

## Life Skills



# Cookies & Dough

Girl Scouts have been selling cookies since the 1920s when Juliette Low began the practice as a way for Girl Scouts to become self-reliant. In the beginning, girls baked their own cookies. In 1934, the first documented councilwide sale of commercially baked cookies took place in Philadelphia. Today's Girl Scouts develop their entrepreneurial and public speaking skills while earning money for special events, projects, supplies, equipment, and facilities.

**E**ach interest project contains activities which are organized into four different categories: Skill Builders, Technology, Service Projects, and Career Exploration. By doing these activities, you will gain insights about yourself—your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes. You will have a range of new experiences, and you will develop valuable skills and expertise in specific areas. *To earn an interest project award, you must complete at least seven activities as follows: two Skill Builders activities; one Technology activity; one service project activity; one Career Exploration activity; Two activities from any category that you choose.*

### Skill Builders

1. To hone your marketing skills, write a 30- or 60-second television or radio commercial for this year's Girl Scout cookie varieties. Or create a public service announcement (PSA) on the benefits of cookie sales for Girl Scout activities, projects, and trips.
2. Choose an activity that you and/or your group or troop would like to do, research the expenses involved (including things like admission fees, transportation, food) and then figure out how many boxes of cookies you would need to sell to finance the project.
3. Design a poster or flier for your cookie campaign that you could post at local stores, businesses, religious institutions, etc.
4. Brainstorm 10 new locations in your community for selling cookies—for example, at train stations, parades, tag sales, malls. Then, narrow down your choices by conducting an informal "test." Keep tabs on the numbers of sales made in each of these locations over the course of one week.
5. Research the history of Girl Scout cookie production and sales. Then, with your friends and family or troop/group, recreate some of the old ad campaigns for fun. Could they still generate sales today? Take a poll.

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6. One of the ways to ensure successful product sales is to develop a marketing plan. Do a market survey of your community to determine the ages and occupations of those who buy certain kinds of cookies and use the results to help in your sales efforts.
7. Selling cookies requires skills in areas such as customer service, public speaking, and perseverance. Role-play different scenarios that might include the customer who is cranky, obnoxious, or very inquisitive.
8. Create a press kit to send to media outlets and places where cookies are sold. Include information on Girl Scouting, the purpose of the cookie campaign, a current council newsletter or list of projects and activities for girls, and a glossy flier of the cookie order form.

### **Technology**

1. Surf the Internet for marketing ideas for food products. Download the information for your cookie campaign.
2. Survey at least 10 people for their favorite cookies and their reasons. On your computer or by hand, make a bar graph or chart showing the results, and interpret them.
3. Study the design of a Girl Scout cookie box. How does it protect the product? How is it appealing? Look at the colors, print styles, artwork, or photography. Can you list five things the design says about Girl Scouting?
4. Prepare a spreadsheet that will help you keep track of your cookie sales and profits. Use graph paper or a computer program.
5. Start a “cookies coast-to-coast” newsletter. Distribute it to your friends and family members via e-mail.

### **Service Projects**

1. Develop a cookie board game for Brownie Girl Scouts that will teach them skills like counting, matching, and following rules. Hold an informal contest to come up with a great name for the game.
2. Hold a cookie-tasting party at a senior citizens’ facility, child-care center, or homeless shelter.
3. Recycle cookie boxes into an art project you have designed, constructed, and decorated. Or create something functional like a small toolbox or tissue holder.
4. Send thank-you notes to major supporters or helpers of your cookie campaign and share with them one project that came about as a result of cookie sales.

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5. Create a poster for a younger troop, friend or sibling promoting the benefits of a healthy beverage (such as milk or juice) to go with their cookie snack.

### ***Career Exploration***

1. Examine different careers in the food industry. Don't forget jobs like those in marketing, sales, photography, and advertising, including the graphic arts and copy writing. Interview a professional in a least two of these fields. Ask about the job's responsibilities, education requirements on training, and benefits.
2. Be an entrepreneur and start your own business selling a product or service that you think will appeal to a specific group: for example, weekend baby-sitting services or a lemonade and cookie stand. Learn how to create a budget.
3. Get some writing tips from a local reporter, freelance writer, or teacher, and then write a feature story about your cookie campaign for the council newsletter.
4. Arrange a factory tour for a food product and see what is involved in the making and packaging of that item. Share what you have learned with others.

### ***And Beyond***

Find out how many Girl Scout Cookies are sold each year in your council and nationally. Keep a visual tally at your council office or meeting place. Write to Girl Scouts in other states to see what activities their cookie sales support. Display clippings, letters, or photos. Try these related interest project to improve your sales skills and marketing strategies:

Your Own Business  
Leadership  
Dollars and Sense  
Graphic Communications  
The Food Connection  
Games for Life  
Collecting  
Creative Cooking  
Writing for Real

**This badge can be found in the book *Interest Projects for girls 11 - 17*, page 22. This text has been reproduced with permission from Girl Scouts of the USA—this document may not be copied or reproduced in any way.**