



Brownie Hiker Badge – Outdoor Pillar

Goal: When I've earned this badge, I will know how to hit the trail for a hike!

Step 1:

What I'll do: Decide where to go

How I'll do it:

Visit the Connecticut Forest and Parks website for their interactive map of trails across the state, you can zoom in and find a trail near you or one you've never been too.

<https://www.ctwoodlands.org/blue-blazed-hiking-trails/blue-blazed-hiking-trails-interactive-map>

(Many trails begin or end in public parks, but you can find smaller, parking areas for a quieter hiking experience).

Many towns and private land trust agencies also offer access to online trail maps.






You can also visit Atlasquest.com and letterboxing.org for hike suggestions at a place new you. These two sites describe a "treasure hunt in the woods" type of activity. Many times the author of the "letterbox" will also include a brief description of the ease or difficulty of the trail they suggesting.

Step 2:

What I'll do: Try out a hiking skill

How I'll do it:

1. Review "Leave No Trace" principles, because a Girl Scout always leaves an area better than she found it! 1. Know before you go 2. Choose the right path 3. Pack it in and pack it out, including bringing your trash back home 4. Leave what you find 5. Be careful with fire 6. Respect wildlife 7. Be kind to other visitors
2. Learn some trail signs and go on a hike! Many trails have BLAZES to mark the path. A blaze is a rectangle, painted on something along the path. It may be painted on a tree, a rock or something else along the way. The color is used to show what trail you are on. If there are multiple trails in the area, they should be painted in different colors to match the map. Be sure to watch the blazes as you hike. You should always be able to find one in front of you and one behind you. If you lose sight of the blaze, go back to the last one you saw, and take another look! Here's a hide and seek for trails signs [trail signs 14.pdf](#) Can you find them all? (There is at least one trail sign in each little picture.)

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| Blue trail Go straight | Blue trail Turns left | Blue trail Turns right | Blue trail stops | Blue and Red Trails go straight |

Step 3:

What I'll do: Pick the right gear

What I'll need:

- Cotton athletic sock
- Wool sock
- Pail of water

How I'll do it:

1. Visit REI Outfitters here <https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/ten-essentials.html> for suggestions on what you should consider packing in your day pack. Remember, if you are going to carry it, you should also know how to use it, so practice first!
2. Try this cold weather clothing experiment.
 - a. Put the socks on, one for each hand
 - b. Put your fingertips into a pail of water, then take them out
 - c. Notice, does the wetness creep up the sock?
 - d. How long does it take for each sock to dry?
 - e. Think about which sock you would prefer to wear on a cool or cold day of hiking?

Step 4:

What I'll do: Pack a snack for energy

What I'll need: GORP = Good Old Fashioned Raisins and Peanuts!

- Raisins
- Peanuts
- Dried cranberries
- White chocolate chips
- Cheerios
- Other favorite snacks or cereals
- Snack bag

How I'll do it:

Make my GORP = Pack a snack that is easy to carry and tastes great. Make your own GORP recipe! Try using dried cranberries, white chocolate chips, and Cheerios. Mix the ingredients in a zipper bag for easy traveling and storage.

Step 5:

What I'll do: Go on your hike

What I'll need:

- Water bottle
- Snacks
- Backpack with other essential gear
- Hiking clothes

How I'll do it:

1. Ask a trusted adult to a buddy for your hike.
2. Tell a different trusted adult, where you are going and when you plan to be back.
3. Put your trail essential gear into your backpack.
4. Put your full water bottle and your snacks into your backpack too.
5. Put on your hiking clothes, remembering to dress in layers. This way you can take a layer off if you get too warm. Or, put a layer on if you get too cool.
6. Play some games while hiking on the trail.
 - a. Take turns playing “eye-spy” and find interesting things to see along to way, or use the alphabet as a theme.
 - b. Try being quiet for a minute and listen to the sounds of the woods. What to you hear? Birds? Frogs? The wind? Or maybe a waterfall?

Where can I purchase the Badge: <https://www.girlscoutshop.com/BROWNIE-HIKER-BADGE>