

# JUNIOR GARDENER BADGE - MEETING 1

**Badge Purpose:** When girls have earned this badge, they'll know how to help plants and flowers grow.

**Activity Plan Length:** 1.5 hours

Time	Activity	Materials Needed
15 minutes	Getting Started <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls recite the Girl Scout Promise + Law.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> (Optional) Girl Scout Promise and Law poster
20 minutes	Garden Tour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls visit a garden.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> (Optional) Flower field guide
10 minutes	Zen Gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls explore garden design.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Small stones <input type="checkbox"/> Sand or salt <input type="checkbox"/> Toothpicks <input type="checkbox"/> Zen garden containers
15 minutes	Snack Chat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls enjoy a healthy snack while discussing what they have learned.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Healthy snack <input type="checkbox"/> (Optional) Music player
15 minutes	Experimenting with Seeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girls experiment with seeds.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Egg cartons (one per six girls) <input type="checkbox"/> Sharp scissors <input type="checkbox"/> Soil <input type="checkbox"/> Seeds <input type="checkbox"/> Small cups
15 minutes	Wrapping Up	<input type="checkbox"/> (Optional) Make New Friends song lyrics poster

## Getting Started

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: (Optional) Girl Scout Promise and Law poster

Welcome everyone to the meeting, recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law.



## Activity #1: Garden Tour

Time: 20 minutes

Badge Connection: Step 1 — Visit a garden

Materials Needed: (Optional) Flower field guide

Prep Needed:

- Look at the neighborhood around your meeting spot to find gardens. Plan a walking route to see as many different gardens as you can in twenty minutes.
  - Ask parents if they have a flower field guide that the girls can borrow, or check one out from your local library.
1. Walk around the area near your meeting place and look at different types of gardens and flowers.
  2. Optional: Give the girls a flower ID guide and have them identify plants they really like. This can also be done once the girls return from their walk.
  3. On the tour, ask the girls questions about the gardens they see:
    - What kind of flowers do you see? Are there any you really like?
    - Have you seen these plants before or are they new to you?
    - Are there flowers and plants that are growing well? Are there any that aren't?
    - What kind of soil are the plants in? Does it look like the rest of the soil in the area or do you think the person who planted the garden added it? Is there mulch or any other ground covering?
    - How are the gardens laid out? Is there a pattern?
    - What about the gardens are the same? What is different?
    - Which garden is your favorite? Why?
    - Have you seen any animals in the gardens? Were they around any specific plants or flowers?

RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *The Audubon Society Pocket Guides: Familiar Flowers of North America*
- *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Wild Flowers and Trees of North America*
- *A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs: North-Eastern and North-Central United States and South-Eastern and South-Central Canada*

## Activity #2: Zen Gardens

Time: 10 minutes

Badge Connection: Step 2 — Explore garden design

Materials Needed: Small stones; sand or salt; toothpicks; Zen garden containers

Prep Needed:

- Stones for the girls' Zen gardens can be collected during Activity #1, brought from home by girls, or purchased at a craft supply store.
  - Some ideas for Zen garden containers: small plastic food takeout containers, disposable storage containers, Altoids tins, small cardboard boxes with the top taped shut and one wide side removed (if needed, cut the box sides off prior to the troop meeting).
1. Pass out one garden container to each girl. Explain they are going to make a special kind of garden to take home that doesn't have any plants. It's called a Zen garden and is used to promote peace and tranquility.
  2. Have each girl pour some sand or salt into her garden container. It should be about ½" to 1" deep, depending on the garden container.
  3. Have the girls choose rocks and arrange them in the container.
  4. Give each girl a toothpick and show the group how to "rake" their garden in small wave patterns. This action is naturally calming.



## Activity #3: Snack Chat

Time: 15 minutes

Badge Connection: Questions link to multiple badge steps

Materials Needed: Healthy snack; (optional) music player

1. While enjoying snack, here are some things for girls to talk about:
  - What kind of gardens did you see on the tour? Which was your favorite one?
  - What was your favorite plant? Why?
  - Does anyone have a garden at home? What kind of plants are in it?
  - Has anyone been to a botanical garden? Were the plants there the same or different than what we saw?
  - What is your favorite kind of flower?
2. (Optional) For the last few minutes of snack, put on relaxing music and let girls rake their Zen gardens.

## Activity #4: Experimenting with Seeds

Time: 15 minutes

Badge Connection: Step 4 – Experiment with seeds

Materials Needed: Egg cartons (one carton per six girls); sharp scissors; soil; seeds; small scoops

Prep Needed:

- Cut the tops off the egg cartons. Cut the bottom portion into sets of two cups.
1. Give each girl one section of egg carton and four seeds.
  2. Using the small scoops, have each girl put some soil into each hole in the egg carton. Then, she should gently put two seeds into the soil of each section.
  3. Explain to the girls that they are going to do an experiment at home and report back at their next meeting. When they go home, they're going to water both sections of their seeds, but they should give one side one teaspoon of water each day and the other one tablespoon to see what will happen.
  4. Ask the girls what they think will happen.

## Wrapping Up

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: (Optional) Make New Friends song lyrics poster

Close the meeting by singing Make New Friends and doing a friendship circle.

## More to Explore

- Field Trip Ideas:
  - Visit a local farmer to find out how they grow crops.
  - Visit a local park that has gardens.
  - Visit a botanical garden.
  - Visit a local nursery.
- Speaker Ideas:
  - Invite a gardener, landscaper, or nursery owner to talk about that they do.

