



GS Backpack

December 2022

**Girl Scouts take action –
and cookies power the way!**

You never know what you can do – until you do it!

Whether you are a Daisy taking your first steps toward making the world a better place by removing litter from a park or an Ambassador changing laws, Girl Scouting gives you the tools and opportunities to carry out your goals. What do you feel passionate about fixing?

Girl Scouts take action in many ways and have a big impact on both the world and their own development. The Girl Scout Research Institute has found that women who were Girl Scouts, especially those who participated for more than three years, have a higher sense of self and life satisfaction, are more likely to volunteer and be engaged in civics, and have higher levels of education and income. Girl Scouts encourages girls to take risks, explore, and take action on the issues they are passionate about in a safe environment.

Girl Scout Cookies are often the way these projects are funded, and we are gearing up to make the 2023 cookie season the best ever! You can get a cookie rally box to start you on your way. Set your goals and get ready to gain new skills, work with your team, and become a cookie entrepreneur! And new this year is the Raspberry Rally cookie, the first in the Girl Scout Cookie lineup to be exclusively offered for online sale and direct shipment only, enhancing your e-commerce sales and entrepreneurial skills.

The Girl Scout cookie program makes it possible for you and your troop to take action on a community service project, fund a field trip, or fulfill your goals. You might decide to work on your Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award project. See our Troop Spotlight on the back page for inspiration on how to take action and make the world a better place!

**Girls who have the nerve to change the
world, grow up and do it!**

**What will
you change?**



**Loved by
millions!**

December 2023

What's inside:

- Family preview of cookie program
- Summer camp
- Upcoming programs
- Troop Spotlight
- Retail store

girlscouts 
of the green and
white mountains

Family preview of cookie program

You can fund your Girl Scout activities, Take Action projects, membership, and more with the Girl Scout Cookie program – the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world!

Working with your troop and your family will make it possible for you to set your goals, make smart decisions, manage money, learn business ethics, and gain people skills. Our Cookie Entrepreneur Family pins help families understand how to give you the support you need to shine and get the most out of the program.

Our Girl Scout Cookie season starts in December with pre-sale orders, cookies arrive in February, and booth sales run from February through March.



Earn the Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin by completing the corresponding activity sheet, each activity sheet is designed to help you support your Girl Scout, giving you tips for your cookie entrepreneur.

You can download the Cookie Entrepreneur Family pin activity sheets using this QR code, and work on these at home together.



QR code to download activity sheets



Our 2023 theme is:

GO BRIGHT Ahead

There's a new cookie in town!

The Raspberry Rally is a sister to our beloved Thin Mints – a thin crispy cookie infused with raspberry flavor instead of mint and dipped in the same chocolatey coating. This cookie will be available for online shipping beginning on February 27. Since this cookie will only be sold online, it will help you to gain experience and skills in e-commerce. All 9 cookie flavors from last year are back to help you make your cookie business a huge success.

Get Ready to Rally!

Raspberry Rally



You can get your 2023 Cookie Rally box right now!



Our 2023 Cookie Rally box!

In it, you'll find materials and activities that will help you prepare for the cookie season. You can do the activities on your own, with your troop, or with your family. Each box contains the materials for one person.

Boxes are \$14, and can be sent to you or picked up at our Mountain Top Shops. Boxes are for sale now through January 13, get yours while supplies last. You'll find the link online when you go to www.girlscoutsgwm.org, click on activities, and search for Cookie Rally.

Girl Scouts love to make new friends, try new things, and go on new adventures!

Now's the time to turn dreams into reality by planning for your adventures at Girl Scout summer camp. Whisper your thoughts to a new friend in your bunk at camp, discover a new animal on a nature hike, pop popcorn over a campfire – it's all there in the great outdoors for you to try!

Summer camp registration will open soon for both day camp and resident camp. Choose a day camp week at Camp Kettleford in Bedford, NH; at Camp Seawood in Portsmouth, NH; or at Camp Twin Hills in Richmond, VT. Camp Farnsworth in Thetford, VT, offers the full camp experience with both one- and two-week residential camp opportunities. Each week has special themes like Splish Splash, Up All Night, Artrageous, Target Time, and Princess Pirates!

At Camp Farnsworth, brand new campers can start with Frolic, a three-night stay at camp from July 4 to 7. If you're ready, choose a one-week special themed program from July 9 – August 11! Older girls may tackle a two-week backpack trek on Vermont's Long Trail or develop their leadership skills as counselors in training.

Day camp weeks run from June 26 through August 18 at Camp Kettleford; from July 10 through August 4 at Camp Seawood; and there are two weeks to enjoy day camp at Camp Twin Hills, which run July 24-August 4.

Families are also invited to come camping on our properties as part of summer camp! Enjoy our lakes, hiking trails, and camp facilities with the added benefit of programs run by our summer camp staff. Check our program listings for dates.



Summer camp is waiting for you, where it's

All fun.

No filter.

Watch for the next issue of the Backpack for detailed flyers on the summer camps near you!



Remember, by selling Girl Scout Cookies you can earn program credits that can be applied to your favorite camp program!

Upcoming dates to remember

December

12/26: Girl Scout Cookie Program begins

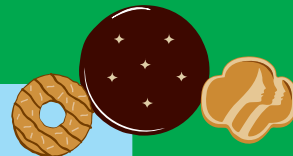
January

1/17: Martin Luther King Jr. Day - offices closed

Check girlscoutsgwm.org for Cookie 2023 updates.

February

2/17: Cookie Booths open
2/17-19: National Girl Scout Cookie Weekend
2/22: World Thinking Day
2/25: Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day



March

Women's History Month
3/12-18: Girl Scout Week
3/12-18 Girl Scouts Celebrate Faith



Troop Spotlight



Junior Troop 59447 of Rochester, NH, made a Thanksgiving dinner for their families. They earned their Social Butterfly and Simple Meal badges while learning life skills.



Troop 58201 of Hinsdale, NH, chose to give their clubhouse a makeover with some of their cookie proceeds.



Wolcott, VT, Troop 61654 used some of their Fall Product proceeds to donate to the local food shelf while working on their budgeting badges.



The Girl Scouts of Troop 51403 in East Dover, VT, helped host a special Veterans Day All School Sing program at The Dover School in Dover, VT.

Have photos to share of the fun your troop is having?
Send photos with description to Customer Care at customer care@girlscoutsgwm.org. Be sure to put Troop Spotlight in the subject line.



Troop 10424 of Gilford, NH, hosted a "Girls-giving" event for their service unit — 32 Girl Scouts in total. Troops 59000, 58666, and 60183 joined for a night of crafts, pizza and fun! Each troop made a Thanksgiving basket or two to donate to a local organization.



Girl Scouts in many troops in the Amherst, NH, area have created scarves with personal notes to send to Ukraine.



Girl Scout Brownie Troop 30287 of Windham, NH, made cat toys and brought them along with other donations to the Salem Animal Rescue League.

Visit our Mountain Top Shop

Bedford Store

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday
9:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Williston Store

Monday – Friday
9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Bedford and Williston Stores

Saturdays, January 7, February 11,
and March 25
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Both stores closed daily for lunch 1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Visit www.girlscoutsgwm.org for store closures at either location.



Girl Scout troops and/or families at any level can stop by either store location, during regular business hours to participate in self-guided activities in order to earn the following:

January: Eco Badges
February: Cookie Badge
March: Financial Literacy Badge

Stations will be set up with several fun activities, all provided free of charge. Once earned, the pins/badges can be purchased at the store.

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Upcoming activities

G-Team

All Ages

Be a media star! The G-team will have opportunities to do social media posts, photo shoots, and speak in front of a camera or microphone - and then you get to see yourself in print, online, or on the air!



Girls in grades 1-12 are welcome to apply, and those approved will receive a welcome packet and special patch with more information! While the program will run from September through June, Girl Scouts are welcome to join at any time.

Camp Chat

All Ages | Virtual

Camp Seawood | January 10, 5:30-6:15 p.m.
Camp Kettleford | January 10, 6:30-7:15 p.m.
Camp Twin Hills | January 11, 5:30-6:15 p.m.
Camp Farnsworth | January 11, 6:30-7:15 p.m.

All Girl Scouts are invited to learn more about our summer camps and other summer programs for 2023.

Price: Free

Register by January 3 for January 10, and by January 4 for January 11.

Magical Baking Series

All Ages | Virtual

January 11, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
February 8, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
March 8, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

In January, you'll make a lemon pudding cake and discover the magic behind the luscious lemon pudding base! Join us again in February to make your own sourdough starter and bread - and find out if it is magical. Then in March, popovers are on the menu. Find out how steam creates these scrumptious pockets of air!

Price: \$10 per girl

Register by January 4 for January 11, by January 23 for February 8, and by March 1 for March 8.

Dancing Princess

Daisies & Brownies | Bow, NH
January 13, 5:00-5:45 p.m.

Come dancing at the Creative Dance Workshop, learn some super fun dance styles while exploring rhythm and musicality.



Price: \$7 per girl, register by December 29

Ceramic Painting Party

Daisies & Brownies | Salem, NH
January 14, 10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Choose personalized Girl Scout-themed ceramic products to paint and take home with you the same day.

Price: \$7 per girl + cost of ceramic
Register by December 29

How to Catch a Snowman

Daisies & Brownies
Portsmouth, NH | January 21, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Richmond, VT | January 21, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Get on your cold weather gear and follow the trail to catch the Snowman.

Price: \$5 per person, register by January 6

Snowshoe, Sledding and S'mores

All Ages

Portsmouth, NH | January 21, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Richmond, VT | January 21, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Bring your family and try snowshoes, bring your sled and test out the camp sledding hills, and then warm up around the fire while making a s'more!



Price: \$5 per person
Register by January 6

Animals in Winter: Protecting Habitats

Daisies - Juniors |
Quechee, VT
January 28,
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Gather at VINS to learn about our animal neighbors and how to protect and help them when spending time outside.



Price: \$20 per girl Register by January 12

Frozen Farm

Brownies - Cadettes | Keene, NH
January 29, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Join us for a snowy adventure! Learn to snowshoe, spot and identify animal tracks, learn about animal adaptations and more!

Price: \$13 per girl, \$7 per adult
Register by January 12

Brownie Snow Adventure

Brownies | Albany, NH
January 29, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Join us for a snowshoe adventure on the beautiful trails at Tin Mountain Conservation Center to see animal tracks and learn about the interesting ways that nature adapts to colder months.

Price: \$18 per a girl, register by January 12



gsEvents

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Girl Scout Week: My Promise, My Faith

All Ages | Virtual

Thursdays, February 2-March 9,
On Your Time

Girl Scouts earn your My Promise, My Faith at your own pace and schedule as you discover how your faith and the Girl Scout Law help develop your character and leadership skills.

Price: \$20 per girl, register by February 16

Animal Detectives

Daisies & Brownies | Amherst, NH
February 11, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Winter is the perfect time to become an animal detective! Venture out on snowshoes (snow permitting) to test your tracking knowledge and visit some of the wildlife and their homes at PMEC.

Price: \$20 per girl, register by January 26

Daisy Snow Adventure

Daisies | Albany, NH
February 12, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Join us for a snowshoe adventure—a leisurely walk on the trails to explore how animals adapt for the winter.

Price: \$18 per girl, register by January 26

World Thinking Day – Breads Around the World

Daisies & Brownies | Virtual
February 21, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Celebrate World Thinking Day learning about the significance and the meaning behind the celebration, all while we make some breads from around the world together.

Price: \$10 per girl, register by February 14

Daisy Robotics 2: How Robots Move

Daisies | Dover, NH
February 25, 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Join Snapology and learn about the many things robots do. Then, work in teams, like engineers, to design a robot that solves an everyday problem.

Price: \$18 per girl, register by February 9

WinterFest

Brownies & Juniors | Thetford, VT
February 25, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Explore the winter outdoors while snowshoeing, ice fishing, and sledding and enjoy the hot cocoa bar to warm up!

Price: \$25 per girl, register by February 10

Mechanical Engineering: Build a Rollercoaster

Daisies | Dover, NH
March 4, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

Design and create your own roller coaster from recycled materials and then test it out to see how its design affects its speed.

Price: \$23 per girl, register by February 16

Girl Scout Ninja Challenge

Daisies & Brownies | Manchester, NH
March 5, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Do you have what it takes to be a ninja? Learn how to build self-esteem, confidence, and a sense of accomplishment one obstacle at a time during this fun challenge course.

Price: \$18 per girl, register by January 19

How to Catch a Leprechaun

Daisies & Brownies
Williston, VT | March 7, 4:00-5:30 p.m.
Portsmouth, NH | March 8, 4:00-5:30 p.m.
Virtual | March 9, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Can you catch a leprechaun? Use your “trash” to make a treasure to catch a leprechaun.

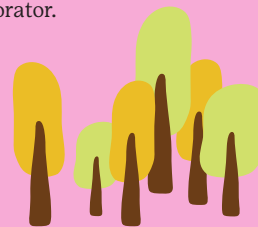
Price: \$10 per person
Register by February 20 for March 7, by February 21 for March 8, and by March 2 for March 9

Maple Sugar Magic

Daisies & Brownies | Hollis, NH
March 11, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Learn how trees make sugar through a humorous puppet show featuring a talking Maple Tree and her leaves and roots. You will also learn to identify, measure, drill and set a tap, as well as empty buckets into a wood-fired evaporator.

Price: \$18 per girl
Register by February 23



Visualize water scarcity in the world.

Water scarcity is when there is not enough water for people who need it to live. Most of us are used to the idea that we have clean water to drink, take baths, or wash dishes. One in every three people on our planet do not have access to clean, safe drinking water.

What you'll need:

- 1 one-liter bottle (could be an empty plastic soda bottle)
- 3 cups (that each hold one cup of liquid)
- Food coloring (optional)
- 1 teaspoon
- 1 tablespoon

1. Fill an empty one-liter bottle with four cups of water. Add food coloring for fun. This bottle represents all the water on Earth.
2. Remove two tablespoons of water from the bottle and place it in a cup. This cup represents all the freshwater on Earth. What's left in the bottle is saltwater, which people can't drink.
3. Take two teaspoons of water from the cup and put it into a second cup. This is freshwater on Earth that isn't frozen.
4. Take one teaspoon from the second cup and put it into a third cup. The second cup is all the clean freshwater on Earth that is directly available for our use. The third cup is freshwater trapped underground and water that is frozen or polluted.



97% of the Earth's water is found in the ocean. That means that only **3%** of the Earth's water is freshwater — possibly drinkable and usable for humans.

- Are you surprised by how little water is available for human use?
- Why do you think it's important to protect and share water?
- How can having enough safe, clean water help keep peace and make the world more secure?
-

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Upcoming activities

G-Team

All Ages

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Price: Free
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Magical Baking Series

All Ages | Virtual
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In January, you'll make a lemon pudding cake and discover the magic behind the luscious lemon pudding base! Join us again in February to make your own sourdough starter and bread - and find out if it is magical. Then in March, popovers are on the menu. Find out how steam creates these scrumptious pockets of air!

Price: \$10 per girl
Register by January 4 for January 11, by January 23 for February 8, and by March 1 for March 8

Go for the Gold, Silver and Bronze

Juniors - Ambassadors | Virtual
January 12, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
February 9, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
March 9, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Thinking about making the world a better place this webinar is the place to hear ideas, ask questions, and get all the info you need to get started!

Price: Free, register by January 5 for January 12, February 2 for February 9, and by March 2 for March 9

Let's Dance

Juniors & Cadettes | Bow, NH
January 13, 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Tap, jazz and hip hop are all super fun styles of dance where you explore rhythm and musicality, using fun, up-to-date music.

Price: \$13 per girl, register by December 29

Junior Maestros

Juniors | Manchester, NH or Virtual
January 16, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Juniors - take a musical journey and explore instruments, try your hand at composition, and take the stage.

Price: \$20 per girl, register by December 29



Find Your Voice

Cadettes
Manchester, NH or Virtual
January 16, 12:30-2:30 p.m.

Cadettes - build your confidence, learn to control your breath, use empowering body language, and other skills to captivate your audience.

Price: \$20 per girl, register by December 29

Tracking Wildlife in Winter

Juniors - Ambassadors | Holderness, NH
January 21, 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Wildlife is seldom seen in the winter but by learning to read the tracks and signs they leave behind you can read their stories written in the snow.

Price: \$14 per girl
Register by January 5



Snowshoe, Sledding and S'mores

All Ages
Portsmouth, NH | January 21, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Richmond, VT | January 21, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Bring your family and your sled! Try out snowshoes, test our camp sledding hills, then warm up around the fire while making s'mores.

Price: \$5 per person, register by January 6



Animal Habitats in Winter

Juniors | Albany, NH
January 22, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

See animal tracks and find evidence of where these animals live, what they eat, where they travel and what they do by snowshoes while working on your Animal Habitats badge.

Price: \$18 per girl, register by January 5

Shaken Baby Syndrome & Prevention

Cadettes - Ambassadors | Virtual
January 25, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

This training will explain exactly what shaken baby syndrome is, how it happens, and how to prevent it from happening with infant safe sleep practices.

Price: Free, register by January 22

Animals in Winter: Protecting Habitats

Daisies - Juniors | Quechee, VT
January 28,
10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Gather at VINS to learn about our animal neighbors and how to protect and help them when spending time outside.

Price: \$20 per girl, register by January 12

Who Done It?

Juniors & Cadettes | Amherst, NH
January 29, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Be a crime scene investigator and use real CSI techniques to solve various "crimes".

Price: \$18 per girl, register by January 12

Frozen Farm

Brownies - Cadettes | Keene, NH
January 29, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Learn to snowshoe, how to spot and identify animal tracks, and about animal adaptations - and more!

Price: \$13 per girl, register by January 12

Child and Babysitting Safety Course

Cadettes

Virtual | January 29, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Virtual | February 12, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Join Coastal CPR and First Aid in The Child and Babysitting Safety course which covers child safety and basic care techniques for children.

Price: \$38 per girl

Register by January 15 for January 29, and by January 29 for February 12



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All Ages | Virtual

Thursdays, February 2-March 9,
On Your Time

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Price: \$20 per girl

Register by February 16

Exploring Life Beneath the Ice: An Introduction to Ice Fishing

Juniors – Ambassadors | Holderness, NH
February 5, 7:00-10:30 a.m.

Try to entice fish to the end of your line using lures and jigging techniques that mimic their natural food. Learn about fish adaptations by observing fish colors, fins, and mouthparts. Ice fishing is a great activity to foster your love for nature.

Price: \$30 per girl, \$25 per adult

Register by January 19

World Thinking Day – Breads Around the World

Juniors & Cadettes | Virtual

February 15, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Celebrate World Thinking Day learning about the significance and the meaning behind the celebration, all while we make some breads from around the world together.

Price: \$10 per girl, register by February 8

WinterPalooza

Juniors – Seniors | Thetford, VT
February 25, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Enjoy ice fishing, go snowshoeing on the frozen lake, check out the duck boxes, cook lunch over a fire and enjoy the hot cocoa bar in this day outdoors.

Price: \$35 per girl, register by February 10

WinterFest

Brownies & Juniors | Thetford, VT
February 25, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Explore the winter outdoors while snowshoeing, ice fishing, and sledding and enjoy the hot cocoa bar to warm up!

Price: \$25 per girl, register by February 10

Investigate the environmental effects of air pollutants.

If you've ever noticed tiny particles in the air, it's what we breathe in all the time. Some of it is dust from the ground or from our bodies or clothes, like lint, hairs, and pieces of skin. Some of it comes from factory and car emissions. Air pollution from things being burned or combusted, like coal, gasoline, or wood, has always been part of our environment.

Acid rain is one of the results of air pollution. When clean rainwater falls through polluted air, it becomes polluted and acidic. Acid rain causes damage to wildlife, plants, and forests. It contaminates water supplies and can even corrode metal on structures like statues, buildings, bridges, and playground equipment.

See what the effects of acid rain look like on living and nonliving things:

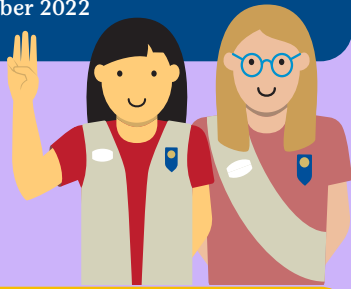
1. Collect six jars with lids and these samples: two leaves, eggshell pieces, and two paper clips (or pennies).
2. Add one cup of vinegar to each of three jars and one cup of distilled water to each of the other three jars. Label them.
3. Drop one leaf in the vinegar jar and the other in the water jar.
4. Do the same with the paper clips and eggshell pieces.
5. Leave them overnight. Then observe.



- What happened to the "living items"—the leaf and the eggshell—when put in vinegar?
- Do you think acid rain has this effect on all living things?
- What happened to the paperclip (or penny) in the acid solution?
- Do you think acid rain has this effect on all nonliving things?
- What are some things we can do to solve the acid rain problem?
- How can conserving resources and finding alternatives to producing energy help?

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Upcoming activities

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February 16, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Celebrate World Thinking Day learning about the significance and the meaning behind the celebration, all while we make some breads from around the world together.

Price: \$10 per girl, register by February 9

WinterPalooza

Juniors – Seniors | Thetford, VT
February 25, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Enjoy ice fishing, go snowshoeing on the frozen lake, check out the duck boxes, cook lunch over a fire and enjoy the hot cocoa bar in this day outdoors.

Price: \$35 per girl, register by February 10

Series Opportunities

Astronomy Club

It's a big universe – learn all about it! Soar to the stars with educational materials and astronomy events both virtual and in person. Meet professional and amateur astronomers who will help you learn even more about the wonders of astronomy.

G-Team

Be a media star! The G-team will have opportunities to do social media posts, photo shoots, and speak in front of a camera or microphone - and then you get to see yourself in print, online, or on the air!

Visit the Series page of our website, www.girlscoutsgwm.org for more information on these Series opportunities, as well as others!



Get smarter about plastic and microplastic.

Not long ago, plastic was considered a revolutionary discovery, but as we learned it is very hurtful to the environment. We use more than 400 million tons of plastic yearly and less than 10 percent is recycled. The rest ends up in landfills, where it can take 500 or even 1,000 years to decompose.

Let's explore the world of microplastics and microplastic fibers. Start by looking at this information sheet from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Microplastic Marine Debris



What are Microplastics?
Microplastics are small plastic pieces or fibers that are smaller than 5 mm in size. They come in many forms including beads, fragments, pellets, fibers, and more.

Primary microplastics are made to be small and can come in the form of resin pellets and beads. Products like resin pellets are melted and used to create larger plastic items, while microbeads may be found in personal care products, such as toothpaste, face washes, and cosmetics.

Secondary microplastics come from larger pieces of plastics, such as beverage bottles, bags, and toys. Sun, wind, and waves can cause these plastics to become brittle and fragment into smaller and smaller pieces in the environment, though they may never fully go away.

Plastic microfibers are synthetic fibers, such as polyester or nylon, which are used to make clothing, furnishings, and even fishing nets and lines. Through general wear or washing and drying, fibers may break apart from larger items, creating secondary microplastics.

Why are Microplastics a Problem?
Our ocean and Great Lakes are polluted with a wide variety of marine debris, ranging from large fishing nets and abandoned vessels, down to the smallest plastic particles that can't be seen with the naked eye. These microplastics are found throughout the ocean, from tropical waters, to polar ice, and even in fresh water and the air we breathe. Microplastics have also been found in tap and bottled water, sea salt, and other products we eat or drink.

Because they are so small, wildlife can mistake microplastics for food. Zooplankton, fish, mussels, and even whales have been found to ingest microplastics. The microplastics and chemicals in the plastics may impact the bodily functions of animals.

Microplastics can also carry harmful pollutants. They may absorb pollutants that are in the water around them, or leach chemicals that are added to plastics to make them colorful or flexible. Although wildlife may ingest or be exposed to these contaminants, more research is needed to understand how they might be affected.

How Do They Get Into the Environment?
Trash travels, and microplastics are no exception. Once in the ocean, it can be difficult to understand where a piece of marine debris comes from.

Microbeads, like those found in toothpastes and face washes, can wash down your drain and into a wastewater treatment plant. Here, some microplastics can end up in the sludge, while some can end up in the treated wastewater. Treated wastewater is discharged into the marine or freshwater environment or is used in agriculture to water crops.

Plastic pellets, like those used to produce larger plastic items, could directly enter the ocean and Great Lakes through a spill during shipping or at a manufacturing facility.

Plastic fragments come from larger plastic items. When they are littered or dumped, they can be moved by wind and storms, and travel directly from rivers and streams. Through exposure to winds, waves, and the sun, these larger plastics break into smaller and smaller pieces, creating microplastics.

When in use, fishing nets can shed **microfibers** directly into the environment. Our clothes also shed these fibers, releasing them in the wash or directly into the water and air around us during normal wear.

How YOU can help!
No matter where you live, you can help make a difference and stop microplastics and other marine debris from getting in the ocean and Great Lakes in the first place.

GET INVOLVED
and participate in local cleanups in your area.

REMEMBER
that our land and sea are connected.

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY
no matter where you are.

REDUCE
the amount of waste you produce.

REUSE
items when you can. Choose reusable items over disposable ones.

RECYCLE
as much as possible! Bottles, cans, cell phones, ink cartridges, and many other items can be recycled.

Marine Debris Program | Office of Response and Restoration | National Ocean Service

<https://marinedebris.noaa.gov>

<https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/publications-files/Microplastic%20Marine%20Debris%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

Microplastics are tiny plastic particles that result from the breakdown of larger plastics when they go into landfills and are not recycled. Microplastics have been found in marine organisms from plankton to whales, in commercial seafood, and even in drinking water.

Choose one of the activities below to help spread awareness:

- Come up with a social media campaign to raise awareness of microfiber pollution.
- Create a message to encourage people to buy clothing made from natural fibers.
- Or talk about the value to the environment of buying from secondhand stores.