

# Style Guide for Volunteers

This guide is to support the creation of consistent, succinct and professional publications that build a compelling, contemporary brand (communications gap statement). Consistency is critical because it reduces errors and decreases frustration/confusion. Volunteers should refer to this guide when developing documents and correspondence for Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington. The style guide is mostly based on *The Associated Press Guide to Punctuation* and *The Associated Press Stylebook*. There is also a helpful *Punctuation Cheat Sheet* available on our website. If you have questions, please refer to these publications or contact the communications department.

## Content

The items below are required in all electronic and printed publications. These include fliers, posters, newsletters, brochures, manuals, forms, ads and press releases.

- The current Girl Scout logo with the council name (see above) must be included in the top left hand corner. If it does not fit, our council name (see page 2 for details) needs to be somewhere on the publication.
  - The logo cannot be altered, reassembled or re-proportioned.
  - Margin and/or clearance space around the logo is determined by the height of the “g” in the logo.
  - Girl Scouts USA does not authorize volunteers to use the Girl Scout logo online or on business cards.
  - Volunteers wanting to use the logo should contact their service unit’s communications coordinator. If this position is unfilled, contact the communications department.
- Use Arial font whenever possible to increase brand consistency across the movement.
- Don’t violate copyright law by using text from another publication, poetry, music, lyrics, videos, graphics and other copyrighted artwork. Girl Scout trademarks (trefoil shape, Girl Scout pins, badges, patches, etc.) require approval by GSUSA prior to production. If you are unsure, get permission.
- Please limit use of all caps, bolding large sections of text and exclamation marks.
- Whenever you are stating information about our council, use the information listed in the current *GSOSW Fact Sheet* available on the website.
- When mentioning documents and forms, be sure to use the complete document/form name to limit frustration.
- For the protection of our members, location details should not be included in the document if it can be viewed by an external audience and is not open to the public.
- Include if appropriate:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Contact information – name, phone and/or e-mail</li> <li>– Service unit and/or troop number</li> <li>– Revision date (any document that changes frequently)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Page numbers (all multi-paged documents)</li> <li>– Event name &amp; description including date, location, cost, registration information/form, registration deadline, refund policy</li> </ul>
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## Proofreading & Publishing

- Publications (see list in section above) produced by the service team and their volunteers (i.e. associates, volunteers planning service unit events) must be proofread by the service unit communications coordinator prior to distribution. The communications coordinator will coordinate approval of ads and press releases with the director of communications who will send approval or edits within 3 business days.
- Troop and girl publications are encouraged but not required to be proofread unless they are using the Girl Scout logo.
- Please provide a reasonable timeline to complete proofreading. Proofreaders must proof the document to ensure it meets the requirements in this document and should be honest about the time they do or do not have to proofread a publication.
- PDF documents that are being attached to e-mail, unless they’re meant to be a working document. This is to prevent issues viewing your document (i.e. various computing platforms & application versions; not owning software or font). Download free PDF creation software at <http://www.cutepdf.com/products/cutepdf/Writer.asp>.

# Council Standards

## Terminology

- **Girl Scouts of the USA** – abbreviations are in order of preference of use: Girl Scouts of the USA, Girl Scouts USA, GSUSA; be consistent throughout your document
- **Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington** – abbreviations are in order of preference of use: Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington (should be used when space is not an issue), Girl Scouts of Oregon & SW Washington, Girl Scouts OSW, GSOSW (only use on Girl Scout-only collateral); be consistent throughout your document; we are not allowed by GSUSA to use council in our proper name
- **Properties**
  - **Camps** – Camp Arrowhead, Camp Cleawox, Camp Low Echo, Camp Whispering Winds
  - **Outdoor program centers** – Homestead Outdoor Program Center, Mountindale Outdoor Program Center, Ruth Hyde Outdoor Program Center, Tomlin Forest Outdoor Program Center, Wallace Creek Outdoor Program Center
  - **Program centers** – Albany Program Center, Lebanon Program Center, Newport Program Center, Seaside Program Center, The Dalles Program Center
  - **Service centers** – Bend Service Center, Eugene Service Center, Klamath Falls Service Center, Medford Service Center, North Bend Service Center, Portland Service Center, Roseburg Service Center, Salem Service Center; list Eastern Oregon contact information when listing all service centers; do not refer to these as program centers
- **Financial assistance** – membership dues financial assistance; girl uniform and books financial assistance; event financial assistance; travel financial assistance; resident camp financial assistance; day camp financial assistance; adult development financial assistance; not camperships or girl assistance
- **Annual membership dues**; not registration fee or membership fee when referring to annual membership dues; note exception above
- **Non-registered members**; not non-members
- **Volunteer meetings**; not leader meetings
- **Council-wide**; not councilwide
- **Online**; not on-line
- **Web page and website**; not Website, web site, webpage or web page
- **Girl/adult partnership**; not adult/girl partnership
- **Girl Scout with award names** (e.g. Girl Scout Gold Award, Girl Scout Silver Award, Girl Scout Bronze Award)
- **Girl Scout Cookie Program**; not Cookie Sale
- **Girl Scouts or Girl Scouting**; never scout, scouts or scouting
- **Girl Scout grade levels**; not program levels
- **Girl Scout Junior**; not Junior Girl Scout (same for all grade levels; puts focus on Girl Scouts instead of grade level)
- **Service unit and troop numbers**: Spell out service unit/troop with the numeric number and do not use the # sign (e.g. Troop 2689, Service Unit 99)
- **Girl Scout Leader's Day or Leader's Day**; not Leader Appreciation Day

## Punctuation

- Only capitalize proper nouns (e.g. formal & complete name of a program, event, form); common nouns are not capitalized
- Capitalize someone's title when it's used before a name, on a business card or in an e-mail signature; it should be lowercase any other time
- Put in italic publication, form and badge names; everything else is in quotations (e.g. book titles, chapters, section names, articles, plays, movies, songs, television shows)

## Examples:

- The **service unit** invited **troops** to the event being hosted by **Service Unit 99 and Troop 2689**.
- All **Girl Scout service centers** will be open Friday, except the **Eugene Service Center**.
- There will be a sale on **journey** books at the **Girl Scout store** beginning Friday!
- We are working on the *It's Your World: Change It!* journey and the *Rocks Rock badge*.
- **Girl Scout Leader Sarah Jones** just purchased *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*.
- **Girl Scout leaders** need to read *Council Volunteer Policies and Procedures* and complete the *Troop Financial Report* by June 30.
- We can't wait for the *Program Guide* to arrive in our mailbox!
- **Girl Scout Daisy** is the name of a **Girl Scout grade level**.
- **Camp Arrowhead** is a safe and fun **resident camp**.