

Planning Ceremonies

Ceremonies are an important part of the Guiding experience. Memories of a special ceremony can last for years. Careful planning and preparation are essential ingredients in the creation of these memorable experiences. The following items should be considered when planning ceremonies.

- 1. Involve the girls in the planning.** Depending on the age and experience of the girls, they can help with the selection of a theme (if you want to use one), creating props and decorations, greeting guests, playing a role in the ceremony, or make other contributions.
- 2. Decide who to invite, and when you want them to arrive.** Send invitations or notes to invited guests to make sure they have all the information they need.
- 3. Keep the “pomp & circumstance” to a minimum.** Girls and adults both become fidgety when they have to sit or stand still through a lot of talking. Involve as many people as possible in the actual ceremony, without taking the focus away from those whose special night it is. If you have a large number of people doing the same thing (such as brownies making their promise), consider having them do it in groups of two or three to keep things moving.
- 4. Maintain the focus of the evening.** If you have planned a ceremony to celebrate something, don't detract from it by including things that can be done at another time.
- 5. Keep the ceremony age-appropriate.** Candle light ceremonies are beautiful, but might not be safe with 15 active Sparks. If the girls can't understand the meaning of the ceremony (poems, etc.), they will be bored and the experience will not be memorable for them.
- 6. Practice ahead of time!** Girls and leaders alike can be nervous about performing or speaking in front of other people (even members of your Unit). Do a full run through of your ceremony the week before, so everyone knows where to stand and what to say. This will reduce nervousness during the actual ceremony, and allow you to adjust for unforeseen difficulties.

Ideas for Enrollment Ceremonies