



# Texas 2020 Women's Right to Vote Centennial Girl Scout Patch Program

## OVERVIEW

*Starting in June 2019, Girl Scouts across Texas will celebrate the beginning of women's access to the right to vote as we near the centennial celebration of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment in 2020. Girl Scout Councils across Texas are excited for girls to learn more about the process of amending the constitution and the efforts that take place to get an*

*amendment ratified into law by introducing the Texas 2020 Women's Right to Vote Centennial Patch Program for Girl Scouts.*

*We are celebrating the advances in history that came about from the suffrage movement – and the women who lead the movement. We also want girls to learn that with the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment, there were still many who were discriminated against and rights that were not equal. The 19<sup>th</sup> amendment is a significant step for women's civil rights in our country. We encourage girls to learn more about the history of women's suffrage, the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and to think about the world they live in today. The Texas 2020 Women's Right to Vote Centennial Patch is intended to be a catalyst for conversation and to encourage girls to learn more and take action to make the world a better place.*

***“It is incredible to me that any woman should consider the fight for full equity won. It has just begun.” – Alice Paul, 1920***

### Participating Girl Scout Councils:

- Girl Scouts of Central Texas
- Girl Scouts of the Desert Southwest - Southern New Mexico and West Texas
- Girl Scouts - Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas
- Girl Scouts of Greater South Texas
- Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas
- Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council
- Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas
- Girl Scouts of Texas Oklahoma Plains

This patch program packet is designed to encourage Girl Scouts of all levels to learn and develop knowledge about the history of voting rights and why it is important for everyone to vote. Girls will discover how the right to vote for women and minorities was granted and how it affects their everyday life. These activities may be done as a troop, as an individually registered Girl Scout (“Juliette”), or with your family at home.

This patch packet features activities divided into three sections Discover, Connect and Take Action. The girls and adults are encouraged to do more or modify the activities to adapt them to the skill levels of the girls as needed.

- Discover- Explore the history of the right to vote
- Connect- Explore how the right to vote affects their everyday life and that of their community
- Take Action- Make a difference in their communities by taking action on an issue they are passionate about.

To earn the patch girls should complete activities from each category of discover, connect and take action. **Each level must also start by reading A Brief Overview of a Woman's Right to vote included in this packet.**

- Girl Scout Daisies – 2 Discover, 1 Connect, 1 Take Action
- Girl Scout Brownies – 2 Discover, 2 Connect, 1 Take Action
- Girl Scout Juniors – 3 Discover, 2 Connect, 1 Take Action
- Girl Scout Cadettes – 4 Discover, 3 Connect, 1 Take Action
- Girl Scout Seniors/Ambassadors – 5 Discover, 4 Connect, 1 Take Action

## **DISCOVER**

- Learn what voting means? What is suffrage?
- Discover who the first women to lead the suffrage movement were.
- Learn about the history of the right to vote in Texas.
- Learn more about what an Amendment is and why it is important.
- Learn about the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
- How did the Nineteenth Amendment affect minority women?
- Why do you think African American men gained the right to vote decades before women did?
- Why do you feel people were opposed to women voting?
- Learn the definition of civil disobedience.
- Learn who represents you in the United States Congress and how to contact them to express your opinion on an issue important to you.
- Learn about elected positions within your school or community. What are the requirements for being elected?
- Play the Myth Buster Game (found in the back of the patch packet)
- Play the Story of Voting Rights (found in the back of the patch packet)

## **CONNECT**

- Learn how to register to vote – complete a mock registration card.
- Educate yourself on the importance of voting. Find out what populations have lower voter registration and turnout.
- Find out where a voting location is in your community and visit it if possible.
- Discuss with a family or community member why they vote.
- Review a map of women's voting rights before 1920. Why do you think so many western states permitted women to vote before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment?

- Which strategies of the women's rights movement were most effective? Why?
- Select a famous Suffragist, learn more about her and tell her story.
- Learn who your elected officials are and what they do for the following positions.
  - Local – Mayor, School Board Member, City Council
  - State – Governor, State Senator, and State Representative
  - National – President, Senator, and House of Representatives

## **TAKE ACTION**

- Help others learn about the importance of voting and how to register to vote.
- Select an issue that is important to you and create a 1-minute presentation and banner to promote the issue and educate others about it (i.e., Recycling, Literacy, Carbon Footprint, Poverty/Homelessness). Write a letter to your elected official about this issue.
- Go online to find a nonprofit organization or social group that cares about the same things you do. Consider volunteering for this organization.
- Get involved with an issue that is important to you. Learn ways you can take action to make a difference in your community.
- Run for student council or ask to speak at your city council meeting. Both options give you a platform and can help you not only spread the word but also influence decision making for a cause that is important to you.
- Write an op-ed article and email it to [programs@gsctx.org](mailto:programs@gsctx.org)
- Create a Public Service Announcement about the importance of voting using audio, visual or written mediums and present it to others. Some ideas are:
  - Create a song using a familiar tune about voting
  - Create a bookmark
  - Create a billboard
  - Design a webpage
  - Make a mini movie
  - Write a poem/Limerick
  - Write a newspaper article

We would love to hear about your take action projects. Please share your story here:

<https://www.gsctx.org/en/our-council/share-your-story.html>

To earn the patch, Girl Scouts use the link below (one per troop, or if participating independently, one per Girl Scout) no later than August 31, 2020.

**Order Now:** [https://gsctx.formstack.com/forms/right\\_to\\_vote](https://gsctx.formstack.com/forms/right_to_vote)

*Thanks to our Girl Scouts sisters from Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital, Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania, and Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York for their inspiration and groundbreaking curriculum that was used to develop this patch.*

## **A Brief Overview of a Woman's Right to Vote**

Our mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers struggled for many of the rights and privileges of citizenship that we take for granted today. The suffrage (right to vote) movement was unique in that it was the first time, women across the nation had petitioned on their behalf.

If you opened up a dictionary and looked up the word Suffrage, you would find that it means the right to vote. Our country is a democracy, identified by the phrase, "one person, one vote" yet the framework of our government did not originally give the right to vote to everyone. When the U.S. Constitution was drafted in Philadelphia in 1787, women were not included in the debates and discussions of how to govern the country. Participation in this new democracy did not extend past the white men who qualified by meeting various religious, property, and taxpaying criteria. Black men were granted the right to vote in 1870 with the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, but black women were denied this right until the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. The first women's rights convention was in 1848 at a meeting held in Seneca Falls, New York. Women and men came together at this convention and used the words of the Declaration of Independence to demand that women be afforded the right to vote. Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Frederick Douglass were some of the prominent names responsible for these initial actions. The 60 women and 32 men who signed their names to this document became the foundation of the suffrage movement.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, black women played an active role in the struggle for universal suffrage. But in spite of their hard work, many people didn't listen to them. Black men and white women usually led civil rights organizations and set the agenda. They often excluded black women from their organizations and activities. For example, the National American Woman Suffrage Association prevented black women from attending their conventions. Black women had to march separately from white women in suffrage parades. Also, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony wrote the *History of Woman Suffrage* in the 1880s; they featured white suffragists while ignoring the contributions of African American suffragists. Though black women are less well remembered, they played an important role in getting the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments passed.

Because of their unique position, black women tended to focus on human rights and universal suffrage, rather than suffrage solely for African Americans or for women. Many black suffragists weighed in on the debate over the Fifteenth Amendment, which would enfranchise black men but not black women. Mary Ann Shadd Cary spoke in support of the Fifteenth Amendment but was also critical of it as it did not give women the right to vote. Sojourner Truth argued that black women would continue to face discrimination and prejudice unless their voices were uplifted like those of Black men.

After the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified in 1920, black women voted in elections and held political offices. However, many states passed laws that discriminated against African Americans and limited their freedoms. Black women continued to fight for their rights. Educator and political advisor Mary McLeod Bethune formed the National Council of Negro Women in 1935 to pursue civil rights. Tens of thousands of African Americans worked over several decades to secure suffrage, which occurred when the Voting Rights Act passed in 1965. This Act represents more than a century of work by black women to make voting easier and more equitable.

Girl Scouting is based on the democratic process, of which voting is a primary principle. The girl-adult partnership helps guide girls to womanhood. The social works and reform embraced by the early suffragists are continued in Girl Scouting by the many thousands of service hours given by Girl Scouts across the United States of America.

## Timeline of voting rights in the United States

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- Prior to **1789** voting was restricted to white men who were property owners.
- **1789**: grants the states the power to set voting requirements. Generally, states limited this right to property-owning or tax-paying white males (about 6% of the population).<sup>[1]</sup>
- **1792–1838**: Free black males lose the right to vote in several Northern states including [in Pennsylvania](#) and [in New Jersey](#).
- **1792–1856**: Abolition of property qualifications for white men. The [1828 presidential election](#) was the first in which non-property-holding white males could vote in the vast majority of states. By the end of the 1820s, attitudes and state laws had shifted in favor of [universal white male suffrage](#).
- **1870**: The [Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#) prevents states from denying the right to vote on grounds of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude". Black males in the Northern states could vote, but the majority of African Americans lived in the South.
- **1887**: Citizenship is granted to Native Americans who are willing to disassociate themselves from their tribe by the [Dawes Act](#), making them technically eligible to vote.
- **1920**: Women are guaranteed the right to vote by the [Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#). In practice, the same restrictions that hindered the ability of non-white men to vote now also applied to non-white women.
- **1924**: All Native Americans are granted citizenship and the right to vote, regardless of tribal affiliation.
- **1943**: Chinese immigrants given the right to citizenship and the right to vote by the [Magnuson Act](#).
- **1961**: Residents of [Washington, D.C.](#) are granted the right to vote in U.S. Presidential Elections by the [Twenty-third Amendment to the United States Constitution](#).
- **1964**: Poll Tax payment prohibited from being used as a condition for voting in federal elections by the [Twenty-fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#).
- **1965**: Protection of voter registration and voting for racial minorities, later applied to language minorities, is established by the [Voting Rights Act of 1965](#). This is when all people were fully granted the right to vote in America.
- **1971**: Adults aged 18 through 21 are granted the right to vote by the [Twenty-sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution](#). This was enacted in response to Vietnam War protests, which argued that soldiers who were old enough to fight for their country should be granted the right to vote.<sup>[1]</sup>
- **1986**: United States Military and Uniformed Services, [Merchant Marine](#), other citizens overseas, living on bases in the United States, abroad, or aboard ship are granted the right to vote by the [Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act](#).
- **1996-2008**: twenty-eight US states changed their laws on [felon voting rights](#), mostly to restore rights or to simplify the process of restoration.
- **2006**: The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was extended for the fourth time by George W. Bush, being the second extension of 25 years.

## Women's Vote in Texas

The question of whether women should be granted the privilege of voting rights was first raised in Texas during the Constitutional Convention of 1868-1869. The proposal was rejected by a vote of 52 to 13. As the women's suffrage movement became more organized over the next four decades, supporters realized that the issue was perceived to be more of a social threat, rather than a political one. Many argued that enfranchisement would cause women to neglect their homes, children and other domestic responsibilities. It was up to the suffragists to articulate that women were citizens, too, and entitled to a say in governmental affairs. To generate support at the grassroots level, it became vital to educate and inform public opinion in an accessible manner. Women's suffrage clubs sponsored lectures, conducted debates, organized essay contests, managed booths at fairs and department stores, marched in parades and wrote music, plays and newspaper articles to spread awareness.

While these efforts helped make women's enfranchisement an active issue, concrete results were not achieved until the governorship of William P. Hobby from 1917 to 1921. Texas suffragists had pledged support to Hobby during the election if he would push for the passage of a bill that would grant women the right to vote in Texas primary elections. Primary suffrage was a more realistic goal than full suffrage as it required only a simple majority of both legislative houses and the governor's signature. The bill passed by a wide margin and was signed into law on March 26, 1918, offering women the right to vote in the state of Texas.

By May 1919, Hobby recommended that the Texas Constitution be amended to offer full voting rights to women, but the amendment was defeated by a majority of 25,000 votes. On June 4, the U.S. Senate passed the "Susan B. Anthony" amendment, which stipulated that if three-fourths of the states ratified the amendment, women would have the vote nationwide. The Texas legislature convened in special session and Hobby placed the women's suffrage amendment on the agenda. By this point, women suffragists had become part of the mainstream, and in spite of some opposition, the amendment was approved by the Texas Senate on June 28. Texas became the **ninth state** in the Union, and the **first state in the South**, to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment.

Are you interested in learning more? Check out these other Girl Scout petals or badges.

- Daisy – Rosie Petal, Make the World a Better Place
- Brownie – Celebrating Community
- Junior – Inside Government
- Cadette – Finding Common Ground
- Senior – Behind the Ballot
- Ambassador – Public Policy

# Activities

## Voting Myths

Instructions: Read each voting myth and discuss why it's a myth and what the facts related to the myth are.

**Myth:** It is hard to meet the voters' registration qualifications.

**Fact:** You can register to vote if you are:

- A United States citizen
- 18 years old by election day
- A resident of the state in which you are voting

**Myth:** Someone must register me.

**Fact:** You can register yourself. Fill out a registration form. Sign the form yourself. Registration must take place 30 days before an election to be eligible to vote in that election.

**Myth:** Forms are hard to get.

**Fact:** Forms are available at a variety of locations such as Post offices, libraries, fire stations, Department of Motor Vehicle offices, city and county offices. You can contact the Voter Registration Office in your county to get a form sent to your home. You can also register to vote online at [www.usa.gov/register-to-vote](http://www.usa.gov/register-to-vote).

**Myth:** Once I fill out the registration form, I am registered.

**Fact:** You are registered when you receive a voter registration card form from the Registrar-Recorder. It should arrive within 30 days.

**Myth:** If I do not vote in an election, I must reregister.

**Fact:** Registration at this time is permanent. You do not have to vote in each or any election to remain registered as long as you do not move out of the county you're registered in. However, you must re-register when you move, change your address, change your name, or wish to change political parties.

**Myth:** I can register for someone else.

**Fact:** You can only register yourself.

**Myth:** If I am away from my home county on Election Day, I cannot vote.

**Fact:** You can vote an absentee ballot. Contact your Voters Registration Office for information on how to register for absentee voting.

**Myth:** If I am disabled, I must still vote at a polling place.

**Fact:** You can vote by absentee ballot. Law establishes a Permanent Absentee Vote Status for those whose mobility is impaired. Call your County Voters Registration Office to learn more.

## **Story of voting rights**

**OBJECTIVE:** To help girls learn the history of voting rights in the USA

### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**

Small color papers (cut enough for each girl to have one): Make 30% gray, 10% green, 30% pink, 10% orange and 20% dark green

### **WHAT TO DO:**

- Give each girl one color paper (they take from a brown bag without looking).
- State that according to the laws in the early years of our country, only the white men could vote. So only the girls with the gray paper could vote. Ask these girls to decide a game or song for all to do. Discuss if this is fair.
- Explain that after many years of hard struggle, culmination in the Civil War (1865-1877), free Black males won the right to vote. However, local poll taxes, "literacy" tests, and other discriminatory acts often prevented them from voting. Ask the girls with the gray and green ballot to decide a game or a song for all to do. Discuss if this is fair.
- Explain that in 1920 after many years of struggle, some women won the right to vote. So add the girls with pink papers to the girls who can vote. Again, ask these girls to decide on a game or a song for all to do. Discuss if this is fair.
- In 1924, Native Americans won the right to vote after finally being declared citizens of the USA. The girls with the orange paper can now be added to the girls who can vote. Again, ask this group to decide on a short activity for the group.
- Starting in the 1950s, there were some major changes in the voting laws, making poll taxes and other discriminatory acts illegal. There were larger-scale efforts to help register all eligible voters. Now all of the votes are in, and the girls can learn what they voted to do.

Discuss the idea of justice as equal rights for all. Are we all equal? Some people are richer, stronger, or better looking, and so forth, but justice exists when we all have equal rights.

Resource: Adapted from "Teacher They Called Me A...!: Confronting Prejudice and Discrimination in the Classroom" by Deborah A. Byrnes



## Additional Resources

### Check Out These Websites for Additional Information

- 2020 Women’s Vote Centennial - [www.2020centennial.org](http://www.2020centennial.org)
- National Women’s History Project – [www.nwhp.org](http://www.nwhp.org)
- Rock the Vote – [www.rockthevote.com](http://www.rockthevote.com)
- Smart Voter – [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)
- League of Women Voters – [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)
- National Park Service – [www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm)
- U.S. House of Representatives – <http://www.house.gov>
- U.S. Senate – <http://www.senate.gov/index.htm>
- House and Senate Legislative Information – [www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov)
- CapWeb An Internet Guide to the U.S. Congress – <http://www.capweb.net>
- The White House. This website also provides access to the Cabinet Departments – [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)
- Supreme Court – [www.supremecourt.gov](http://www.supremecourt.gov)
- United States Federal Judiciary – [www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov)
- The Federal Election Commission – [www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov)
- National Archives and Records Administration of the Federal Register – [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)
- U.S. Bureau of the Census – [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- Federal Voting Assistance Project – [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)
- Ballot Access – [www.ballot-access.org](http://www.ballot-access.org)
- The Federal Election Commission. Includes the universal voter registration form [www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov)
- Leadership Council on Civil Rights – [www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org)
- Project Vote Smart – [www.votesmart.org](http://www.votesmart.org)
- Where to Vote in Texas - <https://www.votetexas.gov/voting/where.html>
- Project VOTE - <https://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/projectvote/index.html>
- [The OpEd Project - https://www.theopedproject.org/](https://www.theopedproject.org/)