

Girl Scouts of Southern Illinois
Choosing a Troop Crest

In the early days of Girl Scouting, troop crests were used to identify a troop. The rapid growth of the Girl Scout movement soon made numbering necessary, but crests were kept as a symbol of a troop's goal or main interest.

Today, troops should think carefully about the crest they choose. It should have a special meaning to them, one they can pass along to new members each year. The symbol can be used on a troop flag or to mark troop equipment. Every member should know what their crest is and what it means.

Crests are used by Girl Scout Junior, Cadette, Senior and Ambassador troops. A new crest is not chosen every year. Once chosen, crest is used for the life of a troop. If a girl enters an established troop then she takes the crest of that troop. If an entire troop bridges to the next level and forms a new troop they may either keep the crest from the previous level or select a new one. If part of a troop bridges and forms a new troop they too have the same option. The girls remaining behind should keep the old crest unless the focus of the troop has drastically changed from the time the original crest was selected.

There are 24 crests including the blank where troops may design their own symbol. Following is the meaning of the other 23.

Meaning of Troop Crests:

BLUEBIRD	traditional symbol of happiness and cheerfulness
CARDINAL	known for its song, good cheer and bright color; at home in the city or in the wild
CLOVER LEAF	traditional symbol of good luck; also the shape of the Girl Scout trefoil
DAFFODIL	spring flower, symbol of sunny personality
DOGWOOD	new life, rebirth; a spring flowering tree
FALLING STAR	symbol of good luck - makes wishes come true
FORGET-ME-NOT	long standing symbol of friendship and loyalty
HAWAIIAN LEI	symbol for circle of friendship
LIGHTNING	symbol of power in nature
LILY OF THE VALLEY	symbol of purity, in folklore, it is known as Fairy Bells
MORNING GLORY	symbol of awaking of new day and glory to God
MUSICAL NOTE	international symbol of music and song
PINE TREE	symbol for boldness, loyalty and stability
PURPLE PANSY	also known as "hearts-ease" stands for service and friendship
PURPLE VIOLET	symbolic today of a clean environment and a clean earth
RED ROSE	the "All American" flower, symbol of beauty and love
SAILBOAT	symbolizes freedom on the wind of an adventurous journey
SEASHELL	a promise of discovery - a gift from the sea
STAR OF BETHLEHEM	a guide or beacon that shows the way, a goal
UNICORN	symbol of magic, mystery, and purity
WATERFALL	symbol of the Royal House of Stuart - it stands for loyalty and challenge (It was also the crest of the first troop in Savannah, GA.)
WHITE ROSE	symbol of faith and loyalty, and the quest for truth
WILD ROSE	perseverance and adaptability even in the face of adversity, beauty in strength, and exploring possibilities

(This information comes from the GSUSA Message Board on AOL Scouting Forum.)