



Swaps - Keepsakes for Girl Scouts

Swaps, the tradition of Girl Scouts exchanging keepsakes, started long ago when Girl Scouts and Girl Guides first gathered for fun, song, and making new friends.

Swaps were widely exchanged at national Girl Scout Senior Roundups in the 1950's and 1960's.

In more recent years, some Girl Scouts describe the types of objects now preferred as swaps by calling them: Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere.

Swaps are still the perfect way for Girl Scouts to meet each other and promote friendship. Each one is a memory of a special event or Girl Scout Sister.

Swaps Basics

Swaps should:

- Tell something about the givers or their group. (Girls may include their address or email information so others can write to them.)
- Represent the givers' country, community, or Girl Scout council.

Tips for Swaps Givers

Girls should:

- Think about the kind of swap they would like to receive from someone else.
- Try not to spend a lot of money. Consider making something from donated or recycled material.
- Be creative, and take time to make hand-crafted swaps.
- Try to have one swap for each event participant and staff member.
- Plan ahead so there's time to make the swaps.
- Make swaps that can be worn, used, or displayed.
- Ask their group or service unit for help, if needed, in putting swaps together.
- Make swaps portable. Remember: Swaps must be carried or shipped ahead to the event, where other girls will be carrying them away.

What to Do with Swaps

Girls can:

- Include swaps with thank-you letters to sponsors and those who helped them go to a travel or destinations event.
- Make a display or scrapbook for travel night or troop visits.
- Keep swaps in a memory box or shadow box.
- Make a quilt, using swaps.
- Put pins and patches on a hat or jacket.

Swap Safety and Etiquette

Girls should:

- Never refuse to swap with another person.
- Swap face-to-face, especially if exchanging addresses or email information.
- Avoid using glass and sharp objects in swaps.
- Follow all Safety Activity Checkpoints guidelines.
- Avoid using food products, unless they are individually wrapped or sealed.