

Cookie Booth Essentials

How to Maximize Your Booth Experience, Interact with Customers, and Stay Safe



Cookie booths are a great place for Girl Scouts to leverage and grow their entrepreneurial skills. This opportunity comes with some important responsibilities.



Use this flyer for helpful tips on how to talk to customers about the cookie program and how to navigate difficult situations that may come up.

Booth Requirements

Remember to review information on Election Week Cookie sales posted on our website, gsocfct.org.

- All booth sales must take place in a service unit or council-approved area.
- Ensure booth location is in a well-lit, visible spot, ideally near the entrance without obstructing walkways.
- Girl Scouts should not sell in or in-front of establishments that they themselves cannot legally patronize.
- Keep all personal items securely stored out of sight. Keep an eye on your surroundings. If anything feels unsafe or uncomfortable, do not hesitate to end the booth and leave.
- Girls need to be present at a cookie booth. Have a minimum of two adults (at least one of whom is a registered Girl Scout volunteer with the required background check) present at all times. Never leave the booth unattended. Plan breaks to ensure adult coverage at all times.
- Always have a first-aid kit and caregiver contact information available at the booth.
- Only Girl Scout Cookies may be sold at booths.
- Girl Scouts may not engage in any direct solicitation for money; however, Girl Scouts should promote the Cookies for Heroes program at cookie booth locations.

Note: Digital Cookie is not available during Election Week Cookie Sales.

Holding Booth Sales at Election Voting Sites

As Girl Scouts is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization, there are limitations that prevent Girl Scouts from supporting individual candidates or political parties, or engaging in other specific partisan actions that could influence an election.

If holding a cookie booth at a voting location it is important to:

- Follow rules on where to set up your booth and avoid soliciting or standing too close to the voting area.
- Allow voters to approach the booth voluntarily.
- Ensure that all Girl Scouts present maintain a friendly, non-intrusive demeanor to respect the electoral process. Remind them that they cannot talk about supporting any particular candidate.
- Ensure that no one at the cookie booth is wearing clothing or accessories that could be interpreted to support a specific political party.



Preparing for Cookie Booths

- Determine if the Girl Scouts in your troop are ready for booth sales. Consider things like the length of time for the booth shift, if they will be okay standing in the same area for the duration of the booth, and how they will react if rejected or ignored by customers.
- Work with the SU cookie volunteer to schedule the booth, and consider volunteering to help supervise at the booth.
- Encourage Girl Scouts to unleash their creativity to make signs and decorations to attract customers.
- Check your council shop or girlscoutshop.com for tablecloths, booth kits, and other cookie gear.
- Have Girl Scouts practice their sales pitch and replies to potential customer responses.
- Determine how much change to take to the booth.

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Booth Etiquette

- While at a cookie booth, make sure Girl Scouts wear their uniforms, other Girl Scout-branded clothing, or their membership pin to clearly identify themselves as Girl Scouts. It's a great way to show your Girl Scout pride!
- Booths should not block a store entrance or exit.
- Make sure there is enough room for both the cookie display table and the participating Girl Scouts. Ensure that pedestrians, bikes, and cars can safely pass by.
- Arrive early enough to set up, but do not encroach on the time of troops selling before you.
- Begin packing up before the end of your shift so troops following you can start on time.
- Be sure to clean up after your shift, taking empty cases with you.
- Set up—and remain—in the designated area.
- Always be courteous and polite; avoid yelling at customers.
- With adult supervision, Girl Scouts should do the selling.

Cookie Booth Finances

- Use caution when accepting large bills or checks. We suggest using a bill checker pen if accepting \$20 bills or larger.
- After receiving cash and making change, Girl Scouts should hand the money to a volunteer for safekeeping and to deposit into the cash box as soon as possible.
- Keep the cash box in a safe place or behind a barrier of cookie packages; consider using a money belt or apron in place of a cash box.
- Use the inventory worksheet posted on gssoft.org to help reconcile sales at the end of the booth.
- Turn booth funds over to the troop co-leader or treasurer promptly and avoid keeping money at home or at school.

"What If?" Scenarios

What if you're approached by an angry customer or someone makes you feel uncomfortable?

- Safely remove the girls from the situation.
- Do not argue or negatively engage with the aggressor
- If the situation calls for it, call 911 and, if available, alert security.
- Try to get a good look at the person in case you need to identify them.
- If you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, do not hesitate to pack up the booth and leave. Contact your SU volunteer to let them know you ended the booth early.

What if someone asks about a cookie we don't sell anymore?

- Thank them for loving Girl Scout Cookies!
- Ask them what they loved about that cookie, was it chocolate? Was it fruit flavored? Based on their response, recommend a different cookie.
- Some cookies come and go based on their popularity/food trends and to make room for new and exciting flavors.

What if someone steals money or cookies from the booth?

- Try to get a good look at the offender so you can describe them to security or the police.
- Call 911, and alert security (if applicable).
- Report any incidents to your council according to its guidelines.

PRO TIP: Never attempt to physically recover stolen items or confront a suspect.

What if someone asks you "What is the difference between Girl Scouts and Scouting America?"

- Girl Scouts and Scouting America are two completely different organizations.
- Girl Scouts bring their dreams to life and work together to build a better world! And research shows there's no better place to discover their full potential.
- Talk to cookie customers about what the Girl Scout experience has been like for you and your troop.

PRO TIP: Stay positive. Don't put other organizations down. Just lift Girl Scouts up.

What if a customer asks where the cookie proceeds go?

- You can say, "Girl Scout Cookie proceeds stay local to power amazing adventures and life-changing opportunities for girls, such as STEM activities, trips, community projects, and charitable donations. The more cookies you buy, the more you help troops and Girl Scouts gain the skills needed to take on the world!"

PRO TIP: Always practice good listening skills before replying. Do not engage with someone if the situation escalates.

What if you are asked to leave by store management or security?

- If a problem arises with property/store management or security guards, follow their instructions.
- Report the request to your troop cookie volunteer so they can work with the service unit or the council to resolve the matter.

PRO TIP: Bring a copy of the authorization if it's available.

What if you are asked which candidate Girl Scouts supports?

- Avoid engaging in political discussions; stay focused on cookie sales and creating a positive, friendly environment.
- If pushed, let the person know that Girl Scouts is a non partisan organization and does not endorse any particular party or political candidate.
- If the person makes you feel uncomfortable, ensure the safety of the girls, then contact 911 if needed.

What if another troop shows up at the same time?

- Contact troop cookie volunteers to verify sign-ups in case someone has arrived at the wrong location.
- Work together to find a solution. Consider splitting the time or having one troop per door.
- Do not involve store management with troop conflicts.

PRO TIP: Girl Scouts and their adult volunteers should always behave in a manner appropriate to a public setting.