



# Eco award leader guidance



**Are your girls interested in achieving the Eco award?  
This document has guidance on how you as a leader  
can support them, whether in or outside your unit.**

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## Award overview

The Eco award involves girls picking 3 actions to help the environment. The goal is to increase girls' confidence and awareness of their environmental impact, and to inspire them to take action.

Once girls have completed their 3 actions and shown you evidence, they need to share what they've achieved with other girls in guiding to inspire them to think about the environment.

## Supporting girls with the award

A key part of the Eco award for girls is understanding what impacts the environment and becoming more environmentally aware.

However, it's important that girls understand they can't control some choices related to their environmental impact and that's OK. For example, girls living in more rural areas may have limited travel options except to use a car. And while some foods have a lower carbon footprint, girls need to prioritise having a balanced diet. Every girl's situation is unique and will involve different considerations.

The goal is for girls to find sustainable changes that work for them in their day-to-day lives. Girls and their parents/carers should never feel pressured to make changes that don't work for them. We want girls to feel comfortable, confident and excited about their choices – not guilty.

## Time commitment

Girls must do 1 of their actions **consistently** over a set period. Consistently means on average at least once per week for:

- Rainbows/Brownies – 1 month
- Guides – 2 months
- Rangers – 3 months

For example, if a Ranger chooses to help at a community garden, she should do it at least once a week for 3 months, rather than just on 1 weekend. Girls can do their other 2 actions over a set time too, but don't have to.

If a girl moves up to the next section before completing her Eco award, she'll need to start over, using the resource for her new section. If a girl plans to complete her Eco award over the summer before transitioning to the next section, her current leader needs to sign off the award, not the new leader.

## Girl voice in decision-making

Whether girls are doing the Eco award as a unit or individually, it's important that they actively take part in deciding which 3 actions to do. Girls should take the lead in choosing actions they believe will benefit their environment, with guidance and support from their leader.

Visit our [involving girls in decisions and planning webpage](#) for ideas on how to include girls.

## Choosing actions

Girls can do the Eco award individually, as a unit, in groups within the unit, at home or even in the local community.

**Girls can't count actions they did before starting the award towards their Eco award.**

**If doing the award as a unit**, girls can choose to complete 1 of the 3 actions on their own. They must do the other 2 actions together as a group. However, the group doesn't need to do the same activity for the 2 shared actions. For example, half the group could plant flowers in pots, while the other half takes part in a litter pick.

**If doing the award as an individual**, girls can choose to do their actions at home, in their unit or in the local community. They can do all 3 actions in the same place, or split them.

## Unit meeting activities (UMAs) related to the environment

Below is a list of all the UMAs related to the environment. Girls can choose to do up to 2 of these UMAs for 2 actions as part of the award.

Section	UMA	Theme	Description
All sections	Exploring nature	Have adventures	Girls do activities that focus on protecting wildlife, creating habitats, biodiversity and conservation.
All sections	Animal allsorts	Mixed themes	Some activities include conservation of the environment, animals and biodiversity.
All sections	Save the planet	Take action	Girls learn ways to help save the planet and how to have a lesser impact on our world when it comes to climate change. Includes conservation, recycling, clean energy and more.
All sections	Future girl acts	Take action	Girls explore ways to contribute towards a world where we all look after our planet, and the animals we share it with.
All sections	Community action	Take action	Girls explore ways to support their community. There are activities about protecting wildlife, reusing and recycling, improving the environment and reducing waste. It also includes activities that encourage girls to start a charitable or social action campaign to support local causes.

All sections	Make change	Take action	Girls develop the skills they need to make changes in their own lives and the lives of others. They can use these for any cause or campaign, including the environment, veganism, conservation or sustainability.
Brownies	Hedgehog homes	Have adventures	Girls discover how to make a hedgehog home, care for wildlife and work as a team.
Guides	Toads on roads	Take action	Girls find out about toad migration and raise awareness by getting creative with comedy.
Rangers	Mission to moth	Have adventures	Girls explore how to attract moths by mixing up a moth feast, and find out about other wildlife in the local area at night.

## Doing the award at home

If doing the award individually at home, girls may need support and guidance from a parent or carer. As part of the award, girls could learn about their home environment, such as whether their household recycles, if they have a composter or if they use energy-saving lightbulbs.

It's important to highlight that a young person may not be able to control the choices in their home. Each home will face different challenges, and parents or carers may not have the resources or ability to make changes.

Encourage girls to ask open-ended questions to their parents/carers, like:

- 'Could we try doing some eco-friendly things together, like using less plastic, turning off lights more often or start composting?'
- 'I'd like to learn how we can save energy, reduce food waste, or maybe recycle more. Could we pick 1 thing to start with together?'

These questions are a great way to start the conversation without making parents or carers feel they're doing something wrong, or that their child doing the award is going to result in difficult conversations, or financial costs.

## Your role as a leader

In the award resources for girls, each section has examples of actions girls can choose from. However, they're welcome to choose their own actions. Just make sure to check and confirm the actions they've chosen before they start.

Help your girls by asking if their actions are fun, challenging, achievable and helping the environment. The resources for girls have an award log where girls can record their actions and progress. They can write in the resource itself or print it out to record their actions.

Once your girls have completed their actions, it's your responsibility to check the evidence they've given and make sure they've finished each section

correctly. Please look at the resource for the section you lead for more details about the award steps.

Sharing what they've achieved with other girls in guiding is the last step in completing their award. Choose what works best for you and the girls to do this. It should involve guiding peers, either at your unit, another unit or a different section.

## **Recording the award on GO**

Remember that you'll need to record their Eco award on GO. There is a new category in the programme section called 'other badges' where the Eco award can be added. You can find the GO helpfiles [here](#).

## **Ordering badges and certificates**

Eco award badges and certificates are available through your county. You can't order them directly from the online shop.

## **Safety guidance**

Please carefully consider the safety guidance in each section's resource.



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