

# Short and Snappy - Ceremonies

## Objective

To introduce some of the tradition ceremonies used in Girl Scouts and encourage troop leaders and volunteers to use these ceremonies.

## Length

20 minutes

## Materials Needed

Flag ceremony (attached); Flag



## Information to Share (spend 10 minutes on this section)

Ceremonies are meant to recognize the accomplishments of your Girl Scouts, pass on our traditions, and reinforce the values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. They can be used to open and close a meeting, give out awards, welcome new members, renew memberships, and honor special Girl Scout accomplishments or days.

**Girl Scouts' Own**—is girl-planned and allows the girls to explore their feelings around a topic, such as friendship or The Girl Scout Promise and Law, using spoken word, favorite songs, poetry, or other methods of expression.

**Investiture**—welcomes new members, girls or adults, into the Girl Scout family for the first time. Girls receive their Girl Scout, Girl Scout Brownie, or Girl Scout Daisy pin at the same time.

**Opening Ceremonies**—start the Girl Scout meetings or events.

**Rededication Ceremonies**—are an opportunity for girls and adults to renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

**Other Ceremonies: Bridging, Court of Awards and Bronze, Silver and Gold, etc.** (More information on these can be found in Volunteer Essentials)

### Suggestions for Successful Ceremonies:

- ❖ **Devote sufficient time to planning the ceremony.** A good ceremony has a clear purpose and enriches the meaning and mood of the ceremony.
- ❖ **Use GSUSA book- Let's Celebrate** (You can purchase these in council stores)
- ❖ **Take safety precautions** when using candles or fires or when constructing bridges or platforms. Refer to Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoints for specific advice.
- ❖ **Add personal elements to traditional ceremonies.** Use favorite poems, songs, stories and sayings, or write something of your own.
- ❖ **Consider the role of colors and symbols** that you might use in your ceremony.
- ❖ **Observe flag etiquette** when doing flag ceremonies

## Activity (spend 10 minutes on this section)

Have volunteers do an opening or closing flag ceremony for your community meeting, encouraging leaders to do ceremonies at their troop meetings.

### Flag Ceremony

#### Honoring the American Flag

A flag ceremony is a way of showing love and respect for one's country.

*Flag Ceremonies may be used for:*

- ❖ Opening or closing meeting
- ❖ Opening or closing special events
- ❖ Beginning or closing a day
- ❖ Honoring a special occasion or special person
- ❖ Retiring a worn flag

Flag ceremonies may take place in meeting rooms, in outdoor settings, in large auditoriums, on stage, even on horseback. All flag ceremonies share one thing in common—respect for the flag.

#### Possible commands for a Flag Ceremony

**"Girl Scouts, attention."** Used to announce that the flag ceremony is about to begin.

**"Color guard, advance."** This signals the color guard to advance with the flags, or advance to pick up the flags.

**"Color guard, post the colors."** This directs the color guard to place the flag in flag standards, or to attach the grommets to a flag pole rope.

**"Color guard, honor your flag."** The color guard salutes the American Flag.

**"Please join us in saying the Pledge of Allegiance."**

#### OR

**"Color guard, honor your flag."** The color guard salutes the American Flag.

**"Color guard, retire the colors."** This asks the color guard to remove the flag from standards, or to lower the flag, detach from the rope, and fold prior to being dismissed.

**"Please join us in singing T.A.P.S."** This asks you to sing the song T.A.P.S. the lyrics can be found either online or in a Girl Scout Songbook.

**"Color guard, dismissed."** The color guard leaves in formation, with or without the flag.

**"Girl Scouts dismissed."** Girls may leave in formation or be at ease where they have been standing.

