up front so there are no surprises later!

- When is money due to troop?
- What payments will the troop accept?
  - Council best practices: Have parents write a check, as opposed to paying in cash, so there is a paper record. Always provide a receipt, no matter the payment form.
- How will the TCM distribute cookies?
- Money earned is troop money, not an individual girl's money.
- Review the collection procedure if a family doesn't pay money owed to the troop.

## AT THE END OF AND AFTER THE MEETING

- Make sure you have all the paperwork back from each family, including a driver's license number.
- Place your troop's Initial Cookie Order by due date.

# Cookie Season Prep with Girls

Get inspired for the best Girl Scout Cookie Program ever! Here are some ideas for inspirational and informational activities that will help each girl have a successful season full of fun and learning. You can break these activities up and complete a few during each meeting, or gather your troop for a half-day cookie workshop to complete badge and additional activities below in one fell swoop.

## EARN YOUR COOKIE BADGES

The beginning of the year is the perfect time for your troop to earn their cookie-related badges – just in time to put their new skills to work during the cookie program! The badge activities, which can be found in each level’s Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting, are comprehensive, easy to follow, and teach your girls business, marketing, and communication skills

- Daisy Cookie Business leaves: Count It Up, Talk It Up
- Brownie Cookie Business badges: Meet My Customers, Give Back
- Junior Cookie Business badges: Cookie CEO, Customer Insights
- Cadette Cookie Business badges: Business Plan, Marketing, Think Big
- Senior Cookie Business badges: My Portfolio, Customer Loyalty
- Ambassador Cookie Business badges: Research and Development, P&L (Profit & Loss)

## GET READY FOR THIS YEAR’S COOKIE CONTESTS

Are your girls barrier breakin’, challenge crushin’, lead takin’ cookie entrepreneurs?

Have them show the world how the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world prepares girls to lead, learn, and succeed by entering the Girl Scouts of the USA’s Cookie Pro Contest as well as a Spirit of Nebraska specific contest. Watch for both contest details at [GirlScoutsNebraska.org](http://GirlScoutsNebraska.org). Girls could win a VIP trip to Orlando, Florida!

There’s a Spirit of Nebraska contest coming, too, that will encourage girls to participate in cookie booths. Watch for details on how to enter a drawing for a chance to win BIG prizes.

Contest details are available at [GirlScoutsNebraska.org](http://GirlScoutsNebraska.org).

## PLAN AND DECORATE YOUR COOKIE BOOTH

If your girls are interested in booth sales, discuss possible locations and decoration themes. Well-decorated, visually interesting booths attract more customers and produce more sales! Build in enough time for your girls to get creative and start making signs and other decorations.

## PRACTICE YOUR SALES PITCH

The sales pitch is an essential tool for successful salespeople. Developing and practicing a pitch will give your girls confidence to make sales and meet their goals!

In her sales pitch, a girl should:

- Greet the customer and introduce herself
- Share her goals
- Ask customers if they would like to buy cookies
- Recommend her favorite cookie and/or suggest cookies as gifts
- Close the sale
- Say thank you and goodbye

Every customer your girls meet will have different needs, interests, and experiences with Girl Scout Cookies (AKA a “customer persona”). It’s important for girls to practice interacting with the different customer personas they may encounter!

## BAKE THE ORIGINAL GIRL SCOUT COOKIE RECIPE

Did you know that Girl Scouts used to bake the cookies they sold? Help your girls get into the cookie spirit by baking the original recipe from 1922! You can find the recipe on [GirlScouts.org](http://GirlScouts.org).

## TEST YOUR COOKIE PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE

Knowing your product is the number one key to making a sale! To give your girls this key to success, create a trivia game with cookie facts.