



***Organized for Life***  
Patch Program

**EARNING THE PATCH**

The goal of this curriculum is to teach Girl Scouts of all ages the incredibly important skills of organization and time management. These skills will help girls become successful students and adults who can contribute to their own organized, tidy and smoothly-running homes, classrooms and workplaces.

**Materials Provided:**

Before and after pictures of organized rooms available on website:

[http://yourhomeeditor.com/before\\_after.php](http://yourhomeeditor.com/before_after.php)

Packet of unique organizational uses for everyday items

Anti-Clutter Mantra

Donation sites list

**Materials Needed:**

Old magazines; paper, crayons/colored pencils/markers; 3x5 cards and other items for sorting game

**PHASE I – DISCOVER**

In this phase, girls will gain knowledge on sorting, categorizing, editing and prioritizing.

**Step 1** – Girls will learn different ways to categorize (color, size, subject, use, texture), as well as what constitutes “clutter”; what to keep, throw away, donate, or sell.

✓ **ACTIVITIES**

- *Daisies, Brownies and Juniors*

**Sorting game.** Girls should break into small groups and sort items provided by the troop leader. Items can be: crayons, colored beads, solid color pens or pencils, small toys (like matchbox cars or plastic farm animals), inexpensive plastic paint brushes, multicolored 3x5 cards or scrap booking papers, foam shapes, etc. **NOTE:** Make sure the objects can be broken into three categories based on look (color), purpose and likeness. Girls should break into small groups and sort the same number of identical items. The lesson will be that there are many different ways to categorize and sort the same items (for instance, by color, shape, usage, etc.) and one is no more correct than the other.

- *All ages.*  
**Unique uses for common items.** Brainstorm about common household items that can be used to organize, categorize or corral objects (ex., using an empty baby wipes box to hold crayons or CDs). Each girl should bring in one to three items from her home and show the troop how she would use it to organize or containerize. *See sample ideas in the supplied materials.*

**Discuss: What is clutter?** Where does it accumulate most in your household, and what can be done about it? What is the benefit of being organized? What's the impact of being disorganized? How does being disorganized affect how you feel? How would being disorganized affect how you get dressed in the morning? How would being disorganized affect homework and school projects? How does a disorganized backpack affect classroom experience?

- *Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, Ambassadors*  
Develop a list of organizing supplies you might find helpful in specific rooms in the home (ex., lazy Susan in the kitchen or bathroom, jewelry organizer in the bedroom, drawer divider or magazine rack for a home office or desk). Research online for organizing supplies, or go to stores like Bed Bath and Beyond, Container Store, IKEA, Target and Office Depot to search their organizing sections for organizing products for specific rooms in the home.

**Step 2** – Girls will learn principals of organizing such as sorting/categorizing, purging, assigning everything a home and maintaining the space.

✓ **ACTIVITIES**

- *Daisy, Brownie, Juniors, Seniors, Ambassadors*  
**Sorting Collage.** Using old magazines create a collage of things that you would put in the following places: closet, bathroom, kitchen, desk drawer, etc. Where else might you put these items?
- *All ages*  
**Packing.** Troop leader can bring in a bag or suitcase and girls can bring in items they would bring on a camping trip. The troop can practice sorting the items, folding them and packing them neatly into the duffle bag or suitcase. Troop leaders should show them how to use Ziplock bags to containerize toiletries or dirty clothes or how to use plastic (or other) bags to keep dirty shoes from clean clothes. Teach them the proper way to fold items or roll socks and towels for the bag (so they can also do it at home in their own dressers).

**Prioritizing.** Girls should take a look around their bedrooms at their toys, books, clothing and other belongs and decide what they would grab

to take with them if they had to leave home quickly (like for a hurricane or fire). Being forced to choose favorites teaches them how to prioritize their belongings.

**Respect for belongings.** Once they have shared with the troop which items they would save (and why), hold a discussion about how they respect those items. Are the clothes they love so much always put neatly on hangers or folded in drawers? Is that prized gymnastics trophy hidden away in a box in the closet? Or does it have a dust-free place of purpose on a shelf? Is that favorite drawing in a frame? Are those earrings in a jewelry box? Space planning (making adequate room for the important things) is an underlying lesson here.

**Step 3** – Girls will learn the basics of time management.

✓ **ACTIVITIES**

○ *Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, Ambassadors*

**Time management.** Girls should bring in their school calendars, school syllabi and sports/extra-curricular activities schedules and spend time putting ALL activities, practices, games, tests, quizzes and projects, and jobs for the year on their calendars. Seeing EVERYTHING written down in one location will give them a more accurate view of what they need to do each day. They will see clearly when they have a basketball game the night before a math test, and will know they cannot wait until the night before to study—because they will be out late at the game. Be sure to add in family birthdays, vacations, troop meeting dates and other personal engagements as well.

○ *Brownies, Juniors, Cadette, Seniors, Ambassadors*

**How long will it take?** Troop leader should come up with some common group or household activities and ask the girls to guess how long (exactly how many minutes) those activities take. Then the group should time themselves doing those activities to see the difference in perceived time vs. actual time. They may find that they avoid doing certain things (like making their bed or math homework) because they think it will take hours to complete, when in actuality, it takes about 90 seconds to make a bed. Older girls can guess how long they think it will take to complete a homework assignment or read two chapters of a literature book, and then time themselves to see the actual time and share their findings with the group. Did they need more time than they expected to finish their homework or less?

○ *All ages*

**Make a “to do” list.** Make a list or draw pictures of things you need to do (smaller children may draw “chores” while older girls may write lists of school work or upcoming projects or things their parents ask them to do like babysit a younger sibling or make dinner, or fill out college

applications). Once all items are listed, younger girls should draw that they will feel like when the list is complete. Older girls should write a journal entry or poem about what it feels like (less stress, personal satisfaction, sense of accomplishment) to complete a task or realize a goal.

**Time-saving benefits of a clutter-free bedroom.** Using the room by room photos from the website [http://yourhomeeditor.com/before\\_after.php](http://yourhomeeditor.com/before_after.php), talk about why the “after” picture looks like a place you want to be. Do you spot the same differences in the rooms as other girls? What are the benefits of cleaning the clutter from *your* bedroom, closet, or bathroom (saving time by being able to find things when you need them, having all the pieces to a game or set, not rushing around looking for things)? What are the impacts of being organized (or not)?

Daisies	Discuss photos of a playroom <i>or</i> bedroom
Brownies	Discuss photos of a playroom <i>and</i> bedroom
Juniors	Discuss photos of bedroom (closets included), bathroom + one additional room
Cadettes	Discuss photos of bedroom (closets included), desk
Seniors	additional rooms such as kitchen and bathroom
Ambassadors	

### **Anticipated Outcomes**

- Girls gain practical life skills
- Girls seek challenges in the world
- Girls will be able to explain the basic organizing principals and will understand their relation to an organized, stress-free lifestyle.
- Girls will use knowledge gained to develop Organized for Life thought processes.
- Girls will develop organizational and time management skills demonstrated by their ability to keep their rooms in order, and maintain functional schedules for their schoolwork and troop meetings.

### **PHASE II – CONNECT**

Girls connect with their neighbors, school, and family members to learn about the many different ways people deal with organization.

**Step 1** – Many people live well with less. Help girls learn about simple living and lifestyles in other countries (and historically in our country). Ex., a U.S. family of four used to have only one clothing closet for all to share. It did not used to be the norm for kids to each have their own bedrooms or electronics—they shared. Introduce the girls to cultural diversity and how other cultures live with, purchase, and manage their “things.”

✓ ACTIVITIES

○ *All ages*

**Research how other lives with less.** Research another country or another time period in this country where people lived with less “things” than we do in our current homes and society. Do teepees have closets? Do igloos have room for Panini makers? Do African villages shop at Target? How do European families of four live in 1,000 square-foot flats? Share your findings with the troop.

○ **What can you live without?** Have each girl bring in 10 things from her room that she knows she really doesn’t “need” and donate them to a local shelter or recycle them if possible.

○ **Skype** someone from another country to literally see how they live.

**Step 2** – Girls will learn about organizing as a profession.

✓ ACTIVITIES

○ *All ages*

**NAPO.** Visit the National Association of Professional Organizers website ([www.napo.net](http://www.napo.net)) and invite a local professional organizer to visit your troop to talk about what she does and they type of people she helps and how she helps them.

**Anticipated Outcomes**

- Girls advance diversity in a multicultural world
- Girls feel connected to their communities locally and globally
- Girls will gain knowledge from other cultures about living simply
- Girls will learn to prioritize their own belongings
- Girls will learn the difference between “need” and “want”
- Girls will learn how clearing clutter and living simply benefits themselves, their families, and ultimately their communities (recycling, donating, purging, saving money by not losing things or buying duplicates, buying less items = less packaging, which = less garbage on the planet).

**PHASE III – TAKE ACTION**

**Step 1** – Girls take action to purge their own environments and gain control of their busy schedules.

Girls will perform a minimum of one community service project to benefit a local or national effort by collecting unused and unwanted items from themselves, their family and friends, or their community and donating them to the appropriate organizations.

✓ **ACTIVITIES**

- *All ages.* **Practice the Anti-Clutter Mantra** (provided in materials) with your family for one week and discuss how it saved you time or how it made you (or your parents) feel.

**Practice organization.** Ask your teacher if you can help her organize her classroom one afternoon. Or ask a troop leader or mother if she would let you help organize a room in her home. Practice the principals of organization you have already learned.

- *Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, Ambassadors.* **Teach** a younger troop about sorting and categorizing. Help them learn the principals of organization.

- *All ages.*  
**Bedroom Purge.** At home, go through your bedroom and look for items that are no longer age appropriate (clothing, books, toys) but that are still in good condition. Collect them into bags and bring them in and share with the troop why you have outgrown the items.

**Donation/Recycling/Giving Back.** Donate the bags from the above activity to an appropriate donation site (The Spring, Brookwood Home for Girls, Casa, Fairy Dust Project, etc.). Additional locations and websites of places to donate specific items (books, eyeglasses, shoes, luggage, towels/sheets, etc.) are available in the provided materials.

**Make it a larger effort.** Attempt to rally your parents, your classroom or even your whole school or neighborhood to purge items from their home. The troop can offer to pick up all items and donate them to an agreed-upon local charity or donation site.

**Anticipated Outcomes**

- Girls are resourceful problem solvers
- Girls educate and inspire others to act

## Organized for Life Patch Program Report Form

To receive an "Organized for Life" participation patch (cost is \$1.50 per patch), complete the information below and return this form to the Girl Scout Resource Center. To receive the patch or patches by mail, include a check for the patches and add \$3 to cover shipping and handling. Please make check payable to Girl Scouts of West Central Florida.

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Troop Leader or Girl Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_)

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ Troop #: \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the Age Level: D B J C S A

Number of patches needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Included: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Don't forget to add the \$3 if shipping is needed.)



*Keep what you love.*

*Use what you keep.*

[www.YourHomeEditor.com](http://www.YourHomeEditor.com)



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## Anti-Clutter Mantra

If you open it, close it.  
If you take it out, put it back.  
If you turn it on, turn it off.  
If you move it, put it back.  
If you unlock it, lock it.  
If you use it up, refill it or replace it.  
If you break it, fix it.  
If you can't fix it, find someone who can.  
If you borrow it, return it.  
If you make a mess, clean it up.  
If you're done with it, put it back.  
If you don't know where it goes—ASK!

## Anti-Clutter Mantra

If you open it, close it.  
If you take it out, put it back.  
If you turn it on, turn it off.  
If you move it, put it back.  
If you unlock it, lock it.  
If you use it up, refill it or replace it.  
If you break it, fix it.  
If you can't fix it, find someone who can.  
If you borrow it, return it.  
If you make a mess, clean it up.  
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*Keep what you love.*

*Use what you keep.*

[www.YourHomeEditor.com](http://www.YourHomeEditor.com)

- \* Stop junk mail - [dmachoice.org/mps](http://dmachoice.org/mps)
- \* National Do Not Call Registry - [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)
- \* Stop credit card offers - [www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com)
- \* Stop/reduce junk mail at [www.41pounds.org](http://www.41pounds.org) or call 866-417-4141.

It costs \$41 but they will reduce your junk mail by 80 - 95% for the next 5 years and they do all the leg work. They will contact 20 - 35 direct mail companies to remove your name from their distribution lists, including credit card apps, coupon mailers, sweepstakes, magazine offers, insurance promotions, catalogs, etc. AND they donate 1/3 of the fee to the nonprofit organization you choose!

### General Consignment (clothing, furniture, etc.)

- I Bought It On Ebay - 1515 Dale Mabry Highway South, Tampa, FL 33629  
10452 Roosevelt Boulevard, St. Petersburg, FL 33716
- Triage (clothing & furniture) - 4912 South Lois Avenue, Tampa, FL 33611
- The Missing Piece (fine furniture) - 3854 S. Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa, FL 33611
- Déjà Vu - 1601 34th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 3713

### Clothing Consignment

- Donna's Consignment - 5195 34th Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33711
- Plato's Closet - 4023 W Kennedy Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33609  
13124 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa, FL 33618
- Li Da La Consignment - 3648 Henderson Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33609

### Baby/Toy/Maternity Consignment

- Stellie Bellie's - 3475 4th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33704
- Baby Boomerang - 2902 W Kennedy Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33609
- Baby Go Round - 4111 Henderson Blvd, Tampa, FL 33629
- Ollie's Treehouse - 7925 4th Street North, Saint Petersburg, FL 33702

### Recycling Sources

- Appliances - [www.recycle-steel.org](http://www.recycle-steel.org)
- Carpets - [www.carpetrecovery.org](http://www.carpetrecovery.org)
- Cell phones and rechargeable batteries - [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org)
- Computers - [www.sharetechnology.org](http://www.sharetechnology.org)
- Electronics - [www.mygreenelectronics.org](http://www.mygreenelectronics.org)
- Eyeglasses - [www.neweyesfortheneedy.org](http://www.neweyesfortheneedy.org)
- Floppy disks & videotapes - [www.greendisk.org](http://www.greendisk.org)
- Formal dresses - [www.operationfairydust.org](http://www.operationfairydust.org)

# Unique Places to Donate...

towels/sheets – animal shelters  
vases – nursing homes, worship centers

## BOOKS

The libraries at assisted living facilities are a good option. Children's books can go to doctor office waiting rooms OR BooksForAfrica.org – This U.S.-based nonprofit organization will channel your reading material into the African schools and libraries that need them most. Send boxes to: Books for Africa, 253 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, St. Paul, MN 55101.

PaperBackSwap.com – Trade your books with other members on this website for only the cost of mailing your book to the person requesting it. Create a "wish list" and when a book you want is listed by another member, the website will alert you with an email so you can request it.

## CLOTHES / SHOES / EYEWARE

DressForSuccess.org – Collect your suits, business clothes, shoes and other business accessories for this nonprofit that provides office attire to low income, disadvantaged women so they can impress during an interview and maintain jobs.

NikeReuseAShoe.com – Nike's Reuse-A-Shoe program keeps old athletic shoes out of landfills by sending the rubber, foam and fabric to be recycled into materials used for soccer fields, basketball courts and playgrounds across the country. Visit the Nike site for a drop off location near you.

UniteForSight.org – Unite for Sight funnels donated glasses and shades to kids and adults in Latin America, Asia and Africa, where the cost of prescription glasses is unaffordable for most. Fill out a quick form on the website and UFS will tell you where to send your specs.

## BAGS

Suitcases for Kids - Foster care children often relocate, toting their possessions in plastic garbage bags because they cannot afford to purchase suitcases of their own. Suitcases for Kids is an international nonprofit organization that collects and distributes new and gently used suitcases, duffel bags and backpacks for these special children. Search online for a local donation site.

## TECHNOLOGY

ShareTechnology.org – Your outdated laptop or printer might be of no use to you, but a school, nonprofit organization or disabled person might be thrilled to have it. Browse listings of needed equipment in your area or post items you have to offer.

Phones4Life.org – Got a collection of old cell phones? Phones 4 Life will distribute them to the elderly or disaster victims so they can make emergency calls and get in touch with friends and family in times of need.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Citylinks.org – Haven't played that banjo in a while? Fax machine collecting dust? Citylink will match your unneeded item with a nonprofit in your area. Give musical instruments to a children's community center, or the fax machine to a housebound elderly person to send in a grocery order.

MissionFish.org – If you want to sell your clutter on Ebay, but want to give a portion of the profits to a nonprofit, Mission Fish and Ebay Giving Works will direct all or a portion of your sale money to any one of the more than 5,000 charities listed on Mission Fish. They even send you a receipt for your tax-deductible donation.

FreeCycle.org – This online community works much like Craigslist.org. Instead of carting your Precious Moments collection to the curb, you post a listing of it and choose from the responses you receive. Since it's all local, there's no shipping.