



# Digital Cookie Consumer FAQs

## ABOUT DIGITAL COOKIE

### **What is the Digital Cookie platform and how does it work?**

The iconic Girl Scout Cookie Program you know and love is going beyond the booth and allowing girls to sell in their native digital space by offering them new channels to enhance their cookie sale and new ways to learn twenty-first-century business skills. Over 1 million excited Girl Scouts are ready to take their cookie sale to a whole new level!

In true Girl Scout style, the girls initiate the cookie sale. With the Digital Cookie platform, customers will be able to buy Girl Scout Cookies through one of two digital sales platforms, depending on their area. Some girls will invite friends and family to visit their personalized cookie website, or take in person orders using a mobile app. With these options, customers can place their orders online, pick their delivery method, and pay by credit card. Other girls will take in-person orders using a mobile app that allows for credit card processing, direct shipping, and the ability to invite friends and family by email to purchase cookies online.

### **Will all Girl Scouts be selling cookies digitally?**

We are working to make the Digital Cookie platform available to all girls in all areas in the next few years. Check participating Girl Scout council areas [here](#).

### **Are you taking door-to-door sales away?**

Door-to-door sales are here to stay! Far from replacing the traditional cookie program, the Digital Cookie platform expands and enhances a girl's experience by giving her a fun new way to learn twenty-first-century skills while providing another way to sell cookies. So this cookie season, depending on your location, a Girl Scout could approach you through a door-to-door sale, at a booth sale with a digital device, or through an email invitation to visit her Digital Cookie website.

### **Why isn't the Digital Cookie platform available in my area?**

Decisions about Girl Scout Cookie Program operations are made locally by councils. The Digital Cookie platform might not be offered in your council just yet, but we are working in collaboration with our local councils nationwide to make the Digital Cookie platform available.

### **Where does the money from the Digital Cookie platform sales go?**

As with the traditional Girl Scout Cookie Program, 100 percent of the net revenue earned from cookie sales will remain with the Girl Scout council that sponsors the sale. Girls decide how to spend their troop cookie money and reinvest it in their communities through "Take Action" projects and learning experiences, including travel. As a result, customers who purchase Girl Scout Cookies are not only getting a delicious treat—they are also making an important investment in their communities.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Who bakes Girl Scout Cookies?**

Currently, two commercial bakers are licensed by Girl Scouts of the USA to produce Girl Scout Cookies: ABC Bakers and Little Brownie Bakers.

### **How can I be sure my Girl Scout Cookies were baked for the current season?**

Every Girl Scout Cookie package is stamped with a seasonal "Use or freeze by" date. That date corresponds with the end of each cookie season. This means that Girl Scout Cookies with a date of September 2016 would be baked for the 2015–16 season.

### **How do I determine which licensed baker supplies Girl Scout Cookies to my council?**

Girl Scout councils contract with one of two licensed bakers, whose recipes and ingredients may differ slightly. Contact your [local council](#) to find out which baker they partner with.

### **Who selects Girl Scout Cookie varieties?**

The licensed bakers may offer up to eight varieties of Girl Scout Cookies. Only three types are mandatory: Thin Mints, Peanut Butter Sandwich/Do-Si-Dos, and Shortbread/Trefoils. Girl Scouts of the USA reviews and approves the varieties proposed by the bakers. Any of the five optional cookies can be changed every year.

### **Why are my Caramel deLites now called Samoas? Why are my Trefoils now called Shortbreads?**

Each Girl Scout council chooses a licensed baker, either ABC Bakers or Little Brownie Bakers. Each baker uses different names for some cookies. So a cookie may be called Trefoils when baked by one baker and Shortbread when baked by the other. The two cookies look and taste similar, but the name of the cookie and the recipe are dependent on the baker. The exception is Thin Mints, which is the name both bakers use to describe their chocolate-mint cookie.

### **Is my Girl Scout Cookie box/package recyclable?**

Girl Scout Cookie packages are intended to be recyclable, but whether the packaging can be accepted depends on your local recycling service. ABC Bakers produces several Girl Scout Cookie varieties that are available in soft-pack only, and without a carton. The film overwrap is similar to the protective wrapping found inside all cookie varieties, and is recyclable. Film overwrap packaging is currently the "greenest" packaging available for Girl Scout Cookies, eliminating thousands of pounds of paperboard from the waste stream.

## **How do I find out the ingredients, nutritional value, and allergen information for Girl Scout Cookies?**

Cookie ingredients, nutritional information, and allergen information are clearly listed on both the cookie package and the cookie order form. This information can also be found in the [Meet the Cookies](#) section of the Girl Scout website. With special regard for allergen concerns, our bakers bake Girl Scout Cookies in state-of-the-art facilities, and consumers can be assured that every required safety protocol is adhered to in order to prevent cross-contamination of ingredients. Consumers with additional questions can find out more by visiting the baker websites: [www.abcsmartcookies.com](http://www.abcsmartcookies.com) or [www.littlebrownie.com](http://www.littlebrownie.com). To find out which licensed baker supplies your council with cookies, please [contact your council](#). Ingredients may differ slightly by baker.

## **Why is my local Girl Scout council only selling six varieties of cookies, while the neighboring council is selling eight?**

Half of the Girl Scout councils served by Little Brownie Bakers are taking part in the "Super Six" initiative and selling the core five favorite Girl Scout Cookies (Thin Mints, Samoas, Tagalongs, Do-si-dos, and Trefoils), plus Savannah Smiles. Research shows that these core varieties appeal to the vast majority of customers. This initiative has been very successful and well received by both Girl Scout members and cookie consumers. The primary benefits to the participating Girl Scout councils are better management of cookie inventory and a streamlining of the sales process for girls and volunteers.

## **Where can I find recipes using Girl Scout Cookies?**

Check out our new [recipe page](#) featuring great recipes—all made with Girl Scout Cookies as an ingredient! Also visit [www.pinterest.com/GSUSA](http://www.pinterest.com/GSUSA) to find and share recipes.

## **INGREDIENTS**

### **Are all Girl Scout Cookies kosher?**

Yes. All Girl Scout Cookies are kosher.

### **Do Girl Scout Cookies have trans fats?**

Girl Scouts of the USA is proud that all Girl Scout Cookies have "zero trans fat per serving," with the same great taste that has made them one of America's favorite treats over the years. All varieties contain less than 0.5 grams trans fat per serving, which meets the FDA guidelines for the "zero trans fat" designation. Selected varieties can claim 100 percent trans fat-free status, meaning there's not a speck of trans fat in the whole package.

### **Is high fructose corn syrup used in Girl Scout Cookies?**

Our licensed bakers use a variety of ingredients in the production of Girl Scout Cookies, including, in some cookies, high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). Currently, Little Brownie Bakers does not use HFCS in any of its cookie varieties. We trust our bakers, who are industry leaders, to develop recipes using ingredients that will produce the best-tasting and highest-quality cookies while simultaneously addressing industry trends, scientific developments, and of course, consumer preference.

### **Why is palm oil used in Girl Scout Cookies?**

Palm oil is an ingredient found in the majority of baked snacks sold in the United States. GSUSA's licensed bakers informed us it is necessary to use palm oil in our cookies for the sake of shelf life, to offer customers the highest quality in taste and appearance, and to serve as an alternative to trans fats. One of the primary goals of our Girl Scout Cookie bakers is to create the best-tasting cookies possible using the healthiest ingredients available.

The world's food supply is intricately tied to the use of palm oil, so we believe promoting sustainable manufacturing principles is the most responsible approach for Girl Scouts and Girl Scout Cookie development. At Girl Scouts, we have an opportunity to use our strong voice to bring about positive change on this very important issue, and our bakers have made the following commitments:

- GSUSA and our licensed bakers are members of—and our bakers source palm oil exclusively from—the [Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil \(RSPO\)](#), an organization of growers, buyers, manufacturers, conservationists, and other interested parties striving to develop and follow best practices to ensure sustainability.
- Since 2012, our licensed bakers have made a substantial investment in [GreenPalm](#) certificates. Certificates purchased by our bakers covered 100 percent of the palm oil used in Girl Scout Cookies. These certificates offer a premium price to palm oil producers operating in accordance with the guidelines for social, environmental, and economic responsibility set by the RSPO.
- Our licensed bakers joined other industry leaders in making a pledge to move to a segregated, certified-sustainable palm oil source, based on market availability.
- Our licensed bakers are committed to using as little palm oil as possible in Girl Scout Cookies and have committed to continuing to research viable alternatives. Please visit [www.littlebrownie.com](http://www.littlebrownie.com) or [www.abcsmartcookies.com](http://www.abcsmartcookies.com) to read more about our bakers' positions on palm oil.

American palm oil use represents approximately 2 percent of total global consumption, and palm oil used in Girl Scout Cookies represents a tiny fraction of that. Thanks to the encouragement of and partnership with Girl Scout members, we and our bakers have realized the power of the Girl Scout brand to make a positive difference in the move toward sustainably produced palm oil.

### **What does the GreenPalm logo on the side of my Girl Scout Cookie package represent?**

The [GreenPalm](#) logo on Girl Scout Cookie packages signifies a commitment by our licensed bakers to developing a worldwide supply of sustainable palm oil. (Unfortunately, we have not been able to assure a fully sustainable supply in the quantities required by our bakers.) GreenPalm investment supports farmers' initiatives to become sustainable, and the presence of the logo on cookie packages ensures consumers and Girl Scout members that our bakers have purchased enough GreenPalm “certificates” to offset 100 percent of the palm oil used in Girl Scout Cookies. Visit [www.greenpalm.org](http://www.greenpalm.org) to learn more about these certificates.

### **What is that RSPO logo on the side of the Girl Scout Cookie package?**

One of our bakers uses an RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil) logo on its cookie packages. This is the result of this baker shifting to the Mass Balance System, a progression from the previous GreenPalm system. The RSPO logo signifies that this baker has “contributed to the production of certified sustainable palm oil.” In order to use that logo, this bakery was audited by the RSPO to ensure its compliance with the RSPO criteria. Visit [www.greenpalm.org](http://www.greenpalm.org) to learn more about RSPO.

### **Are Girl Scout Cookies "sustainable"?**

Yes. Sustainability refers to social, environmental, and economic factors that an organization addresses to provide value not only to consumers, but also to the world. Girl Scouts is very proud of the initiatives our licensed bakers report on annually in terms of their corporate sustainability and social responsibility. The Girl Scout commitment to "make the world a better place" is a tenet we and our licensed bakers take very seriously.

## **Is the cocoa used in Girl Scout Cookies "conflict free"?**

Our licensed cookie bakers are actively working with their suppliers to ensure that the cocoa used in Girl Scout Cookies is responsibly sourced. Our bakers are required to provide assurance that cocoa sourced for Girl Scout Cookies is child- and slave-labor free. In order to provide this assurance, our bakers require compliance from their cocoa suppliers through strict supplier codes of conduct. Our bakers are also working with third-party organizations focused on creating a sustainable marketplace that rewards cocoa farmers who prohibit unethical practices. GSUSA understands that, in spite of the best efforts of our manufacturers and the ongoing work by their suppliers, we also have a responsibility to provide leadership on the topic of slave labor and human trafficking. We are committed to using our powerful voice and brand wherever possible to affect change in this area.

## **Are there GMOs in Girl Scout Cookies?**

Girl Scouts of the USA listens to our customers and we work with our trusted bakers, who are industry leaders, to develop recipes using ingredients that will produce the best-tasting and highest-quality cookies, while simultaneously addressing industry trends, scientific trends, and of course, consumer preference. As an organization, we continue to defer to required federal guidelines as they relate to our products. At the current time, there are genetically modified agricultural crops (GMOs) in Girl Scout Cookies. Our bakers determine whether to use GMOs in Girl Scout Cookies based on a range of market-related factors and depending on the specific cookie recipe. Girl Scouts recognizes that many people have concerns regarding GMO ingredients, and we monitor member and consumer opinion on this matter. It is important to note that there is worldwide scientific support for the safety of currently commercialized ingredients derived from genetically modified agricultural crops. The World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, and the American Medical Association all share this assessment. In addition, in the future, GMOs may offer a way to help feed an ever-increasing world population.

## **Should people with diabetes buy or consume Girl Scout Cookies?**

According to the American Dietetic Association, most people with diabetes can enjoy sugars in moderation as part of their meal plans, depending on blood glucose control and body weight. We encourage consumers concerned about sugar intake to discuss dietary options with a doctor or registered dietitian. For consumer convenience, each of our licensed bakers lists dietary exchanges on the cookie package and the cookie order form, so people with diabetes and parents of children with diabetes can make informed choices. The amount of sugar and carbohydrates is also listed on the box. Dietary exchanges should always be consulted, even if a product is labeled "sugarless." With regard to labeling, terms such as "sugar free" or "sugarless" are not synonymous with "diabetic-friendly," owing to the carbohydrates.

## **Don't Girl Scout Cookies contribute to childhood obesity?**

Girl Scout Cookies are sold for a short time every year and are considered a snack or special treat. As with all treats, they should be enjoyed in moderation. Starting with our youngest members, the Girl Scout organization promotes a healthy lifestyle for girls, which includes a well-balanced diet and plenty of exercise. Our health and fitness programs encourage girls to adopt healthy fitness and eating habits early in life and to continue them into adulthood. Girls are also taught to consider ingredients and portion size when choosing snacks. The Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI) released a research review entitled *Weighing In: Helping Girls Be Healthy Today, Healthy Tomorrow* that addresses various underlying causes that have led to the epidemic of obesity and of being overweight among children and adolescents, and the lifestyles, culture, and behaviors that have contributed to this condition. [Read more](#) about this research review.

## **Why don't you offer cookies that are whole wheat, wheat free, non-dairy, dairy free, sugar free, casein free, organic, low carb, low calorie, low fat, non-fat, fat free, etc...?**

Girl Scout Cookies are produced only once a year and for a limited time, so our bakers generally don't achieve the volume required to support the production of specialty cookies. The demand has not been great enough to make it economically feasible; however, our bakers continue to experiment and have a commitment to ensuring there is always

a "healthful" cookie in their line-up. Each of our bakers strives to use the most healthful ingredients available in the production of one of America's most treasured sweet treats. Check the labels of all the products you eat, including Girl Scout Cookies. You may just find a variety that fits within your dietary restrictions or goals.

### **Are there gluten-free Girl Scout Cookies?**

In responding to an important consumer trend, Girl Scouts will be selling both gluten-free varieties again in the 2015–16 cookie season. The cookies are part of a limited pilot and are being offered by participating councils. For more information on Trios™ Girl Scout Cookies, visit [abcsmartcookies.com](http://abcsmartcookies.com), and for more information on Toffee-tastic™ Girl Scout Cookies, visit [littlebrowniebakers.com](http://littlebrowniebakers.com).

## DELIVERY OPTIONS

### **What does in-person delivery mean through the Digital Cookie platform?**

In-person delivery allows your order to be delivered face-to-face by a Girl Scout. When a customer selects the in-person delivery option via the Digital Cookie platform, that selection must be first approved by an adult or caregiver. Parental approval may be based on cookie inventory, distance, capacity to deliver to the requested address, and whether the girl can meet the estimated delivery time of 6–10 weeks.

### **Why isn't in-person delivery offered in my area?**

Girl Scout councils' delivery methods for orders placed online vary based on several factors.

### **What if I select in-person delivery and the Girl Scout parent doesn't approve?**

Parents have 10 days to consider and approve in-person delivery orders placed online through a girls' Digital Cookie site. Their decision may be based in part on cookie inventory, distance, and capacity to deliver to the requested address; whether the customer is a friend or family member; and whether the girl can meet the estimated delivery time of 6–10 weeks. If the order is not approved for in-person delivery, we will complete the order by following the customer's selected secondary delivery option at the time of placing the order, which can either be to donate the cookies to the council's charity of choice or to cancel the order.

### **Can I adjust my order to change my shipping address or change my delivery method?**

Unfortunately, you cannot change your order or update a shipping address. Once an order is placed, all sales are final.

### **Can I order cookies online and have them shipped overseas?**

Currently, we are not offering the option of shipping cookies overseas unless you are shipping to AFO (Army Post Office) or FPO (Fleet Post Office).

### **Are cookies shipped via regular mail or via a third party shipping company?**

Cookies are shipped using major carrier(s) from the distribution center to your specified shipping address.

### **Other than shipping and handling, are there any other fees associated with online ordering?**

No, there are no other fees other than the cost of cookies. When you pay for shipping and handling, you're helping empower girls to do more with their cookie earnings. These fees go directly to the vendors who help us make sure your delicious cookies get to you and that the cookie money gets to her troop. That way, she and her friends can go out into their communities and do amazing things.

### **How much does shipping and handling cost?**

Shipping and handling costs are calculated in tiers starting at \$9.95 for 4–6 boxes of cookies. But don't worry about doing all that math. Just visit the Digital Cookie site, make your cookie selections, and we'll calculate the shipping for you before you finalize your order. Thank you for your support!

### **How can I track my order?**

Once your order is placed, you will receive an email confirmation with order information, including your carrier tracking number.

## DONATING COOKIES

### **How can I donate cookies?**

Simply select the “donate cookies” option from the order card. Your local council makes a decision about what charity(ies) will be the recipient(s) of donated boxes of Girl Scout Cookies. When you donate, you help bring a smile to someone’s face while you support a girl’s cookie goals.

### **Who receives the cookies I donated through the Digital Cookie site? Which charities do these cookies go to?**

The local Girl Scout council partners with a charity(ies) to be the recipient(s) of donated boxes of Girl Scout Cookies. The selected charity is indicated on the Orders page, and you can find out more information by visiting the [council’s website](#). The council’s name will be included on the order confirmation email.

### **Is my purchase tax-deductible?**

Not if you keep the cookies. If you buy Girl Scout Cookies and keep them, you've purchased a product at a fair market value. For this reason, no part of the price of a package of Girl Scout Cookies used in this way is tax-deductible. However, if you decide to donate the cookies at the time of purchase, the answer is “yes.” Many Girl Scouts ask customers to pay for one or more packages of cookies for use in their Take Action projects or “Gift of Caring” programs. Customers donating their purchase of Girl Scout Cookies don’t benefit directly from paying for them, so those individuals may treat the purchase price of the donated cookies as a charitable contribution.

### **Can I select the cookie variety I’d like to donate?**

No. The local council works with girls to select the varieties that will be donated to the Girl Scout council charity of choice.

## ORDERING COOKIES

Girl Scout Cookie varieties vary per area. If the Girl Scout Cookie you are looking for is not showing in the order card, it could be for a variety of reasons, including the possibility of the cookie being out of stock or not for sale by the council. Please check with your [Girl Scout's local council](#) for more information.

### **Why do I need to know a Girl Scout in order to buy cookies online? How can I order cookies online if I don't already know a Girl Scout?**

In true Girl Scout style, the girls always initiate the cookie sale. This allows girls to learn from the experience, provide customers with all relevant information about the cookies they are offering (as cookie varieties vary based on location), and most importantly, stay safe by inviting only trusted friends and family members to order through her Digital Cookie site. If you don't already know a Girl Scout, ask around to your friends and family to find a trusted connection!

### **What if I'm not satisfied with the quality of my Girl Scout Cookies?**

For product inquiries or concerns, contact Little Brownie Bakers at 1-800-962-1718, or visit [littlebrowniebakers.com](http://littlebrowniebakers.com). This contact information is also noted on the side panel of each cookie box.

### **The Girl Scout I want to support lives in a different state. Can I purchase Girl Scout Cookies digitally from her?**

Yes. We understand that sometimes friends and loved ones live across the country or in a different state, so feel free to purchase cookies from any Girl Scout who markets her cookie business to you. She'll be grateful for your support.

### **What cookies are offered digitally by my Girl Scout?**

Cookie varieties vary by area. To learn more about cookies offered by your Girl Scout, visit the cookie site of the girl who has invited you or, if she is not currently participating in the Digital Cookie platform, her [local council's website](#).

### **What kind of charges can I expect to see on my bank or credit card statement? What if I was charged incorrectly?**

For a shipped order, you can expect to see the charge for the full amount on your statement after you submit your order. For an in-person delivery order, you can expect to see the authorization hold (but not the charge) after you submit your order. Once your Girl Scout's parent approves the in-person delivery order, the full amount will then be charged. If the order is declined or if it is not approved within 10 days, it will default to your secondary delivery option or cancellation. If you were charged incorrectly, please [contact customer service](#).

### **Are cookie purchases non-refundable? Can I cancel my order/get a refund?**

All sales are final. You cannot cancel an order, and we do not offer refunds.

### **I ordered my cookies but I did not receive a confirmation email. What should I do?**

Please check your spam folder for an email from Girl Scout Cookies ([email@email.girlscouts.org](mailto:email@email.girlscouts.org)). If you cannot find it and you wish to retrieve your order confirmation number, please fill out [this form](#).

### **When will I receive my order?**

Shipped orders can take 2–10 business days for delivery. In-person delivery orders can take 6–10 weeks.

**Why haven't I received my order?**

The reason may depend on the delivery method you have chosen. Refer to your order confirmation email to verify your delivery method. Shipping orders can take 2–10 business days. In-person delivery orders can take 6–10 weeks. If it has been longer than this amount of time, please contact customer service via [this form](#).

**My shipped cookies arrived damaged. What should I do?**

Please contact customer service via [this form](#).

**I want to change my shipping address. Can I adjust my order?**

Unfortunately, we do not offer the opportunity to change an order. Once the order is placed, all sales are final.

## SAFETY AND LEARNING

### **Is participating in the Digital Cookie platform safe for girls?**

The Digital Cookie platform emphasizes the safety of both girls and customers. Before girls are allowed to set up their site, they are required to learn about Internet safety through our “Safe Selling for Smart Cookies” video. In addition, girls take an Internet Safety Pledge and parents/caregivers agree to our Terms and Conditions before using the web-based platform. Parents/caregivers must also approve all updates and changes girls make when customizing their Digital Cookie site. Girls using the mobile app that enables them to process cookie sales on-the-go will adhere to the same safety standards as those participating in traditional Girl Scout Cookie sales.

### **Is it safe to enter my credit card information on girls' Digital Cookie platforms? Is there protection against data breaches?**

Our systems are fully Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant, and consumers can feel absolutely confident that their financial information is not stored. Both the online and mobile platforms of Digital Cookie transmit financial data to credit card processors and “scrub” credit card and other identifiable information from the systems.

### **What new skills do girls learn with the Digital Cookie platform?**

Aside from honing in on the Girl Scout Cookie Program’s “5 Skills”—goal setting, money management, people skills, decision making, and business ethics—the Digital Cookie platform provides girls an opportunity to get hands-on experience with twenty-first-century skills in areas such as financial literacy, social responsibility, STEM, innovation, ecommerce, entrepreneurship, teamwork, email marketing, data tracking, site setup, and managing customer lists—to name just a few!

### **Are consumers able to find girls' Digital Cookie sites by searching online?**

No. We take girls’ safety very seriously! In true Girl Scout style, the girls always initiate the cookie sale. This allows girls to learn from the experience, provide customers with all relevant information about the cookies they are offering, and—most importantly—stay safe. Girls have pledged to only share their Digital Cookie personalized URL with trusted friends and family members.

### **Will Girl Scouts use my information in any other way aside from confirming my order and delivering my cookies? Will my personal information be shared with third parties?**

We will not use your information other than to place, confirm, and deliver your order. We do not share personal information with third parties. For purposes of clarity, individuals whose information is obtained by GSUSA through any alternate means shall not be subject to this exception.