

Outdoor Training FAQ's

I have camping experience, do I still need to take BOLT (or Advanced Camp or Wilderness Series)?

Yes. This course will provide you with not only content knowledge, but also information on GS methods, our councils and council properties policies and procedures. Working with girls and groups can be a vastly different experience than when you are camping alone or with your family. You will learn how to best work with groups in the outdoors and to handle situations and teach girls, while developing relationships and sharing ideas with volunteers from across the council.

Can I test out of the outdoor training?

We currently don't have the capacity to test out of training. Training covers more than the necessary subject content knowledge. It includes skills and scenarios in working with groups of girls, building relationships with and new ideas from volunteers from across the council, and learning GS and council specific policies and procedures.

What are the sleeping accommodations at camp?

For BOLT training, the accommodations will be in a cabin, dormitory style cabin, or platform tent at one of our GSWCF camp properties. Advanced Camp Training and Wilderness participants will sleep in tents, similar to what you may use when camping with your family. You do not need to bring your own tent, unless you prefer to.

What should I do if I have dietary or other special needs?

During the registration process there will be a space for special information to be entered. If you missed this step, please contact customerconnections@gswcf.org to have it added. Please include your full name, training name and date and the special information you need added in the email and be sure to do so at least 1 week prior to the training date. This ensures your trainer will have adequate notice to help ensure a great experience for you.

Is overnight stay required (BOLT, Advanced Camp, Wilderness Series)?

Overnight stay is required to complete the course. This simulates and allows you to practice the experience before taking girls camping, allowing you to think and work through how you might handle situations that may occur when groups of girls are present.

Why was BOLT shortened from 2 nights to one night a few years ago?

Based upon feedback from participants, some of the book-work was moved into the pre-requisite webinar Stepping Out to help meet the demands on volunteers time. This allows the time you have in training to focus on the hands-on skills.

Do we need BOLT if we are only attending a Service Unit encampment and will never be going camping?

If your troop is attending an encampment where food and fire will be provided to you, you do not need BOLT. You will only need the Stepping Out webinar. If your troop doesn't plan to go camping or build campfires, then you do not need BOLT. However, if you do intend to build a campfire or cook over a fire, then you do need BOLT.

Do I need to take the outdoor courses in order?

Stepping Out, BOLT, Advanced Camp, and Wilderness Series are trainings that are progression based and need to be taken in order.

What is the difference between BOLT, Advanced Camp, and Wilderness Series?

BOLT provides basic instruction for working with girls outdoors and GSWCF properties policies and procedures. Advanced Camp covers more advanced outdoor skills, cooking techniques, girl/adult partnerships, and more. Wilderness Series covers taking girls into remote locations and backpacking.

Can children accompany their parents to BOLT training?

In order to allow the best learning opportunities for participants, we are unable to accommodate children at adult learning courses. Child care is not available during adult learning courses. For overnight trainings, sleeping accommodations are reserved for adults only.

What if it rains or the weather is inclement?

Courses are held unless it presents a danger to the other participants. With the exception of our outdoor trainings, most of our adult learning courses are held inside. If severe weather conditions dictate a change in the training location or a need to cancel/reschedule, all registered participants will be notified as soon as possible. In case of a weather alert such as a hurricane or tornado, please follow the instructions of weather officials.

Who should I contact if I need directions to the camp?

Confirmation and other details will be sent at least 1 week prior to the training. This will include contact information for your trainer and the Camp Ranger at the site your training will be held.

What will I need to bring to BOLT, Advanced Camp, or Wilderness Series training?

Along with the other confirmation details sent a week prior to the training, you will receive a packing list. This list will include basics such as: sleeping bag, mess kit, toiletries, pillow, hat, bandana, towels, flashlight, and clothing.

I transferred from another council and took outdoor training there. Do I need to take it here too?

Councils develop their own curriculum and trainings and may not have the same content or align. Many trainings contain council specific policies, procedures, or paperwork. Please submit a record of the trainings from your previous council, and any copies of curriculum/objectives/content that you may have to adultlearning@gswcf.org. The Adult Learning Manager will review the information and contact your former council for any clarification. After this, the Adult Learning Manager will let you know what we are able to accept that aligns with our training.

Do I need Wilderness First Aid to take girls camping?

Basic CPR/First Aid is required anytime you leave your meeting place, travel, or go camping and will be less than 30 minutes away from emergency medical services. Wilderness First Aid (also called Level 2 First Aid) is required when you will be 30 minutes or more away from Emergency Medical Services. You may register for a training through GSWCF or for a list of accepted certifying organizations please see Volunteer Essentials Ch. 4 Safety-wise.

Do I need Event/Camp/Series Coordinator training to take my troop camping.

No. Event/Camp/Series Coordinator training is designed for those who will be serving as Service Unit Encampment Directors or Event & Series Coordinators.

What skills are covered in the lifeguarding training?

This American Red Cross course is for those who are already strong swimmers. This class requires: 550 yard swim test using only freestyle or breast stroke, retrieving a 10 lb. brick from the bottom of a 10 ft. deep pool, swimming 20 yd. with a brick on your chest, treading water for 2 minutes using only legs, swimming 30 ft. underwater while picking up 3 dive rings in 4-7 ft. of water.