



GIRL GUIDES
AUSTRALIA
VICTORIA

Girl Guides Australia Handbooks

Leaders Frequently Asked Questions

What are Handbooks?

A series of skills based books which allow Youth, Adults and families to learn about Guiding. The Youth Handbooks are progressive and the skills develop as the Guide does, however they can also operate in isolation from each other. They provide a record of each Guide's experiences as she writes her plans, ideas, reflections and records in there. They are an essential tool for every Guide to make the most of the Australian Guide Program (AGP).



The Handbooks are a great addition to add to your 'starter pack' for new Guides (along with their polo shirt, sash, Look Wide etc.) as the Handbooks help Guides and parents understand what Guiding offers, and will help the Guide with her Pre-Promise journey.

What are the developmental stages?

Girl Guides Australia formally recognised and incorporated the five Developmental Stages into the AGP in 2008. Girl Guides Australia bases the programming, resources and some activities around five developmental stages. These stages are founded on educational principles and are recognised as: 5-7, 7-9, 9-12, 12-14 and 14-17 years. The content of the Guide Handbooks reflect these developmental stages.

Which handbook do I suggest each Guide buys?

Each Guide should be advised to buy the Handbook for her developmental stage. If she is 7, 9, 12 or 14 she should buy the book for the age range she is entering.

Scenario: If a Guide is 11 and 5 months, should she buy Handbook 3 (9-12), or Handbook 4 (12-14)? (The parent may be concerned about her outgrowing the book in 7 months) Answer: She should buy Handbook 3 (9-12) since it provides age appropriate content & Discover a Challenge badges. She will not outgrow that book until she is 13 and at that stage can have the excitement of a new Handbook!

Should all the Guides in my Unit be using the same Handbook?

No, they should each have a Handbook for their age. There are sections of content that are repeated in each book and other sections that are different. Having Guides with different Handbooks will allow them to share the skills and ideas they've gained from their Handbook with others who may have a different one.

What are Discover-a-Challenge badges?

The Discover-a-Challenge badges are a new series of 10 skills based badges centred around the four elements of the AGP – Physical, Practical, People & Self and developed directly in line with the developmental milestones. They provide an opportunity for Guides to progressively challenge themselves.

There are ten levels of challenges, which are included in the back of the Handbook, that corresponds to their starting age. The badges have been named after Australian gemstones: Turquoise, Topaz, Amethyst, Garnet, Agate, Zircon, Jade, Sapphire, Diamond and Black Opal. There are minimum ages to start each level, but Guides don't need to start at the first level (Turquoise).

Discover a Challenge badges are worn on the sash, next to the Action Guide (Only one to be worn – the highest level achieved).

Should our Unit have a set of Handbooks in the cupboard or should the Guides be encouraged to buy their own?

Each Guide should be encouraged to buy her own Handbook as they are designed as a journal to be written in and used for planning, drawing and writing activities, reflections and badge work.

It is encouraged that Groups have a full set of Handbooks available - both to help girls and parents see the progression through Guiding, and because Handbooks that your girls do not have may contain information or skills relevant to your meeting.

It may also be helpful to have a few spare copies of your Unit's relevant Handbook(s) for Guides to refer to if they forget to bring theirs to a particular meeting and/or to sell to new Guides to help them and their family understand all that Guiding offers early in their time at Guides.

How can I use the Handbooks within my Unit meeting?

The Handbooks are full of skills and information which we teach at Guides, therefore (via the Handbook) this information will be readily available for use during the Unit meeting. The Handbooks also provide an excellent guide to developmentally appropriate life skills (through the Discover-a-Challenge badges) that you may also choose to integrate into your Unit meetings. From Handbook 3 onwards the Handbooks also provide the information girls need to confidently run their own Patrol System with minimal Leader direction.

Is the Leader's Handbook linked to the youth Handbooks?

The Leader's Handbook and youth Handbooks are written to work hand in hand. While the youth Handbooks guide each girl through their Guiding journey, the Leader's Handbook assists Leaders to deliver the best quality Guiding program for their girls. All Handbooks are designed around girls' developmental stages and milestones.

What are the advantages to parents of having Handbooks?

The Guide Handbooks provide parents with a simple and accessible explanation of what Guiding is and gives them an insight into the opportunities Guiding can offer their daughter. They provide each Guide with a journal to record her Guiding journey which will more clearly demonstrate to her and her family the skills she is gaining through Guides. The Handbooks also allow parents to better support their daughter to develop her skills in a range of areas from making bedrolls prior to camp to completing Discover-a-Challenge badge challenges.

Which book/s should I buy for my Junior Leader & Guide Helper (youth helpers)?

Junior Leaders are youth members of Guiding and as such they should have the youth Handbook for their age as it contains an age appropriate leadership skill sections – including information about being a Guide Helper and a Junior Leader. It may also be beneficial for them to have a copy of the Handbook/s of the ages of girls they assist with so they can better understand that age group and help run activities that cater for them. From time to time they may need access to a Leader Handbook to assist them in understanding more about a particular area of the AGP – however there is no need for them to own one.

Should Discover-a-Challenge badges be done at Guides, home or both?

Due to the skills based nature of the badges, many of the skills required to complete them will be covered at Guides. In order to be challenged and complete all components of each badge Guides may need to work on these at home, however, as with all Guide activities, these should not be seen as 'homework', but rather an added extra if she so chooses.

Where can I find out more about the Handbooks?

By reading the Handbooks! They are very comprehensive documents and contain answers to many Guiding questions. If you still cannot find the answer, email us at program@guidesvic.org.au