

# 6-12 Weeks Prior to Trip

## Get Down to Details

You're down to crunch time! With less than three months to go, use this time to ensure you are up to date in completing all steps within the timeline. Go back and review the to-do list that begins each section of this guide.

Let girls take the lead on finalizing details listed below. (These categories are also found on page 27 in *Exploration: The Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel*.) Step in when girls ask for or appear to need your support.

### Revisit the Itinerary

Lock in daily itinerary items. Double-check places, dates, and times. Confirm your lodging.

### Safety Check

Go over all travel safety guidelines again. Are all girls well-acquainted with procedures? Review your trusted *Volunteer Essentials*.

### Family Meeting

Hold a group family meeting to go over final details. Have a communication plan so families will know where the group will be at all times. Also, discuss safety plans and use the time to have parents and guardians fill out any forms that haven't been completed.



### Coach Girls Through:

- Finalizing details
- Checking paperwork
- Confirming plans

### Your To-Do's:

- With girls, finalize itinerary and budget.
- Complete all safety and risk-management planning.
- Inform families with full and final details of trip.
- Recruit and train the back-home contact person.
- Complete other council-specific requirements.
- Check with U.S. State Department for travel warnings (refer to [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)).
- Register your trip with the U.S. embassy or consulate of the country you will visit.
- Continue to strengthen group team-building.
- Continue preparation of cross-cultural exchange.



#### Progress

18-24 Months

12-16 Months

8-12 Months

3-8 Months

**6-12 Weeks**

4-6 Weeks

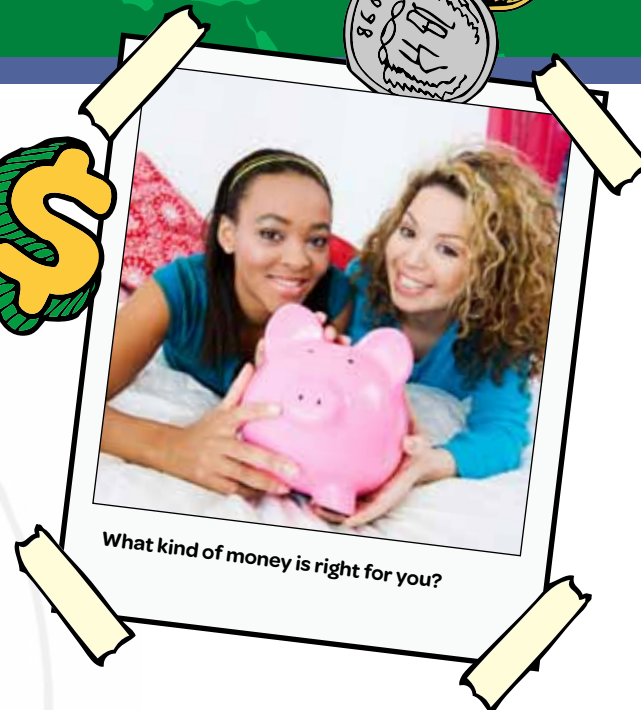
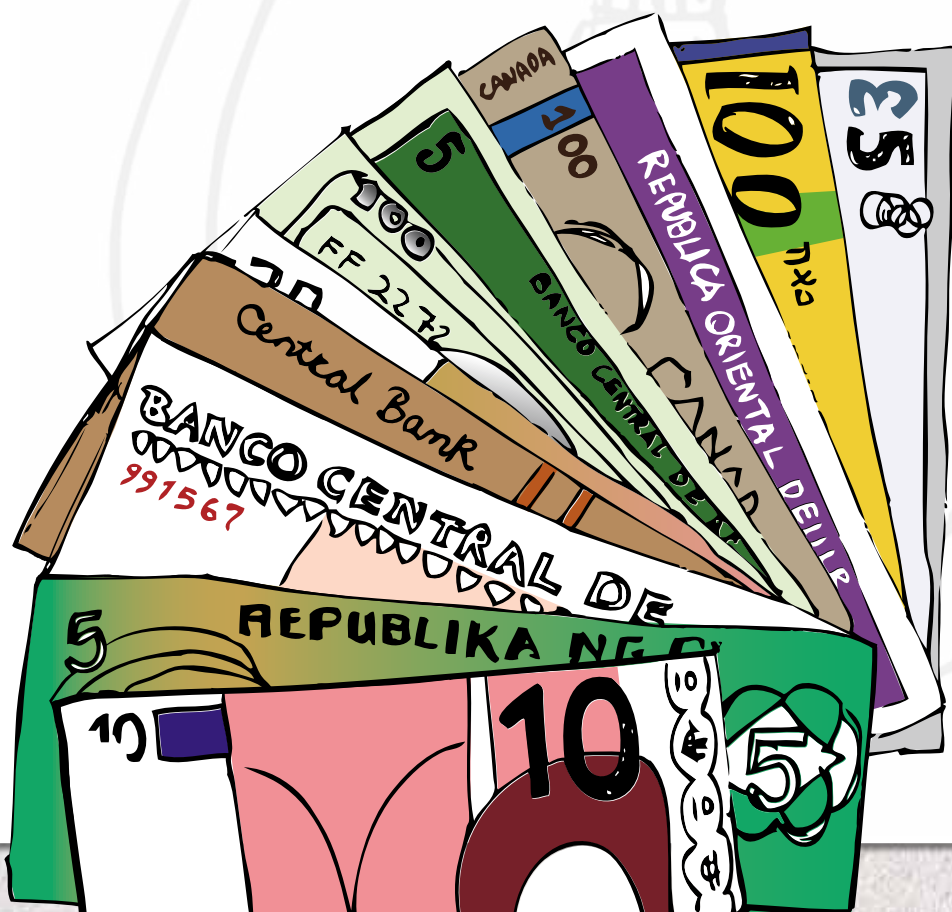
On Your Trip

Back at Home

# Know About the Dough

Review budget and balance it against troop funds. Answer any outstanding questions. By this point, tickets, lodging, transportation, event fees, and whatever can be purchased in advance should have been done. All troop funds should be collected.

Familiarize yourself with the different options for carrying money and exchanging currency. Here are pros and cons on currency included in Exploration: *The Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel*.



## Cash

**Pro:** Cash is universally accepted.

**Con:** It will need to be converted to local currency. This can be done at local banks or currency exchange bureaus. Once money is lost or stolen, you can not replace it. Carrying a lot of cash around may not be safe.

### TIPS

- When converting US dollars to foreign currency, shop around for the best rate, as it will vary from place to place. In general, the best rates will be from major banks and the worst will be through exchange kiosks at airports or train stations.
- If you exchange some money before leaving the United States, do so at a major bank to get the best rates.

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# Know About the Dough *(continued)*

## ATM / Debit Card

**Pro:** ATM machines abound internationally, giving you access to cash virtually any time and generally at the best exchange rate.

**Con:** International ATMs can carry fees as high as \$5 per withdrawal, so it might be a good idea to use a bank that has a large international presence.

### TIPS

- Ask your bank about withdrawal fees at overseas ATMs. Also, let them know you will be traveling abroad so they don't think your card was stolen and block access to your account when they start seeing charges from Paris!
- Make sure your ATM card is linked through one of the major networks (PLUS, Cirrus, Mastercard, Visa, etc.).

## Travelers Checks

**Pro:** If they are lost or stolen, they can be replaced within 24 hours. They can be exchanged for local currency at a bank or used directly at many stores.

**Con:** You won't get the best exchange rate for them. And most banks add a surcharge for issuing them. Also, you'll need to find places during your trip that accept travelers checks or can convert them to local currency.

### TIPS

- Travelers Checks come with serial numbers that you should record and keep in a safe place—without those numbers, there's no refund!

## Credit Card

**Pro:** Credit cards are like insurance—hopefully you won't need them, but if you run out of or lose your money, they come in handy.

**Con:** Not every card has the same replacement policy overseas. Plus, some credit card companies charge fees for international transactions.

### TIPS

- Most credit cards are widely accepted, but check your card's policy on international transactions and replacing a lost or stolen card.
- Call your credit card company to let them know you will be traveling abroad.



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