

100 Years of Gold

The Highest Award in Girl Scouting

Gold Award
Though the names of the award have changed, the meaning stays the same. Flip this card over to learn about how the Gold Award has evolved since 1980.



Golden Eagle of Merit

Marked the beginning of a long tradition using prestigious awards to recognize girls who make a difference.



First Class

In 1938, there were three ranks in the Intermediate Girl Scout Program: Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class. Before a Girl Scout could attain First Class rank, she had to choose one program field of concentration. Ten badges had to be earned for achievement of this rank.



First Class

The Curved Bar was discontinued. To achieve First Class meant a girl was an "all around" person with some skills in many fields and a proficiency in one. The First Class Pin was never worn on the Intermediate or Junior/Cadette uniforms - they wore the patch. Once a girl reached Senior Girl Scouting, she wore the pin.

1916

1919

1938

1940

1963

1980

2016

Golden Eaglet

Girls had to demonstrate proficiency in 21 diverse subjects ranging from nature studies to athletics to homemaker activities.



Curved Bar

Curved Bar replaced First Class as the highest rank. It was introduced for Intermediate Scouts who had completed the rank of First Class and wanted to do more. Due to the shortage of metal during WWII, an embroidered patch was used. In 1947, a new Curved Bar pin was introduced, which replaced the First Class badge. The design was that of the First Class pin resting on a curved bar.



Gold Award

Since 1980, the highest award has been known as the Gold Award, and it has inspired girls to find the greatness inside of them and share their ideas and passions with their communities. This long history of honor has allowed the best and brightest girls to undertake projects that improved their communities and world.

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girl scouts

of eastern washington
and northern idaho

The Girl Scout Gold Award

1980 - 2016

The Girl Scout Gold Award evolved from a long line of special Girl Scout awards. The Girl Scout Gold Award was introduced in 1980 as the highest award a Girl Scout could earn. This prestigious award recognizes the work of Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts who have achieved outstanding accomplishments in the areas of leadership, community service, career planning, and personal development.

- 1980 - The Girl Scout Gold Award was introduced. This new recognition helped girls focus on four areas: skill development, leadership, service, and career exploration. Girls would spend 15 - 30 hours in each area.
- 1987 - The requirements were revised to include a service project carried out over a period of four months.
- 1990 - Delegates to the 1990 National Council Session approved a proposal to keep the name of the Girl Scout Gold Award in perpetuity.
- 1993 - The Girl Scout Gold Award Alliance was proposed at the 1993 National Council Session of Girl Scouts. Delegates to the convention created a proposal that GSUSA establish the Girl Scout Award Alliance for those who have received the highest award available to them in Girl Scouting.
- 1995 - The Gold Award was revised. The service project was modified to a minimum of 50 hours.
- 2004 - The requirements for the Gold Award were officially changed to reflect the STUDIO 2B materials. The service project was modified to a minimum of 65 hours.
- 2008 - The first Girl Scout Journeys were introduced. Over the next three years additional Journeys were added, culminating in three series of Journeys to choose from at every grade level.
- 2009 - 2010 - The requirements for the Gold Award were revised to reflect the new Journey materials. In 2010, the new requirements were official. Projects became more than a service project, but rather a Take Action project with a suggested 80 hours.



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