



# What is guiding?

Just heard of guiding but not sure what it's all about? The next few pages should explain all you need to know – and if you want to find out more, come along and get involved!

## What is guiding?

Guiding is a game – with a purpose. It provides opportunities for girls and young women to:

- be challenged by new adventures and experiences and take pride in achievement
- develop self-awareness, self-respect and self-confidence
- think for themselves, govern themselves and make their own decisions
- develop a sense of tolerance, justice, and kindness, learn teamwork and acquire leadership skills, working with and for others
- make friends and have fun
- appreciate the environment and how to live in it
- understand and learn about the world, its peoples and cultures.

## What is Girlguiding UK?

- Girlguiding UK is the largest organisation for girls and young women in the UK, with a membership of 580,000.
- Guiding is a worldwide organisation with over ten million members in more than 140 countries.
- There are 28,000 units, or groups, throughout the UK, led by 80,000 adult volunteers.

Girlguiding UK enables girls and young women to develop their potential and to make a difference to the world. Girlguiding UK welcomes everyone who shares our values of openness, tolerance, respect and democracy, regardless of their personal circumstances or background.

Girlguiding UK values all its adult Leaders and helpers – and the girls do too! Seventy-eight per cent of girls in guiding consider their Guide Leader to be a top role model in their lives. According to our research, that's up there with their mums, Kylie Minogue, Lorraine Kelly and JK Rowling!

# Who's involved and what do they do?

‘ Many of the skills I had gained in guiding matched those my employers were looking for. This included working as part of a small team, resourcefulness, creativity and working with young people. Guiding has also been hugely important in developing confidence in my own abilities. ’  
*Fiona, 37-year-old Leader*



## Rainbows

- Aged 5–7 (4–7 in Northern Ireland).
- Rainbows have fun! They take part in indoor and outdoor activities as part of their programme called the Rainbow Jigsaw.
- Their meetings are full of games and activities which let Rainbows think for themselves and take an active part in group decision making.
- Everything a Rainbow does helps her to develop – it's an opportunity to look, learn, laugh and love.
- And if they still want more after the meeting, Rainbows have a website built especially for them, where girls can read stories, play games and do activities: [www.girlguiding.org.uk/rainbows](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/rainbows).

## Brownies

- Aged 7–10.
- Brownies take part in indoor and outdoor activities that challenge them to do their best.
- Their meetings are action-packed and full of challenges, games and activities, usually ones that the Brownies have suggested themselves.

- Brownies work in small groups called Sixes. This gives each girl a group of ready-made friends to take care of her.
- Brownies can often take part in special activities and events. Many Brownie Packs go away on holiday, to camp or on an overnight sleepover.
- The Brownie website is an interactive feast, with games and activities, and the chance to contribute to the book club and advice column: [www.girlguiding.org.uk/brownies](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/brownies).

## Guides

- Aged 10–14.
- Being a Guide is all about learning new skills, making new friends and helping others.
- Each Guide is encouraged to achieve her own personal goals through a progressive programme with the opportunity to work for a wide variety of badges. This allows the girl to mature and develop at her own pace.
- Guides can find news and activities online at [www.girlguiding.org.uk/guides](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/guides).



‘It’s nice to be part of a group of girls who help each other and are friendly. It makes me feel special. ’

*Heather, ten-year-old Brownie*

- Guides work together in Patrols, groups of four to eight girls, providing a ready-made group of friends. They elect their own Patrol Leader. A Patrol plans its own activities with the support of the Guide Leader so that each Guide learns to share in decisions that affect herself and others in the Patrol.

## Senior Section

- Aged 14–25.
- Take part in a programme known as Look Wider, which is based on the principles and methods of guiding. It is designed to appeal to all young women and offers fun and flexibility to suit the individual.
- Senior Section members can choose to meet together in groups, help with Rainbow, Brownie or Guide units, become adult Leaders or take on a wide range of other challenges.
- Senior Section offers a variety of recognised qualifications or awards, such as the Queen’s Guide Award and the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. These can be followed by a group or by individual members; the choice is made by the members themselves.

## Adult volunteers

- Aged 18–65. Can be members or non-members of Girlguiding UK.
- Volunteers make guiding happen – we couldn’t do all this without them!
- Help out in a variety of ways, from working with the girls, to assisting with PR, accounting, recruitment, training and much, much more.
- Gain satisfaction from knowing they are enabling girls and young women to fulfil their potential in a safe environment.
- Learn new skills such as organisation, budget management and risk assessment.
- Give as much or as little time as they are able.
- Are usually women, although there are some roles for male volunteers as well. For example, men can help with fund-raising, or teach a special skill such as climbing or outdoor cooking.



## What happens at meetings?

Girls meet at a time and place that suits the group and their families, where they follow a programme of activities decided by the girls and supervised by trained Leaders. This can include anything from abseiling to party planning and from circus skills to survival. By taking part in these activities, girls learn lots of life skills and gain confidence.

## How much does it cost?

Each unit determines what it needs to run the group, which may include material and equipment costs and meeting room fees. Each group agrees its individual way of gathering the funds.

Girls can choose from a range of clothing, which they can wear to meetings and on trips. Most items cost less than £10.

An annual subscription fee is paid by all members – girls and adults – which includes a subscription to our monthly membership magazine *guiding* (for adults), pays for insurance, subsidises programme materials and includes special deals on merchandise.

## How can I find out more?

Girlguiding UK groups can be found all over the UK, in a range of locations from rural community halls to inner-city youth centres. We welcome people from every background and with all kinds of skills, abilities and ambitions.

### For more information:

Phone: 0800 1 69 59 01

Email: [joinus@girlguiding.org.uk](mailto:joinus@girlguiding.org.uk)

Website: [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk)



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*girls in the lead*

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