

Outdoors in Our Community 2025

BC Program Committee



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British Columbia Council, BC Program Committee
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Welcome

Welcome to BC Council's **Outdoors in Our Community** program kit.

Purpose:

-We know that planning weekly unit activities can be a challenging. Please use this program kit to help your unit explore activities in your community. We hope that these ideas help your youth members achieve GGC Girl's First programming areas as well as learning new things, representing Girl Guides in the community and most importantly having fun.

A few notes:

- Most of the activities can be done across all levels but there are some that have Safe Guide age requirements and additional Safe Guide steps. Remember to check the most up to date version of Safe Guide.
- Please remember to include youth members when preparing for activities in your community.
- We recognize that not all communities have access to the same activities which makes each of communities unique. Please explore your local community activities.
- For outdoor activities, remember to leave no trace or leave the area in a better condition than how you found it.
- In the spirit of Guiding, please modify the activities for your unit or event. Consider the accessibility for all members in your unit including the physical environment and extra costs to attend activities.
- Plan and prepare for outings including preparing to be outdoors (Clothing, footwear, skin protection, hydration, map skills, safety, etc).
- Incorporate cultural opportunities to build on our knowledge and experience to further community involvement.
- “At Girl Guides of Canada, we’re building a space where everyone feels seen, respected and celebrated for who they are. GGC is a place where all caregivers, volunteers and community members know they’re welcome. That means creating spaces where all girls and youth, no matter their background, race, gender identity, ability, beliefs, family structure or lived experience can thrive without barriers, question or fear.”

https://www.girlguides.ca/web/GGC/Parents/Who_We_Are/Inclusivity_and_Accessibility/GGC/Parents/Who_We_Are/Inclusivity_and_Accessibility.aspx

Creating a better world, by girls!
Girl Guides of Canada



Outdoor Nature Activities

- Nature Walks
 - Nature Bingo - Take your unit on a walk and have them look for items (See Appendix 1-3 for ideas)
 - Paint Colour Seek and Find – Give out paint chip colours and encourage your unit to locate things in nature that match.
 - Nature Eye-Spy – Play a game of eye spy outdoors
 - Identify plants – Check out PlantNet (or other apps)
 - Photo Scavenger hunt- Give a list of items to search for and take a picture to share with the unit (Check out Appendix 1-3 and feel free to adapt.
 - On a rainy day wear your rain gear and go puddle jumping
 - Visit a Suspension Bridge. Learn about how they are built and explore the area.
- Bird Watching
 - Identify birds and their songs – Check out Bird ID (or other apps)
 - Make bird feeders
 - Learn bird anatomy
- Geocaching <https://www.geocaching.com/play>
 - “Geocaching is an any day, any time activity that can take you to amazing and beautiful places. Geocaches are physical containers hidden all around the world you can find from a set of coordinates.”
 - Challenge your unit to find Geocaches within your community or create your own
- Sketching outdoors
 - Meet up outdoors and practice sketching the local landscape. Invite an artist for an outdoor art lesson.



- Hug-a-Tree – Outdoor survival program
 - Hug-A-Tree is a program to teach children how to prevent getting lost and what to do if they do
<https://www.adventuresmart.ca/programs/hug-a-tree-and-survive/>
- Water-Side walk
 - Go on a walk along a beach, lake, pond, or creek
 - Learn about the name of the location, history, wildlife that lives in or near the water, local plants
- Beach Combing
 - Go on a walk at a beach and search for treasures.
- Beach Clean-up
 - Organize a beach clean-up
 - Check out local rules before starting and plan to have the supplies you need such as garage bags, gloves, tongs
<https://ocean.org/pollution-plastics/shoreline-cleanup/>
- Storm Drain Marking
 - Contact your local municipality to see if they are running the program to paint yellow fish next to storm drains
 - For example: <https://www.surrey.ca/about-surrey/environment/storm-drain-marking-challenge>
 - Historically yellow salmon images are painted near storm drains to remind the public to protect our water ways from pollutants



Community Visits

Explore a community building or service to learn about how our community works. Plan ahead and make contact in advance. Consider giving thank you letters/cards to the staff on your visits.

- Visit a Fire Station
 - Learn about Emergency Preparedness and then try to arrange a tour of a fire station
 - Check out Master of Disaster resources for children and youth in BC
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/education-programs-toolkits/master-of-disaster>
- Visit a Police Station
 - Learn about Community Safety and local Laws
 - Try to arrange a visit to a local police station or ask them to bring a patrol car to your unit meeting place
- Visit a Grocery Store
 - Some grocery stores have dieticians who provide in-store programming
 - Challenge your unit to create meal plans with a specific goal:
 - balanced meal
 - plan a camp meal
 - within a specific budget
 - 100km challenge – create a meal with products that are produced within 100km of your location
- Arrange a tour with a bakery, fish monger, butcher, produce store, or restaurant. (Please consider the dietary needs/preferences of your unit)
 - Learn about how food is grown, processed and distributed



- Visit a Library
 - Encourage your unit to bring their library cards if they have one or ask at the library to issue one
 - Learn about how public libraries work, how to find books, check out and return process
- Visit a Fish Hatchery
 - Learn about Fish Hatcheries closest to you
<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/sep-pmvs/hatcheries-ecloseries/hatcheries-ecloseries-eng.html#wb-auto-4>
- Visit a Zoo
 - Plan ahead and learn about the wildlife at a zoo closest to you
 - Arrange a visit with a tour to learn more about the wildlife and how to zoo works
- Visit the Aquarium
 - Plan ahead and learn about the wildlife at the Aquarium
 - Arrange a visit with a tour to learn more about the wildlife and how to zoo works
- Visit the Planetarium
 - Learn about space science in an interactive way
 - Arrange for a group visit (day or sleepover)
<https://www.spacecentre.ca/group-visits/>
- Visit an Art Gallery
 - Check out art galleries in your community. Learn about different art modalities and consider trying out the methods back at your unit site.
- Visit an Animal Shelter
 - Learn about animals they care for, supplies they need and ways to help



- Visit a Theatre
 - Book a tour at a local theater
 - Learn about the inner workings of the theater
 - Watch a performance
- Visit a Museum
 - Look for indoor and outdoor museums to visit
 - Learn about the art on display

<https://www.art-bc.com/places/category/museums-heritage-sites/>
- Visit a Bird Sanctuary
 - Book a tour and learn about local birds and conservation methods
 - There may be other animal sanctuaries in your community that offer programming such as owls, reptiles, or fish
- Go to a Local Pool
 - Arrange to complete your swim tests with a lifeguard as needed (Check Safe Guide for details)
 - Attend a public swim
 - Play water games and have fun together
- Public Transit
 - Go on an adventure on public transit (some cities also offer educational programs to learn about transit)
 - Take transit to another activity, explore your community on transit
- Visit Your City Hall
 - Learn about different levels of government and the role of your local government
 - Attend a city council or school board meeting (Often the agendas are released in advance to prepare for the topics)



- Visit a Local Bank Branch
 - Complete Girl's First Money Sense activities
 - Ask for a tour and learn about bank accounts, debit and credit cards etc.
- Visit an Airport
 - Ask in advance for a tour if possible
 - Learn how to read the airport boards (Arrivals and departures)
 - Learn how to navigate an airport
 - Learn about airport codes in your community, across BC and Canada
- Visit a Farmer's Market
 - Explore the vendors and learn about where the food was grown and where the artistic vendors are from
 - Find a fruit or vegetable you have never eaten and ask the vendor how to eat/cook it
 - Try new foods or drinks
- Visit a Farm
 - Ask for a tour
 - Learn about how the farm works
- Visit a local artist
 - Learn about different modalities such as pottery, painting, glass blowing, enamel, or resin
 - Many art supply stores can help facilitate an activity
- Learn about Plants
 - Visit a garden center
 - Check out PlantNet (or other apps)
 - Assemble a potted plant or make a decorative wreath



- Fruit Picking
 - Visit a local U-pick fruit farm.
 - Learn about how fruit is grown, season, collected, shipped.
- Go to an Indoor Rock-Climbing Facility or Climbing Centre
 - Learn about safe climbing and techniques
 - Practice your skills
 - Check Safe Guide for instructions before booking
- Go Horseback Riding or Visit an Equestrian Centre
 - Learn about the care of horses and the tools used to riding
 - Learn about the different styles of riding
 - Go Horseback riding
 - Check Safe Guide for instructions before booking
- Go Play Lazer Tag
- Go Go Karting



Outdoor Explorers Activities

- Biking:
 - Learn bike skills and how to care for a bike at your meeting site or in your community (an empty parking lot works well)
 - Go on a bike adventure in your community or somewhere new
 - Try Mountain Biking- Check Safe Guide
- Flashlight meeting
 - Hold a meeting at a nearby park (Check if the bathrooms are open year round)
 - Play flashlight/night games
 - Take a camp stove and have a warm snack (Remind everyone to bring their own cups/dishes as needed)
 - Plan a night walk at a local park – place glow-in-the-dark markers along a trail ahead of time and challenge your unit to follow the path. Remember to collect the markers before you leave.
- Nite Hike
 - Sign up for the NiteHike in Vancouver (held in the Spring). This is an overnight hike for members of Girl Guides and Scouting.
 - For ages 8 and up (usually completed with Pathfinders and Rangers. Shorter route for younger participants)
<https://nitehike.org/>
 - Look for other night hikes in your community or plan your own
- Cloud Watching
 - Learn about cloud formations
 - Bring blankets to a local park and lay on the ground to watch the clouds go by
 - Add in a sketching/drawing activity
<https://climatekids.nasa.gov/cloud-formation/>
<https://www.noaa.gov/jetstream/clouds/ten-basic-clouds>



- Storm Watching
 - Plan a meeting in a safe location to observe storm clouds. Learn about detecting and anticipating cloud changes.
https://weather.gc.ca/forecast/canada/index_e.html?id=BC
- BC Program GGC Extreme Weather Challenge
 - Check out this challenge for additional programming for ideas or to complete the challenge
<https://www.girlguides.ca/WEB/Documents/BC/program/Extreme Weather Crest Activities FINAL.pdf>
 - Contact a local meteorologist to learn about weather
- Star Gazing
 - Plan a meeting at a local park to learn about stars.
 - Check out apps to download to help identify stars, constellations and/or planets.
- Have an Outdoor Sing-along Meeting
 - Check out BC Program GGC Sing BC Sing challenge
https://www.girlguides.ca/WEB/Documents/BC/program/Sing_BC Challenge.pdf
- Map Skills
 - Learn about maps (paper or digital)
 - Go on an adventure in your community and try to follow a map
 - Make it into a scavenger hunt
- Community Programs
 - Check out your local community center for activities
 - Ideas: self-defence, pottery, crafts, speakers, learn-to programs, pasta/bread making



Winter Weather Activities (*Check Safe Guide)

- Snowshoeing
- Snowtubing
- Cross-country Skiing
- Snowboarding
- Ice Skating
- Sledge Hockey
- Curling
- Sledding/Tobogganing

Outdoor Water Activities (*Check Safe Guide)

- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Dragon Boating
- Voyageur Canoes
- White Water River Rafting
- Paddle Boarding
- Windsurfing
- Sailing
- Go to a Water Park

Appendix 1

Eco Bingo Hunt

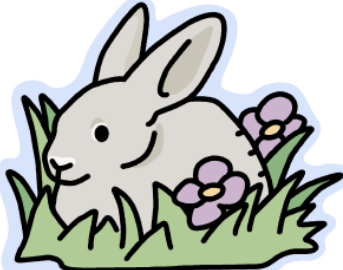
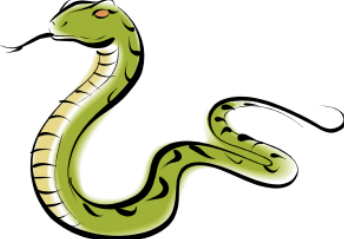


Before heading out, have a discussion with the girls about what contaminates the earth, e.g. car exhaust, litter, etc. Go on a walk and have the girls cross off everything that they see on the list. A line of 5 gets a Bingo. When a girl gets a Bingo, have her say which of the squares she's crossed off are good for the environment and which are bad for it and why.

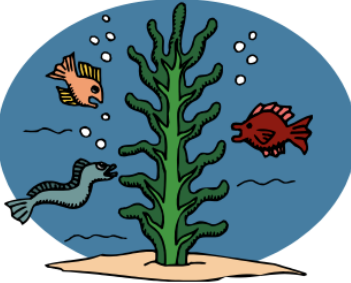
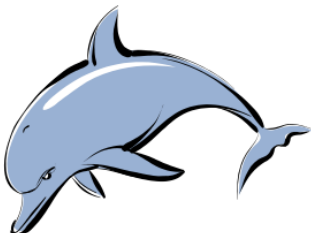
Fulfills part of the Taking it Outside section of the Eco Pak challenge.

Appendix 2



		
Flower	Caterpillar	Bird
		
Grass	Rabbit	Fox
		
Acorn	Mouse	Snake

Appendix 3

 Hawk	 Algae	 Fish
 Dolphin	 Shark	 Jellyfish
 Turtle	 Grasshopper	 Lizard