What Girl Scouts Can Learn About "Leave No Trace"  
  
Have you taken a seashell from the shore? A pinecone from the forest? Left an apple core behind? No big deal, right? Now imagine hundreds, thousands, potentially millions of outdoor visitors all doing the same. Different story. So how do we teach Girl Scouts to respect and appreciate the natural environment? By leading "leave no trace" outdoor experiences, educating girls in the hows and whys of minimal impact outdoor adventures, and respecting the natural environment ourselves.  
  
Leave No Trace is an awareness and an attitude—not a set of rules and regulations. It applies to your backyard or local park as much as the back country. You would never think of trampling your neighbor's flowers, putting soap in your drinking water, or carving your name on your garage door. When you visit other natural environments, the same principles apply.  
  
Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics  
  
With the help of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (the Center), a partner with Girl Scouts of the USA in outdoor and environmental education, girls can gain a better appreciation for the natural environment and apply the values they have learned in Girl Scouts—all of which can lead to ethical choices in the outdoors. As a Girl Scout volunteer you can help protect the environment by reminding girls that while they are there, they are visitors. And as visitors, they always leave the area the same or better than they found it.  
  
Help girls learn more about protecting the environment by teaching girls the seven principles of Leave No Trace:  
  
Plan Ahead and Prepare: Know the regulations and concerns for the area you'll visit.  
Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces: Stick to trails and remember, good campsites are found, not made.  
Dispose of Waste Properly: Pack it in, pack it out.  
Leave What You Find: Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.  
Minimize Campfire Impacts: Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings.  
Respect Wildlife: Observe wildlife from a distance and never feed them.  
Be Considerate of Other Visitors: Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.

LEAVE NO TRACE TRAINING VIDEO  
  
This is a short video covering the 7 principles of Leave No Trace. Share it with the girls.  
  
<http://vimeo.com/36997579>