

How to Start a Troop Without Ending up Broke

Send any comments, suggestions, etc to alpharalphblvd@hotmail.com

This list was compiled from ideas and suggestions from the creative and ingenious members of the Yahoo group BrownieLeaders (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BrownieLeaders/>)

LEADER SUPPLIES

Leader's Guide

Handbook

Try-it book

Safety-wise (1/troop provided)

Storage box (bought, or photocopy paper box, or a wheeled suitcase you have). Some leaders use a wheeled luggage cart if they have them or can get them

Sharpies (multiple colors, if possible)

Big scissors

Tissues / Kleenex

First Aid kit – see below on how to stock

INCOME

Start up grant from Service unit, if available

Dues (decided by girls, often based on cost of Try-Its and patches)

Start up fee from parents: This should cover the first batch of pins, patches, etc

SUPPLIES

Look in your own cupboard. If you buy new crayons each year, you may have a lot of boxes sitting around!

Watch garage sales and thrift stores for supplies. Don't be afraid to mention at a garage sale that it is for a Girl Scout troop – some people will give discounts. Be ingenious – leaders have used one of those beaded car seat covers as source material (For example - knotty people swap - <http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/9092/knotpeop.html>)

PAPER/PHOTOCOPIES

Ask parents for old office letterhead, and use the back. Great for drawing, paper airplanes, and such.

Some companies will let employees use the printer/copier for the cost of paper, or for free as community service. See if one of your parents can do this.

GIRL SUPPLIES

1. Have each girl bring in her own supplies in their own box, or buy a box of zippered bags and each girl gets her own bag.

Have them contain:

scissors,
crayons, markers, and a pencil
glue or glue sticks,
paint set (?)

2. Ask parents for donations of excess craft materials, then base the crafts on what is available.
3. If a try-it calls for something special, have each girl bring that item in (i.e. Oatmeal container for Space Explorer, shoebox for Me & My Shadow)
4. Ask parents to save things - we ask parents to save certain items for future use (i.e. the tabs off Kool-Aid bursts for SWAPS, Snack-to-Go containers for when we make trail mix later this year, old letterhead)
5. Divide the girls into smaller groups – one per supervising adult. If one group cuts while another glues, then you need half the number of scissors and glue sticks.
6. Borrow what you can! Both parents and other leaders might help.

JULIETTE LOW BIRTHDAY PARTY

Our parents donated items for our Juliette Lowe birthday party. Each girl brought in a wrapped item that could be used for crafts or our first aid kit. I provided a list of suggested items and the girls enjoyed opening the gifts for our troop.

A game can be made of the unwrapping:

Each girl held her wrapped gift and we started the "Left/Right" story and passed gifts this way. When the story was done, each girl was holding a different gift and got to open "her" present. What wasn't supplied for the first aid kit, I got the hospital to donate supplies.

An example of the story is at

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/1132/stories.html> – you can find lots of variations by searching for “left right gift story” (no quotes)

Have a Troop Scavenger Hunt for supplies. An example follows. (“Prizes” can be simple things like stickers and such.)

IT'S SCAVENGER HUNT TIME!!!!!!

RULES:

EACH BROWNIE WILL BE GIVEN A LIST OF ITEMS TO HUNT FOR AROUND THEIR HOME. NOTHING CAN BE TAKEN WITHOUT PARENT PERMISSION.

EACH ITEM WILL BE GIVEN A POINT VALUE AND FOR EACH ITEM YOU WILL RECEIVE THE POINTS LISTED. IF YOU HAVE 2 OF ONE ITEM YOU WILL GET DOUBLE THE POINTS, THREE OF ONE ITEM TRIPLE THE POINTS, ETC.

THE DEADLINE FOR THIS WILL BE AT THE _____ MEETING. THERE WILL BE NO LATE ENTRIES INTO THIS CONTEST IN ORDER TO MAKE IT FAIR FOR ALL GIRLS. POINTS WILL BE TALLIED AND PRIZES GIVEN AT THE FOLLOWING MEETING.

PLEASE BRING YOUR ITEMS IN A BOX OR BAG LABELED WITH YOUR NAME SO WE CAN GIVE POINTS CORRECTLY.

ALL ITEMS WILL BE PUT INTO THE TROOP CRAFT BOX AND BE USED THROUGHOUT MEETINGS.

THE SCAVENGER HUNT LIST IS AS FOLLOWS:

SCOTCH TAPE - 4 POINTS PER ROLL
BEADS - 1 POINTS PER 10 BEADS
FABRIC PAINT - 4 POINTS PER TUBE/BOTTLE
SHOE BOXES - 3 POINTS PER BOX
YARN - 3 POINTS PER ROLL
RUBBERBANDS - 1 POINT PER RUBBERBAND
MARKERS - 1 POINTS PER MARKER
CRAYONS - 1 POINT PER CRAYON
BUTTONS - 2 POINTS PER BUTTON
YARN NEEDLES - 3 POINTS PER NEEDLE
RIBBON - 1 POINT PER PIECE/SPOOL
BABY FOOD JARS - 3 POINTS PER JAR
FLOWER SEEDS - 2 POINTS PER PACK
POTTING SOIL - 5 POINTS PER BAG
STRAWS - 3 POINTS PER EVERY 10 STRAWS
TEMPURA PAINT - 5 POINTS PER JAR, TUB, TUBE, ETC
LIQUID STARCH - 5 POINTS PER CAN/BOTTLE
SPONGES - 2 POINTS PER SPONGE
FILM - 10 POINTS PER ROLL
COUNTERFEIT PENS - 20 POINTS PER PEN
FACE PAINT - 4 POINTS PER SET
PAINTBRUSHES - 1 POINTS PER BRUSH
KIDS SCISSORS - 4 POINTS PER PAIR
PAPERBAGS - 1 POINT PER BAG
TISSUE PAPER - 2 POINTS PER SHEET
ALUMINUM PIE PANS - 2 POINTS PER PAN
POSTERBOARD - 1 SHEETS PER POSTERBOARD
DISPOSABLE CAMERAS - 20 POINTS EACH
BAND-AIDS - 1 POINT PER BAND AID

ANTISEPTIC CREAM - 4 POINTS PER TUBE
GAUZE PADS - 2 POINTS PER PACK
PHOTO ALBUMS - (LIFT UP FILM PAGE TYPE) -
10 POINTS PER ALBUM
SCRAPBOOK ITEMS - DIECUTS, STICKERS, ETC -
1 POINTS PER ITEM
PAPER FASTENERS - 1 POINT EACH
WIGGLE EYES - 2 POINTS PER PAIR
FEATHERS - 3 POINTS PER EVERY 5 FEATHERS
THREAD - 2 POINTS PER SPOOL

CHEAP TRY ITS

All in the Family

Animals

Around the World

Colors and Shapes (with stuff from around the house)

Girl Scout Ways - Old vinyl tablecloths and shower curtains can be used to make Sit-upons. Newspaper, plastic grocery bags, or remnants of carpet padding can stuff them.

Girl Sports - I made the beanbags out of material and rice and we used a soccer ball instead of balloons. Another troop used borrowed beanie babies for the bean bag toss.

GS Through the Years - Root beer floats (cheap ice cream, cheap root beer)

Let's Pretend

Movers, if you have access to old letterhead or other scrap paper.

Playing Around the World

Senses - I used salt and sugar from my house. Pickle juice (and then ate the pickles later) and grapefruit juice. My coleader brought items to smell, and I brought in the items to feel. We made the paper items which I printed and also had the girls make a yarn picture of their name and then feel it.

Sounds of Music (with supplies found around the house)

CHEAP GS ACTIVITIES

Sing songs, practice the flag ceremony (some service units and the council have flags they can loan).

Some of these can also be service projects, like when we went to the fire station, we planted flowers for them and they loved it and even joined us for snack!

What about volunteering time with an animal shelter, soup kitchen, meals on wheels, at a nursing home or working at the council camps (if you have any)?

I have scheduled one meeting to just go to the playground, eat a sack dinner and PLAY!
Girls had a great time. When the weather gets nicer, we get outside our meeting place and practice putting up, taking down, (not losing parts) and putting away our troop tents so the girls are ready for tent camping during the Summer. I usually have my wonderful

Senior Scout advisor lead this! We all enjoy the opportunity to be outside. (we are a Junior troop so this is usually a new skill for first year girls).
