



# Knowing Girlguiding

## What you'll find out:

- All about the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS).
- The key moments and people who have shaped Girlguiding's history.
- How traditions are part of Girlguiding.
- Why the promise and law are important.

In Girlguiding, we've got a long history of empowering girls and young women to be their best. As the needs of girls have changed, we've listened and evolved too. This is one of the reasons Girlguiding is often called a 'movement' (get it?).

Knowing Girlguiding can help you to understand why our organisation runs like it does and how you can help girls in your unit feel like they belong in our incredible global movement.

## A worldwide movement

Girlguiding UK is part of the [World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts](#), the biggest movement of girls and young women around the world. Amazingly, there are Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in over 150 countries. Each country has its own promise, uniform and activities, but in every country, empowering girls and women is at the heart of what they do.

There are lots of ways you can help the girls in your unit feel part of a global organisation:

- Choose a WAGGGS country and try some of their guiding games and activities. Find out about their uniforms, promise and badges.
- Check out the WAGGGS [resources](#) – these are free for you to use.
- Run a unit meeting activity about WAGGGS: [World Centre postcards](#) (Rainbows), [trefoil trivia](#) (Brownies), [World Centre welcome](#) (Guides).



## World Thinking Day

Every year on 22 February, Guides and Girl Scouts celebrate being part of an international movement. Fun activities, writing to groups around the world and fundraising all take centre stage. WAGGGS produce a free activity pack exploring the real-life issues that affect women and girls around the world that you can take part in.

## Traditions

A tradition is something we do or believe, that's passed on from person to person, often handed down from one generation to the next. They can be created and they can be changed as they pass along.

Traditions help people feel like they belong and offer a sense of stability and familiarity as things change.

Girlguiding has lots of traditions. Some happen all over the country, like the promise, Brownie story or Rainbow song. Others happen [all over the world](#), like the salute and the World Badge. And some are unique to individual units, for example:

- A Guide unit that does night hikes to celebrate changing seasons.
- A Brownie unit that asks girls what they have done each week to keep their promise.
- A Rainbow unit that has a unit badge blanket for Rainbows to sit on during Rainbow chats.



### Your guiding traditions

Think about your own unit, does it have any traditions? Do you have songs, or games, or sayings that everyone in your unit knows?



### Updating traditions

Sometimes, traditions can make people feel excluded or like they're not part of a group. We should always do our best to make sure everyone feels included.

It's important to look at traditions and ask ourselves:

- Is this still the best way to do this?
- What do we get out of this tradition? Does it still do that?
- Could a tradition cause unintentional hurt or harm?

Claire, a young leader for Brownies, shares this example of a tradition that their Brownie unit used to do to help them collect the weekly payments.

**'The Brownies used to pay £2 a week in coins. To collect this money, and take the register, the Brownies sang a song and skipped to place the coins in the shape of a trefoil on the floor.'**

Most parents and carers now prefer to pay the unit termly through a bank transfer, so the tradition was changed. The Brownies still sing the song for the register, but they now do a silly dance instead of placing down the money. The tradition has been updated while keeping the fun and history.'

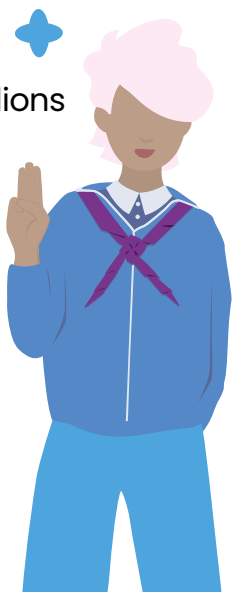
Here, Claire's old unit found that collecting coins wasn't going to work anymore, but the song was still important to them. So they simply kept the core of the tradition and changed the part that was no longer relevant.

You can try doing this with traditions in your unit with your leadership team. For example you might find a new poem you'd like to read to celebrate when someone gets their gold award.

### Heart of guiding: the promise and law

Our promise connects us to millions of people involved in guiding around the world. We have different languages, cultures and beliefs, but we all make a commitment to do our best.

See how the [promise and law](#) helps bring everyone in guiding together.



Making your promise is very special, and it's important to understand what it means. Here are some ways you can help girls explore the promise and law:



- Ask them to choose a community action to complete, then use this to chat about why serving the community is important.
- Talk with them about ways you've all followed the Guide Law that week.
- Run unit meeting activities linked to the promise and law: [promise potions](#) (Rainbows), [mime time](#) (Brownies) or [director's cut](#) (Guides).

### From the past into the future

In 1909 a handful of girls gate-crashed the first ever Boy Scout rally and demanded 'something for the girls'. Ever since, millions of Guides across the globe have been changing lives and building a better world for girls and young women, like you!

Here are some of the people and events who have inspired Girlguiding to be what it is today. As a movement, we'll keep moving forward and making guiding amazing for all girls.

### 1909

- **Agnes Baden-Powell** – established guiding in the UK.

### 1912

- **Juliette 'Daisy' Gordon Low** – guiding was spreading globally, and she formed the Girl Scouts of the USA.

### 1914

- A section for younger girls was set up called Rosebuds. However, after a year the name was changed based on a popular story about helpful, mysterious creatures, 'The Brownies', by Juliana Horatia Ewing.

### 1914–1918

- During World War I, Guides acted as messengers for The Marconi Wireless Telegraph. Rangers helped with signalling, firefighting, emergency first aid and feeding refugees.

### 1916

- A young leader training programme called Cadets was set up for older Guides who wanted to become leaders.

### 1918

- **Olave Baden-Powell** – Olave was the first World Chief Guide.

### 1928

- Olave Baden-Powell helped set up WAGGGS.

### 1932

- **Helen Storrow** – founded the first [WAGGGS World Centre](#), Our Chalet, which you can still visit today in Switzerland.

### 1987

- Rainbows, our newest section began.



## 2009

- The [Girls' Attitudes Survey](#) started to find out how girls and young women feel about their lives.

## 2019

- **Anna McNuff** – as a Girlguiding ambassador Anna ran the equivalent of 100 marathons for her [Barefoot Britain challenge](#) to show girls that they can do anything.

## 2022

- [Amplify](#), our first national youth steering group, was set up to make sure that girls' voices are heard at the highest levels of our organisation.

Find out more about the [history of Girlguiding](#) and [WAGGGS!](#)



### Women who inspire

Are there women in your life who have inspired you or do you have a role model? Maybe your Guide leader, football coach or your gran. What about them inspires you? What do they do that you would like to bring into your leadership style?



### Well done!

You've explored all about Girlguiding and now you're ready to inspire girls with our story, traditions and history.