



# Go the Distance, A Boston Marathon Patch Program

A special thank you to Girl Scout Cadette Troop 73791 from Hopkinton, who created this patch program to inspire Girl Scouts to learn about what it takes to train for and complete a marathon or long distance run/walk.

## **Juniors:**

1. Complete DISCOVER section, then 2 other activities of your choice
2. Complete 3 activities in the CONNECT section
3. Complete 1 activity in the TAKE ACTION section

## **Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors:**

1. Complete all activities in the DISCOVER section
2. Complete 5 activities in the CONNECT section
3. Complete 2 activities in the TAKE ACTION section

## Step 1: Discover

### 1. **History:**

Learn about the history of Marathon – the place

2010 marked the 2,500 anniversary of the Battle of Marathon – a battle for freedom that secured democracy for Marathon, Greece – and the event that included the very first marathon. Find out information about the Battle of Marathon and how it relates to the modern marathon.

Learn about the history of Marathon – the race

The original 1896 Olympic Marathon distance was based on the Greek legend of Pheidippides. Read about this legend to find out:

- Who Pheidippides was and what his role was in the first marathon
- Where and why the first marathon took place
- How and when the distance has changed since then

What is similar between today's modern-day marathoning and the very first marathon? What is different? Share your thoughts with other Girl Scouts or friends.

### 2. **Learn about the Boston Marathon:**

The Boston Marathon is the world's oldest and most prestigious annual marathon and part of the World Marathon Majors. The Boston Athletic Association (BAA) is the

running club that organizes the Boston Marathon. Contact the BAA ([www.baa.org](http://www.baa.org)) to learn about their mission, history, and news.

### **3. Accessibility and Ability for Marathonng:**

It is determination first and then ability when it comes to completing any long term project. Where there is a will there is a way. The Boston Marathon was the first major marathon to accommodate athletes of different abilities. Research the different ability categories that athletes can enter for marathons (i.e. wheelchair division, visually impaired/blind division, and mobility impaired division etc).

### **4. Training:**

- **Running shoes:** Running shoes are the most important purchase to make to successfully train for a marathon. Research the three major considerations to take into account when looking to buy a running shoe: foot type, foot strike, and stride pattern. Next find a running shoe store or go online to check out the different options available for sale. Design your own running shoe and share your design with others.
- **Running clothes:** Wearing the right clothes for a marathon is not about style, it's about comfort and preventing injury. Understanding how shorts, shirts, pants, jackets, and socks play a role in training is very important. Considering the season is important too. Look in clothing catalogues, retail stores, or online to learn about the different styles and fabrics used for running clothing. Try running in different clothes that you already own to see which clothes help you speed up and which clothes slow you down. Design your own running outfit. Remember runners go for comfort and movement but don't be afraid to add some creativity. Describe what fabric(s), colors, and designs you would use. Create a design poster to display your vision.
- **Nutrition:** Did you know that the average woman burns 2,880 calories while running a marathon? The foods you eat play a big role in how your body performs. Imagine you were preparing to run a 4 hour marathon. What types of foods will improve your performance? What foods should you limit while training?
- **Conditioning:** There is more to training than just running. Strength training and conditioning are important components for preparation and injury prevention. Chiropractic medicine, physical therapy, and massage are often services that athletes need to heal from an injury. Pick 2 of these topics to learn about. If you can, interview a strength and conditioning coach, a chiropractor, physical therapist, or massage therapist about their careers.
- **Sportsmanship:** Sportsmanship is vital for any sport. The rules for international and national running competitions are explained and enforced by the United States Track and Field (USATF) organization and the International Association of Athletes Federation (IAAF). Learn about the rules of marathon racing and research any cases of cheating or exemplary sportsmanship demonstrated by athletes.

## Step 2: Connect

1. The story of Pheidippides is part of the Battle of Marathon lore. Learn his story and find a creative way (e.g. a skit or play, poster or song) to share with others in your troop or community.
2. Choose to learn about one of the following unusual marathons: Midnight Sun Marathon, Polar Icecap Marathon, Great Tibetan Marathon, Great Wall Marathon. How does training for one of these races differ from training for other marathons?
3. Teach a younger troop or person about something you learned in the DISCOVER section of this patch.
4. To find out why people run marathons, interview a marathon runner or track team member you know or research a famous marathon runner to find out what motivates them to run. Why did they choose this sport? Some famous Boston Marathon winners to consider researching include: Johnny Kelly, Spyridon Kyriakides, Bill Rogers, and Joan Benoit.

Once you have learned what inspires people to run, consider whether you would be interested in training for and running a marathon. If so, look into how to register for and train for a long distance running event such as a marathon, half-marathon, 10K, or 5K race/event.

5. The Boston Marathon route begins in Hopkinton and travels through Ashland, Framingham, Natick, Wellesley, Newton, and Brookline before it ends in Boston. Runners face different terrains and view unique landmarks along their run. Create a map or maze to show what the 26.2 mile Boston Marathon route looks like. If one of the other four World Major Marathons (London, New York, Berlin, and Chicago) is more interesting to you, look into what that race route includes and create a map or maze of that.
6. Hopkinton, Massachusetts, the starting place of the Boston Marathon, started a sister-city relationship with Marathon, Greece. Find out what that means and if your city or town has a sister-city. If you do have a sister-city, make a connection with Girl Scouts in that community. If your town doesn't currently have one, look into starting one

## Step 3: Take Action

1. Volunteer to help organizers of a local marathon, half-marathon, 10K, or 5K charity road race. There are a number of good causes like cystic fibrosis, AIDS, or breast cancer research. Remember that Girl Scouts cannot raise monies for charities but they can volunteer in a variety of other very important ways like:
  - a. Creating motivational, colorful messages of encouragement for the runners/walkers to hang or hold along the race/walk route.
  - b. During the event, volunteers are often needed to help set up, participate in opening and closing ceremonies, to be at cheering and water stations along the route, and to help with clean-up.

Remember to review *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for specific volunteer guidelines.

2. Train for and participate in a local marathon, half marathon, 10K, or 5K walk or run. You could choose a race or a charity walk or run. Charity events raise money for a good cause by capitalizing on people's desire to help as well as get in shape. There are a number of good causes like cystic fibrosis, AIDS, or breast cancer research. Remember that Girl Scouts cannot raise monies for charities, so if you choose to, you may run as an individual but not as a member of Girl Scouts. Participating in events like these have health and wellness benefits as well as achieving short and long term fitness and planning goals.
3. It is important for athletes to eat nutritious meals as they train. Create a recipe for a nutritious meal or snack that an athlete might include in their training diet. Prepare the recipe and serve the meal or snack to your troop or friends. Make plans to share what you have learned about nutrition and recipe planning. Examples of how to share your recipes could include:
  - a. Make a video of you and your friends preparing nutritious meals/snacks and use the video as part of a health and nutrition workshop that you present to younger Girl Scouts. Consider donating your video to the local library or community center.
  - b. Partner with other Girl Scout troops, a local running club, or youth sports organization to create a cookbook full of nutritious recipes that promote healthy eating.
  - c. Work with your local cable access provider to create a healthy recipe cooking show to demonstrate how to plan and prepare nutritious meals/snacks.
  - d. Make and serve nutritious snacks at a race. Make sure you have permission from the race organizers and local health department.
4. Design an individual workout routine. Work on setting a fitness goal and complete your workout routine for a week or two. Record your progress. Make plans to share your workout routine with others. Examples of how to share your routine could include:
  - a. Make a video of you working through your routine and share it with your friends or fellow Girl Scouts.
  - b. Encourage them to develop their own workout routines and record their progress. Once you have several workout routines tested by your troop or friends, consider adding those routines to the video. Use the video as part of a fitness workshop that you present to younger Girl Scouts or senior citizens. Consider donating your video to the local library or community center.
  - c. Partner with other Girl Scout troops, a local running club, or youth sports organization to create a video that promotes fitness conditioning.
  - d. Work with your local cable access to create a fitness training cable show.

Congratulations you've now completed your Go the Distance patch.

Patches are available for purchase in [GSEMA shop](#).