

New Leader Welcome

It is important to welcome new leaders as soon as possible, but after you have them all recruited (mid-November is usually a good time). A New Leader Tea or similar event is the perfect way to get them acquainted with the other leaders in a more personal setting. It also provides them with information they don't get in their training, and it helps set them up for success. So have fun with this and show these new leaders how rewarding it is to be part of your Girl Scout Community!

The Invite

Before you send the invitation, you need to decide on where and when:

- Consider hosting it an hour before your Service Unit Meeting. This works well because you already have the location, and the experienced leaders already have that night on their calendar. It is also a good segway into the new leaders' first Service Unit Meeting because they will feel more comfortable and welcomed when the meeting begins.
- You can have it at someone's house, a coffee shop, or a restaurant. Just make sure it can accommodate everyone and that you will be able to hear each other talk.
- You can even have it at a playground if they need to bring their kids. This is the last option because the leaders are often distracted, and it doesn't feel as personal or special.

Once you have chosen the where and when, you should decide who you are going to invite:

- New Leaders – Invite all leaders who are new this year, including those who aren't done with their training. If this is your first time hosting a New Leader Welcome, you might want to also invite any other leaders who could use this information session.
- Experienced Leaders – Invite positive, enthusiastic leaders who have led active troops to come and share their tips and tricks of the trade. Remember, these will be the first role models for your new leaders, so choose wisely!

Preparation and Set Up

1. Edit the Agenda to fit your needs. Make enough copies of the agenda and your choice of Investiture & Rededication Ceremony for everyone (experienced leaders too!). Then make some sample packets for reference with copies of the Troop Leader Learning Progression, Volunteer to Girl Ratio Chart, Troop Meeting Outline, Sample Troop Finance Report, Adult Volunteer Survey, 4Her Promise Flyer, and Progression charts. If you want to go the extra mile, you can make everyone folders with the Girl Scout Songbook and list of Troop Trips!
2. Set up ahead of time. Put tables in a circle so everyone can interact easily. Place sample packets in the centers of the tables and the agendas or folders at each seat. Plan to have experienced leaders mixed in with the new leaders.
3. Snacks make everything better! It's always nice to provide light refreshments – tea, hot cider, water, cookies, pumpkin bread, candy, etc. It's always fun to “break bread” with new friends!
4. As people come in, have them make nametags and have a seat. Have everyone introduce themselves before you begin – name, role title, troop number and level.
5. Investiture and Rededication Ceremony - if this New Leader Welcome is its own event, do the ceremony as a closing. If it is held before a Service Unit Meeting, do

the ceremony as the opening to the SU Meeting with all the other volunteers.
(Remember candles and a lighter!)

The Meeting

This is the easy and fun part! Make sure everyone has gotten some refreshments, have everyone introduce themselves, and then dive right in! Use the subjects listed in the agenda as a guide and go over each topic. Use the sample packets to supplement the information and work with your experienced leaders to give them advice. Keep it positive and remember that we are trying to help them get started and get excited about becoming leaders! Then close with the Investiture/ Rededication Ceremony!