

Join in the fun with flexible guiding



Flexible guiding is a great way to make sure everyone can join in the fun and adventure of guiding, regardless of their circumstances.

Running meetings in a different way opens up the opportunity to recruit volunteers who are not able to make a regular commitment during the usual working week. It also creates opportunities to save time and money by sharing meetings and sharing the meeting space. The girls will benefit too. They may get the opportunity to meet other young members, see what the next section looks like or have adventures while they're not at school.

Here we share some top ideas for flexible guiding:

Not just Monday to Friday

Have you thought about meeting on a Saturday morning or a Sunday afternoon? Running a weekend unit can mean girls are far more relaxed and much less tired. Units can gain a whole Skills Builder in a day, or complete the necessary UMA minutes to contribute to their Theme Award. And meeting every other week means everyone has time for other commitments in between.

Fortnightly meetings

You could meet once every two weeks. This can suit older girls as it fits in around exam times, part time jobs and homework. Increasing the length of your meeting would mean the girls get the same amount of time as they would in a weekly unit.

Monthly meetings

Monthly meetings are often held on a weekend, where a whole day is set aside for the unit meeting. Having this longer time period can allow for girls to build stronger friendships and relationships with leaders and each other. It also gives more time to work on badges, challenges or themes that can be completed within the day.

Back-to-back meetings

A unit leadership team could run back-to-back meetings for one section. There's no extra planning, you can bulk buy resources and have at least one joint event per term, such as a party or a picnic. It gives helpers a choice of an early or late shift and can help ease a long waiting list.

Sharing the meeting space

Try overlapping Rainbow and Brownie, or Brownie and Guide meetings by 15–30 minutes, by doing this you can have one set of accounts and it can make the transition to the next section easier.

Or, if you have the space, you could run two units at the same time.

A shared meeting space can give the girls the opportunity to meet other young members, you can hold joint activities, you may be able to share the rent and there are more adults available for support.

Make the most of the holidays

Running sessions and events in the school holidays can give girls on the waiting list a taste of guiding. Or try running a unit during the school holidays and condensing the programme into three days to give girls some brilliant experiences.

Independent guiding

Independent guiding is an easy and flexible way for young and adult members to get involved who can't attend regular meetings. It can still be fun and full of the same great opportunities. Young members keep in touch through email, text, phone calls or post, and work on different activities and badges, sometimes meeting up at exciting events.

Visit <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/managing-your-team/flexible-volunteering/> for more information.