



Girl Scouts Give Back: National Civic Action – Promote the Vote

Instructions to Promote the Vote

Many people in your community may not know how or when to register to vote—and through Promote the Vote, you'll play an important role in helping them do just that! Use the following steps and outreach templates to encourage your friends and family to promote the vote!

Promote the Vote is a nonpolitical and nonpartisan initiative designed to increase civic participation. As tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organizations, GSUSA and Girl Scout councils cannot take sides in elections or support or oppose any political candidates. Promote the Vote materials should not be used to target a particular political party or individuals on any one side of an issue. The focus should be on encouraging everyone, regardless of political party, affiliation, or beliefs, to participate in the democratic process.

Online Resources

A number of websites make it easy to find information on voting, registration, and more. We recommend using one of these to get started:

- [Vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov)
- [Vote411.org](https://www.vote411.org)
- [NonprofitVOTE.org/voting-in-your-state](https://www.nonprofitvoteproject.org/voting-in-your-state)
- [VoteAmerica.com](https://www.voteamerica.com)

Once you've explored these sites, decide which one you'll share with friends and family to help them find their information.

How to Promote the Vote

1. Register to vote.

You must be at least 18 years old to vote, but you have to register first.

If you are at least 16 years old, check your state's age requirements for voting registration. Some states allow residents who are 16 or older to "pre-register." If you pre-register, you're

automatically registered to vote once you turn 18.

- Register to vote at [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov). Depending on your state's voter registration rules, this site can help you:
 - Register online. This is available for 39 states, plus the District of Columbia.
 - Download the [National Mail Voter Registration Form](#). You can fill it out online and print the completed form, or print the blank form and complete by hand. Remember to sign the form before mailing it to the location listed for your state.
 - Find guidance for states and territories with different registration procedures.
 - On [USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov), you'll find instructions on how to register in person as well as instructions for military and overseas voters.

2. Make a plan to vote.

Did you know that people are more likely to vote if they've made a plan? That could mean voting in person on Election Day, during an early voting period, or by mail-in or absentee ballot. You can help someone with their plan by sharing important details like:

- How to find their polling place.
- State-specific guidelines. These might include options that are being made available as a result of COVID-19. Therefore, they might be new to even experienced voters. These might offer info about:
 - How to vote early in your state.
 - How to request an absentee/mail-in ballot.
 - Absentee ballots are available for voters who are unable to vote in person on Election Day due to certain circumstances. Some states allow voters to vote by mail for any reason. Share a trusted website with family and friends so they can find their state's guidelines and deadlines regarding absentee/mail-in ballots.

Remember: not everyone has consistent access to the internet and technology. Make sure you have a phone number people can call to get the information they need. [Here](#) you can find a phone number to each state's election commission office.

- **Check deadlines early.** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, states' rules and deadlines for absentee or early in-person voting may change this year. Encourage your family and friends to check their state's deadlines well before November 3.

3. How to spread the word.

Use one (or more!) of these ideas to inspire friends and family to register and make a plan to vote:

- Write a [letter](#) or send an [email](#)—send a personalized message to friends and family, encouraging them to vote. Tell them why voting is important to you and provide the steps they need to take to register and make their plan to vote.
- [Phone bank](#)—call or text your friends and family and ask them if they're registered to vote and have a plan. If not, tell them why you think it's important to vote and share how they can register and make their plan to vote. (You can even rally your troop and host a Zoom phone bank party!)
- Post on [social media](#)—write a post about why it's important to vote, and provide helpful links for people to register and make their plan to vote. You can post from your personal account, or if you don't have your own, ask your parent or caregiver if you can post on theirs.
- Make a yard sign—keep it simple and straightforward! Make a sign asking your neighbors to vote.
- Host a virtual event (via Facebook Live or Instagram), or create a video to share why voting is important to you and encourage others to vote.

Check out the templates for letters, emails, phone calls and social media posts on the following pages to help you get started!

Don't forget to include the where, when, and how using the instructions and links above.

Letter Template

Tips for Sending Letters:

Write it by hand. Giving your message a personal touch can show your reader how much you care. Plus, it's your unique stamp! No one has your handwriting but you.

Make it neat. Make sure your recipient can read the wonderful words you write to them!

Make it personal. Let your creative side shine with bright colors, glitter pens, drawings, and other personal touches!

Don't write the date. While we often want to mark the date that we write letters, it may take longer than normal for this letter to be delivered. Leaving off the date will help your reader feel special and remembered even if they receive it late.

What to Write to Help People Register to Vote:

Dear [Friend/Loved One/Community Member],

I hope you and your family are safe and well.

Election Day is coming up on November 3, 2020. As I learned in Girl Scouts, voting is how we can make a positive change in our communities.

Since I am still too young to vote, will you promise to vote because of me?

I'm asking you to register and make a plan to vote because . . .

- you represent me/our family
- I learn by your example
- voting is our most basic civic duty that generations before us fought for; I believe it's important not to take it for granted
- it's important to participate in elections and raise our voices for causes we care about
- I believe that every vote matters

You can prepare for Election Day in two easy steps:

First, make sure you're registered to vote! You can check your registration status online at [website of your choice].

Second, make a plan! Because of coronavirus, you may be able to vote early or by mail. Check with your local election office to find out your options. If you choose to vote in person, be sure to find your polling place.

Please tell me your plan once you've made it. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,
[Your name]

Email Template

Subject Line: Register to vote and make a plan for Election Day!

Hi [Recipient name],

I hope you and your family are safe and well.

Election Day is coming up on November 3, 2020. As I learned in Girl Scouts, voting is how we can make a positive change in our communities.

Since I am still too young to vote, will you promise to vote because of me?
I'm asking you to register and make a plan to vote because . . .

- you represent me/our family
- I learn by your example
- voting is our most basic civic duty that generations before us fought for; I believe it is important to not take it for granted
- it's important to participate in elections and raise our voices for causes we care about
- I believe that every vote matters

The best way to ensure you vote is to make a plan. First, make sure you're registered to vote! If you aren't sure, you can check your registration status [\[link of your choice\]](#). If you are not registered, you can find out how [\[link of your choice\]](#).

Once you've registered, it's time to decide how you want to vote! If you want to vote in person, you can find your [polling place](#). However, due to COVID-19, many states are allowing mail-in voting. Find your state-specific guidelines [\[link of your choice\]](#). And if you decide vote by mail, make sure you leave 14 days to go through the postal service.

NOTE: if you want to help them make a plan, include information on how to request an absentee ballot or mail-in ballot. If you know where they are registered, you can find the state-specific information they need using one of our recommended websites and provide it to them. For example:

Did you know? Any voter in [your state] can vote by mail. There are four ways to request a ballot by mail:

1. by using [state's election website or link of your choice]
2. by calling your county recorder; you can find the number for your local office [include number or link]
3. by submitting a request by mail; complete [request form link] and mail it to your county recorder
4. by emailing your county recorder and request a mail-in ballot; find their contact info [website]

As I learned in Girl Scouts, voting is how we make positive change in our communities. Please let me know if I can answer any questions to help you make your plan to vote.

Sincerely,
[Your name]

Phone Script

Hi there! This is [YOUR NAME]. How are you doing today?

I'm calling as part of a project with my Girl Scout troop. We're reaching out to people in our community to encourage them to register to vote and make a plan for Election Day—which is coming up on November 3, 2020.

As I learned in Girl Scouts, voting is how we make positive change in our communities. Since I am still too young to vote, will you promise to vote because of me?

I'm asking you to register and make a plan to vote because . . .

- you represent me/our family
- I learn by your example
- voting is our most basic civic duty that generations before us fought for; I believe it's important not to take it for granted
- it's important to participate in elections and raise our voices for causes we care about
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Do you know if you're registered to vote at your current address?

IF NOT/DON'T KNOW: no worries—you can check your registration status at [website of your choice] and register to vote. The deadline is [insert your state's deadline].

IF YES: awesome! If you want to double-check, here's where you can go: [website of your choice].

IF NO: not a problem—it's really easy. You can visit [website of your choice] to find out how to register in your state.

I am so excited that you're going to be registered and ready to vote! Can I also help you make a plan to cast your ballot?

Due to COVID-19, many states are allowing early mail-in voting (and mailing can take up to 14 days!). You can find out about your state-specific guidelines at [website of your choice], the same link I shared earlier. Make sure you request a ballot in time!

If you'd like to vote in person, you can find your polling location at [link of your choice] or by calling [insert number to election day contact].

Thank you for voting! Let me know if you have any questions!

Text Template

Hi there, 🙌 it's [your name]! My Girl Scout troop is helping people register to vote and make a plan for Election Day on November 3! Are you registered to vote at your current address? 📦 Even if you are, it's always good to double-check—here's where you can find that info: [website of your choice]. Once you're registered, you can find your polling location here: [website of your choice]. You may also be able to vote by mail or absentee ballot. You can find all of that information here: [website of your choice]. Let me know if you need any help! And thank you for voting!

Sample Social Media

Voter Registration Posts

Voting is our civic duty! If you're 18 or older, make sure you're registered to vote and make a plan for Election Day! Find out how to register and if you can vote by mail here: [link of your choice].

Just pre-registered to vote! All you have to do is fill out a simple form!

Be sure to vote on November 3! Register to vote and request a mail-in ballot by visiting [link of your choice].

Did you know the deadline to register to vote in [state] is [date]? Make sure you're registered by going to [link of your choice]. Then find out if you can vote by mail here: [link of your choice]!

Why #vote? Because it's your chance to have your voice heard! Make sure you're registered to vote then make a plan for Election Day! Find out if your state allows mail-in voting here: [link of your choice]. Or find your polling place here: [link of your choice].

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