



Brownie Cookie Program Family Meeting Guide

For Troop Cookie Managers and Troop Leaders

*Your go-to guide for engaging girls and families
in their Girl Scout Cookie Program® experience*





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Introduction and Preparation

With support and encouragement from her family, there's no stopping a Girl Scout! Use this guide to explain the benefits of the Girl Scout Cookie Program® to families and to ensure each girl has the support she needs at home as she learns to think like an entrepreneur.

When should we meet?

Family meetings should take place one to two weeks before your cookie program's start date.

Should my meeting be in person or virtual?

Whichever you chose! Check out the "[Tips for Leading a Virtual Family Meeting](#)" section in this guide to make going virtual as seamless as possible.

Prepare Ahead

- Set a date, time, and location for your family meeting, and invite families.
- Attend your council's cookie program training prior to holding your meeting.
- Review cookie season materials so you're ready to answer questions.
- Review the safety resources in the "[Safety first](#)" section of the family meeting outline.
- If a girl has two households, send a copy of all materials to each parent.
- Set key deadlines for your troop based on your council deadlines.
- Meet with the adult volunteers to plan the meeting. One volunteer will pull the girls away to do a hands-on activity while another volunteer talks with the adults.
- Look up council and community partner events that your girls might like to do at the end of the year and next year.
- Involve the girls in planning. This guide will allow you to get input from younger girls and let them present their ideas to their families during the meeting. Cadettes and older are ready to take the lead during the family meeting. Have a planning meeting with older girls ahead of the meeting to decide who will do what and to set goals as a troop for what you'll do with the troop proceeds.
- Plan for girls to earn one Financial Literacy badge and one Cookie Business badge as a part of the cookie program this year.
- Gather supplies:
 - Council cookie materials. Materials vary by council but could include things like order cards, envelopes and other materials to support your program locally.
 - Three large sheets of paper
 - Markers or crayons
 - Pens and a sign-in sheet
 - Name tags
 - Snacks (optional)
 - Stickers (optional; for younger girls)
 - A device with internet access (optional; for older girls)
 - Copies of the Cookie Family Connection Guide and Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin activity sheet (included in this guide; one of each per girl)

Meeting Agenda

Setup

- Hang up three large pieces of paper around the room. Label them “Helping others” or “Take action,” “field trips,” and “troop meeting activities.”
 - Younger girls will brainstorm and share ideas during the meeting.
 - Older girls will have their completed ideas to share from the pre-planning meeting.
- Have a sign-in sheet ready so you know who missed the meeting and can follow up.

Welcome

- As younger girls and their families arrive, encourage them to start brainstorming as they wait for you to begin the meeting. Have them think of ideas for how they’d like to use their cookie money this season. Girls can talk with their families and write their ideas on the three large pieces of paper, categorizing the ideas as they go. Older girls can welcome everyone and let them look at their plans and ask questions as they arrive.
- Welcome girls and families.
- Have girls and parents wear name tags so they can get to know one another by name.
- If you’re a new troop or have new members, ask all girls to introduce themselves and their families to the group.
- Have an approved and background-checked adult volunteer take the girls to one side of the room to facilitate the girl planning session.

Girl Planning Session

If you have older girls (Cadettes and above), let them take the lead during this session. If your older girls haven’t set goals and decided what they plan to do with their cookie money prior to this meeting, you can let them have a breakout session and do research online with adult help. If they have done advanced planning, let them take the lead in the adult session.

Finish Brainstorming

Let girls finish adding ideas based on the three categories: helping others or taking action, field trips, and troop meeting activities. For younger girls, you may want to have some recommendations for their lists.

Girl-Led Decision Making

After girls finish brainstorming ideas, it’s time for them to work together to pick their favorites. Give girls two to three stickers and let them take turns placing their votes (or give each girl a different colored marker and let her make two to three check marks). Help younger girls read the options. At the end of the session, you’ll highlight the girls’ collective top-three options under each category so everyone can do more research before making a final decision at a future date.

Order Card Review

Next have girls look at the order card. Have them write their names on their cards and review the different sections, highlighting the different types of cookies, the girl rewards, where to find nutrition facts if customers have questions, and how to guide customers to complete the order card or how girls can use it themselves to take orders over the phone.

Safety

Review the “[Safety Tips for the Girl Scout Cookie Program](#)” section found in the Cookie Family Connection Guide with the girls. As you review each tip, have girls share other ideas for what they can do to stay safe.

Adult Session

Review the benefits of the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

- Girls gain five skills as they learn to think like entrepreneurs. Girls as young as five are building their confidence and learning about the Girl Scout Cookies.
- ☑ **Goal-setting:** Girls set a troop goal based on what they want to do with their troop proceeds. Then they set an individual goal in partnership with their families to support their troop goal.
- ☑ **Decision-making:** Girls decide where and when to sell cookies, how to market their cookie business, and what to do with their troop proceeds.
- ☑ **Money-management:** Girls develop a budget, take cookie orders, and handle customers' money as they gain confidence managing money.
- ☑ **People skills:** Girls learn to talk to their customers as well as learn how to work as a team with other girls.
- ☑ **Business ethics:** Girls run their businesses using the Girl Scout Law as a guide, being honest and responsible every step of the way.
- Girl Scout Cookie proceeds stay local to:
 - Cover the cost of running the cookie program, including the costs of cookies, materials, and logistics.
 - Support troop activities, like meeting supplies, girl-led adventures, and Take Action projects. This is known as “troop proceeds,” which stay with troops to support the activities planned for and by girls.
 - Help Girl Scout councils provide programs to girls locally. These funds are used to recruit and train volunteers, maintain property that troops use, provide events for girls, offer financial aid, enable customer service, and more.



Review resources and paperwork.

Review the materials you'll be referencing during the meeting, such as:

- The Cookie Family Connection Guide: use the attached or one provided by your council
- The Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin activity sheet (attached to this guide and available at girlscouts.org/entrepreneurfamily)
- The parent permission form (provided by your council either electronically or in paper form)
- Order cards
- [Girlscouts.org/cookies](https://girlscouts.org/cookies)
- Other materials provided by your council
- [Girlscoutcookies.org/troopleaders](https://girlscoutcookies.org/troopleaders)

Ways to sell. There are many ways to sell Girl Scout Cookies, and each one helps the girls gain different skills along the way. It's important for parents to let girls take the lead in picking how they want to run their businesses while helping them come up with new ideas. Review the ways to sell found in the Cookie Family Connection Guide with families, and be prepared to answer safety questions.

Safety first. Review the "[Safety Tips for Girl Scout Cookie Program](#)" section in the Cookie Family Connection Guide. Each way to sell has its own safety guidelines, and it's super important for girls and adults to review the following materials, depending on how they engage:

- Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families (PDF) - [English](#) (also attached to this guide)
- Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing (PDF)—[English](#)
- Practical Tips for Parents (PDF)—[English](#) | [Español](#)
- Safety Tips for Product Sales (PDF)—[English](#)
- Visit [your local council](#) website for a copy of *Safety Activity Checkpoints and Volunteer Essentials*

Review deadlines, ask for help, and tell families how to get support.

- Share important deadlines so families can plan ahead.
- Ask adults to sign up to support cookie booths and other troop activities between the start of the Cookie Program and the end of the school year.
- Review the section found in the Cookie Family Connection Guide called "[Ways to Support Your Cookie Entrepreneur](#)."
- Show families how to get support. This is a good time to make sure you have updated contact information for parents and caregivers.

Sharing Their Plan

Bring the girls and adults back together. Have the girls share the choices they picked from each category.

Girl-Led Family Engagement

Now that you have some ideas about how the troop will use its proceeds, have the girls and families start the first step of the Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin. Younger girls can start on the second step too.

Close with Tradition

Close with the friendship circle and friendship squeeze with everyone and sing the "Make New Friends" song. Remind families about the next important deadline and how to reach out if they have questions.

Virtual Meeting Tips

Having a virtual cookie family meeting is a great way to connect with families. Here are some tips to support your virtual experience.

Preparing for the meeting:

- Select a meeting platform that will allow you to use video and share your screen, so you can show everyone the resources you're discussing and have an interactive meeting.
- Ensure participants have physical or digital copies of important documents before the meeting.
- Download fun virtual meeting backgrounds available on girlscoutcookies.org/troopleaders and your baker website.



Running the meeting:

- Have girls and parents introduce themselves at the start of the meeting. Mute participants and call on them one by one.
- For planning sessions for younger girls, pause the meeting and let girls and parents talk to one another about things the girls would like to do this year. Have girls draw pictures of their ideas while parents tune back in to the adult portion.
- For planning sessions for older girls, have the girls plan ahead of time so they're prepared to present their plans to all families as they listen to important deadlines and guidelines for running their cookie businesses.
- Near the end of the meeting, let the girls present their ideas with support from their families. Ask girls to present and make a list of all the ideas so girls can vote.
- Pause the meeting to allow girls and parents to start the Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin activity sheet.

Cookie Family Connection Guide

Cookie Program Guide for Parents, Caregivers, and Families

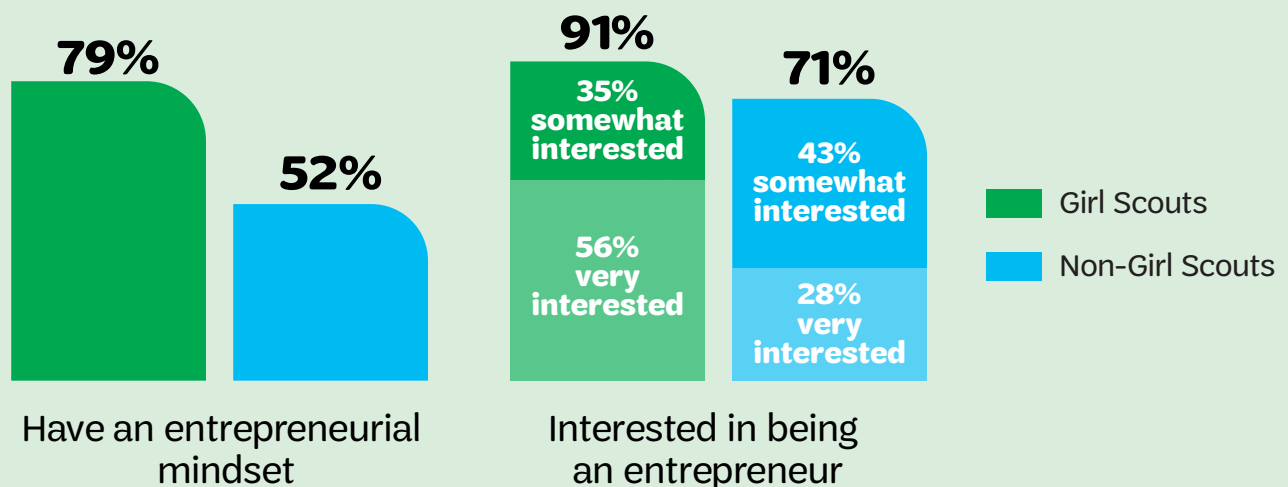


Welcome, families!

The cookie program gives your Girl Scout the ability to power unique opportunities and adventures for herself and her troop while learning to think like an entrepreneur. And you're key to her success. With the support, assistance, and encouragement of her family, there's no stopping a Girl Scout!

Why should my Girl Scout participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program?

Girl Scouts have an entrepreneurial edge when it comes to mindset and interest!



Participating in the program gives girls an entrepreneurial edge! Encouraging an interest in entrepreneurship builds curiosity, confidence, and problem-solving skills—qualities that prepare girls for academic and career success. As your Girl Scout runs her own cookie business, she'll gain five skills along the way that she'll use the rest of her life. The Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin activity sheet is designed to help you support her, giving you tips for your cookie entrepreneur. Here's what girls learn and why it matters.

Through the Girl Scout Cookie Program, girls learn . . .	This matters because . . .
Goal setting as they set a troop goal based on what they want to do with their troop proceeds. Then girls set an individual goal with help from their families.	Girls need to know how to set and reach goals to succeed in school, on the job, and in life.
Decision making by deciding where and when to sell cookies, how to market their cookie business, and what to do with their troop proceeds.	Girls will make big and small decisions in their life; practice helps them make good ones.
Money management as they develop a budget, take cookie orders, handle customers' money, and gain confidence handling and managing money.	Girls need to know how to confidently handle, manage, and leverage money to do great things.
People skills as they safely talk to their customers in person and virtually to work as a team with other girls.	Knowing how to work with others will help them do better in school and, later, at work.
Business ethics as they learn to run their businesses using the Girl Scout Law as a guide, being honest and responsible every step of the way.	Employers want to hire ethical employees, and the world needs ethical leaders in every field at every age.

Did you know? All proceeds from Girl Scout Cookies® stay local!

When you purchase Girl Scout Cookies from a young, budding entrepreneur, you're supporting her success today and tomorrow.
Girl Scout Cookies' proceeds stay local to:



Cover the costs of running the Girl Scout Cookie Program, including the costs of cookies, materials, and logistics.



Fund Take Action projects for the community and amazing girl-led adventures for troops.



Help councils provide Girl Scouts programs in STEM, the outdoors, life skills, and entrepreneurship, as well as camps, leadership training, and more!

Ways to sell.

There are many ways to sell Girl Scout Cookies, and each one helps girls gain different skills along the way. Let girls take the lead in picking how they want to run their businesses.

□ In person:

- **Order cards.** In some councils, these are used before girls have cookies in hand to help them know how many cookies they need to order. Once girls do have cookies in hand, order cards are also handy when girls run out of a type of cookie. They can use the cards to track customers and place a reorder.
- **Direct sales.** This happens after girls have cookies in hand; no need to keep customers waiting! Girls can go door-to-door, pull a wagon through their neighborhood, and more (all with the help from a parent or guardian).
- **Cookie booths.** Cookie pop-up sales in areas with lots of foot traffic are a fun way for girls to connect with their community and practice their sales pitch with new customers. Booth locations must be approved by councils and facilitated within council jurisdiction. And participants must follow all council guidelines about setting up, running, and taking down a booth. Girls can also host virtual cookie booths to promote their sites where they make their pitches via video and direct customers to their Digital Cookie® or Smart Cookie site. A virtual booth guide and additional resources are available at girlscoutcookies.org/troopleaders.

- **Digital sales:** Use your council-approved online digital platform (Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie) to reach customers near and far. Girls can promote their site by emailing friends and family, creating videos to share on social media, and hosting a virtual cookie booth where they make their pitch online. There are endless ways for girls to get creative in spreading the word about their Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie site.

- **Donation program:** Customers who don't want to purchase cookies or want other ways to support girls can donate a package of cookies to a local hero or cause. Customers can support the donation program through any of the above selling methods.





Safety Tips for The Girl Scout Cookie Program

- 1 Show you're a Girl Scout.** Wear the Girl Scout membership pin, vest, sash, or other Girl Scout clothing to identify yourself as a Girl Scout.
- 2 Buddy up.** Always use the buddy system. It's not just safe, it's more fun.
- 3 Be streetwise.** Become familiar with the areas and neighborhoods where you'll be selling cookies.
- 4 Partner with adults.** Adults must accompany Girl Scout Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors when they're taking orders, selling cookies, or delivering cookies. Girls in grades 6–12 must be supervised by an adult when selling door-to-door and must never sell alone. Adults must be present at all times during cookie booth sales.
- 5 Plan ahead.** Be prepared for emergencies, and always have a plan for safeguarding money.
- 6 Do not enter any homes or vehicles.** Never enter someone's home or vehicle when you're selling or making deliveries. Avoid selling to people in vehicles, except at designated drive-thru cookie booths, or going into alleys.
- 7 Sell in the daytime.** Sell only during daylight hours, unless accompanied by an adult.
- 8 Product privacy.** Girls' names, home addresses, and email addresses should never be given to customers. Protect customers' privacy by not sharing their information except when necessary.
- 9 Be safe on the road.** Always follow safe pedestrian practices, especially when crossing at intersections or walking along roadways. Be aware of traffic when unloading products and passengers from vehicles.
- 10 Be safe online.** Girls must have their parents'/guardians' permission to participate in all online activities and must read and agree to the [GSUSA Internet Safety Pledge](#) before conducting any online activities. Additionally, to participate in Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie, girls must read and abide by the [Girl Scout Digital Cookie Pledge](#), and parents/guardians must read and abide by the Digital Cookie Terms and Conditions for Parents/Guardians.

Each way of selling has different safety guidelines. For more details, review the following materials:

- Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families (PDF) - [English](#) (also attached to this guide)
- Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing (PDF)—[English](#)
- Practical Tips for Parents (PDF)—[English](#) | [Español](#)
- Safety Tips for Product Sales (PDF)—[English](#)
- Visit [your local council](#) website for a copy of *Safety Activity Checkpoints and Volunteer Essentials*

Ways to Support Your Cookie Entrepreneur

- Help her earn the Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin to practice building her skills at home.
- Help her set up her Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie site.
- Help her keep money safe.
- Know the rules and safety guidelines.
- Model business ethics, decision making, people skills, and safety as you support her.
- Ask your troop leader how you can help the whole troop reach its goals. Your Girl Scout will learn to be a helper and take action by watching you.
- Help her make arrangements to connect with people in her network.
- Never do things for your girl that she can do for herself, even if it's quicker and easier for you to do them.
- Have fun together along the way and engage your whole family in supporting her!



Entrepreneurship Badges & Pins

When you sell Girl Scout Cookies, you practice goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics—as you learn to think like an entrepreneur. You can earn badges and pins each year you run your own Girl Scout Cookie business. Then explore your own business idea by earning an Entrepreneur badge.

	Cookie Business	Financial Literacy	Cookie Entrepreneur Family	Entrepreneur
Daisy				
Brownie				
Junior				
Cadette				
Senior				
Ambassador				

FIVE STEPS TO EARN YOUR



Brownie Pins



YEAR 1



YEAR 2

Check off the boxes as you complete each activity with your family—you can earn a different pin each year! Adults, look for the 💡 throughout for special ways you can help!

1. Go for the goal. Talk with your family to figure out a realistic goal of how many cookies you think you can sell, then set a second “stretch” goal that’s a little higher. You might not meet the stretch goal, and that’s OK, but you won’t know unless you try! Once you decide on your goals, write them down and fill in the goal tracker—don’t forget to color it as you sell cookies!

My troop goal is _____ packages so we can _____.

My personal goal is _____ packages, and my stretch goal is _____.

2. Find more customers. Who do you want to sell cookies to besides your family and friends? Have your family help you think of people you see on the way to school or at weekend activities. How could you find even more customers? Brainstorm ways to spread the word about your cookie business, then write or draw your ideas here!

💡 **Celebrate where she is.**

Having a goal to aim for will keep your girl motivated and teach her to embrace challenges, but it’s important to celebrate her efforts along the way, too, not just the outcome!

Cookie Goal Tracker

_____ packages

_____ packages

_____ packages

_____ packages

_____ packages

_____ packages

_____ packages

💡 **Open doors.** Help her think

of different ways to reach new customers, like going door to door, using Digital Cookie® or Smart Cookie, making phone calls to family, and setting up a booth. If she decides to go door to door, make sure a caring adult is with her at all times. Ask your troop leader about council guidelines for cookie booths.

3. Be a money master. Practice counting money and making change with a family member before you start selling to customers. Don't worry if you need help at first—that's what your family is for! Fill in the blanks below to practice totaling up a customer's order.

One box of Thin Mints® costs _____ dollars.

Two boxes of Thin Mints cost _____ dollars. (_____ + _____ = _____)

Four boxes of Thin Mints cost _____ dollars. (_____ + _____ + _____ + _____ = _____)



Help her shine. She may be ready to handle simple money transactions, but an adult should always be available to assist with big orders and large bills and to keep the money safe after she's collected it.

4. Make your pitch. Think of how you'll ask people to buy cookies. In addition to introducing yourself and asking if they'd like some cookies, you might want to let customers know what your troop plans to do with the cookie money you're earning or explain your favorite flavors! Write what you want to say below, then practice it on your family at home.



Yes, no, maybe so.

When she's practicing her pitch, pretend to be different customers—some who want cookies, some who don't, and some who are on the fence. It'll build her confidence for real-life situations!

5. Think like a Girl Scout. The Girl Scout Law reminds us to be responsible for what we say and do. You can do that by filling in important deadlines below so you don't forget! Create your own calendar using these dates, and track your progress with your family.



Day by day. Keep all cookie deadlines on a shared family calendar, and give her a calendar of her own so she can practice crossing off dates and planning ahead. Time management will strengthen her business ethics as she gets older!

My Important Cookie Dates

Girl Scout Cookie season starts on: _____

Cookie order deadline: _____

Cookie pick-up: _____

Money due date(s): _____

My other deadlines: _____

Check with your troop leader about how your girl can get each pin, or head to girlscoutshop.com to purchase it.


Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families



The Girl Scout Cookie Program® offers girls unique opportunities to engage in online marketing and sales as they learn about ecommerce and how to think like entrepreneurs.

Follow these four steps as you run your cookie business, and take your marketing efforts to the next level by going online using your Digital Cookie® or Smart Cookie website and social media platforms.

Safety tip: Girls of all ages should partner with their parents or guardians to develop a plan to safely market their business online. Although your parent/guardian should do the posting for you if you're under age 13, all girls should have a hands-on role in marketing their cookie business.



1. As you set goals for your cookie business, think about how digital marketing can help you meet them.

Imagine customers in your community who may not know a Girl Scout. Expand your reach by sharing your secure Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie link to reach them. Be sure to:

- **Be honest.** Yes, the Girl Scout Law also applies to your sales technique! From your Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie site to your digital marketing campaigns, be honest, straightforward, and approachable as you write about your cookie business.
- **Create a sense of urgency.** After all, Girl Scout Cookie season only comes around once a year! Countdowns to the last dates to order are a great motivator for driving sales. Use language that will encourage potential customers to buy from you right now.
- **Make an impression.** Use clear, eye-catching photos in your marketing materials. This may include pictures of the different cookies you're selling, yourself in your Girl Scout uniform, or something tied to your goal. If you plan to use your cookie earnings to go camping, tell your customers about it to show that the cookie program powers amazing girl-led adventures!
- **Highlight special features or products.** Share the top-selling cookies in your lineup or any special varieties. Do you have a new flavor available for purchase? How about a gluten-free option? Do your customers know that Thin Mints are made with vegan ingredients?
- **Use a clear and prominent call to action.** Share your goal and exactly what your customer can do to help you achieve it.

Safety tip: Make sure your marketing materials don't reveal your personal contact information (like your address, school, or last name) or your cookie booth location.



Earn one of the Cookie Business badges to help you discover new skills. Each badge has digital marketing skills built right in.



My First Cookie Business



Cookie Goal Setter



My Cookie Customers



Cookie Decision Maker



My Cookie Team



Cookie Collaborator



My Cookie Venture



Cookie Market Researcher



Cookie Innovator



My Cookie Network



Cookie Boss



My Cookie Business Resume



Cookie Influencer



3. Use digital marketing to expand your network and grow your people skills. Try some of the following strategies:

- **Think of your favorite brands, and then check out their websites and social media accounts.** What do they do to create a relationship with their customers on Facebook or Instagram? What can you do to safely build a relationship with your online customers?
- **Use platforms that potential customers could be on.** Think about your target customers and where they're most active online.
- **Engage your customers through email marketing.** Send an email through Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie to inspire potential customers to buy Girl Scout Cookies and help you achieve your goals.
- **Turn loyal customers into brand advocates.** Existing customers can be your secret sales weapon, especially with word-of-mouth marketing in digital spaces.
- **Avoid spam emails.** Spam is an email that has been sent to someone without their permission. Always get permission to add someone to your email list.
- **Use marketing to inspire, educate, entertain, and entice your prospective customers.** Share how you'll use your cookie proceeds, let people know about all the skills you're learning through the cookie program, and have fun while you're at it! Get creative in your communications—consider writing a poem or recording a video to educate and convince potential customers to buy from you.
- **Show off customer testimonials.** Collect and share testimonials from your customers through social media. This shows potential customers that buying cookies from you is a great investment. Make sure to ask if you can share their words!
- **Say thank you! Impress customers with a custom thank-you message via email or social media.** As your customer base expands beyond friends and family, find ways to maintain personalization while following Girl Scouts' *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for Computer and Internet Use.

Safety tip: To protect your personal identity, never directly message people you don't know online or through social platforms. And remember to always use your secure sales link for orders.

Safety tip: To protect your personal identity, never directly message people you don't know online or through social platforms. And remember to always use your secure sales link for orders.



4. Practice business ethics by safely marketing online. Before you get started, review the below safety standards. When in doubt, revisit these resources.

- You and your supervising parent/guardian must read, agree to, and abide by the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#), the [Digital Cookie Pledge](#), and the [Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing](#) before engaging in online marketing and sales efforts through the cookie program.
- Review Girl Scouts' *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for Computer and Internet Use and Cookie and Product Sales on your council's website.