



## Urban Orienteering in the Capital

*"I am a daughter of adventure. This means I never experience a dull moment and must be prepared for any eventuality . . ."*

*–Molly Brown*

*The Denver Post, August 1923*



### **Purpose:**

As a Colorado Cadette Girl Scout you are ready to try new things and take risks. In this badge you will gain knowledge about Denver and learn how to explore our state's capital city safely and confidently.

### **Requirements:**

To earn this badge, you must complete one option from those listed under each of the five steps.

### **Steps:**

1. **Street Smarts.** Street signs hold more information than simply the name of the street. In this step you will learn how to read street signs or how to guard your belongings while you explore the city.
  - a. Draw a map of at least four blocks that surround your home. Be sure to include navigational directions on your map as well as the address of each home or business within those blocks. On which side of the street are the even and which side are the odd numbered addresses? If you walk north, do the numbers get bigger or smaller? Look at the street signs. What do the numbers on them mean? Can you identify where the street numbers originate – where is 000, 000?
  - b. Get together with your friends on the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall to role-play how to keep your personal items safe. Try to pick pocket each other to discover how easy or hard it would be to lose your valuables, e.g. no cell phones in the back pocket. Now keep a log for a week to see if you can change any bad habits. When the week is up, check back in with your friends to see what progress you made.
  - c. What role did Cherry Creek and the South Platte play in how the downtown streets were platted? How does the downtown street orientation differ from that of the

rest of the city? After you have done your research visit Confluence Park to best understand where Denver began.

2. **Transportation.** With a little planning you can go almost anywhere in the city by using public transportation. Be sure you and a friend have adult permission and an adult chaperone on your explorations.
  - a. Think of three places that you would like to visit in Denver. Using an online map, or an app like Go Denver, decide which mode of public transportation: bus, light rail or a combination, will get you to your destination most quickly? How much will your trips cost? Do you need exact change? How and where can you buy tickets? Pass on what you have learned to an adult to get their feedback about your research. Put your research to the test and take a friends and adult chaperone on the route you planned.
  - b. Visit the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall or Cherry Creek Mall by bus. However, before you go, talk to at least two adults about how they stay safe in a crowd. Where do they keep their money? How can they tell if someone new is trustworthy? If they feel nervous what do they do? Make a plan to stay in communication.
  - c. From Union Station travel to DU using light rail. How do you read the train timetable? How much does it cost? What will you do when get there? Is there a park or ice cream shop nearby? Now that you are there can you use B-Cycle? Why or why not?
3. **Maps and Landmarks.** Many consider Denver the starting point to the Rocky Mountains. The mountains can be seen off in the West from almost every vantage point. You will learn in this step how the location of the mountains helps you to always know your directions.
  - a. Pick two city landmarks, for example the Denver Convention Center and the Art Museum. Determine their location in reference to the State Capitol. Using a map, plot how you plan to travel between the Capitol building and the Convention Center and then back to the Capitol via the Museum. What are the names of the streets you will cross? Now with your troop or family try out your route. Did you use the mountains as a reference to make sure you were going the right direction?
  - b. Check out the book Alphabet Denver from the library. Pick at least five letters of the alphabet to find hidden outside in the architecture of downtown. The book and a smart phone is all that is required to play this fun I Spy game.
  - c. Create a collage of the images of downtown Denver. You can use your own photos or cut out images from city brochures collected from Visit Denver, the Convention

and Visitor's Bureau. Ask permission to hang your creation in the library or your school.

4. **Stay Connected.** The activities in this step will help you develop a communication plan to stay safe.
  - a. Research smart phone apps like Find Friends, Circle of 6 or bSafe that allow you to communicate with your family and allow them to track your whereabouts. Once your family agrees on an app to use, give it a test. For example does the app work as well in Union Station as it does at Coors Field? Try it at least 4 times at different venues and or when using different types of transportation to make it is the right app for you.
  - b. Think about situations like being at an event at the Pepsi Center or Sports Authority at Mile High and becoming separated by the crowd from your friends or family. It is loud and noisy and you don't have a phone. How do you stay calm and safe? Talk to your family and friends about non-electronic ways to stay connected in a crowd. What are their ideas? Do you go back to your seats, meet by a specific gate or something else? Keep it simple, but vow to always have a plan and share that plan with the people you are with before heading into or out of a crowd.
  - c. With an adult or older sibling, go downtown. Arrange a meeting time and place and then head off with a friend in the opposite direction. Be sure to manage your time. Do this five times. Did you have a plan in case one of you was late? Did you pay more attention to your surroundings knowing that you were on a schedule?
5. **Pay it Forward.** The things that you have learned about navigating Denver will be reinforced through sharing them with others.
  - a. Share what you have learned as a troop about traveling safely in Denver by creating a play to preform for a Brownie or Junior troop.
  - b. Create a paper or digital scrapbook of the sites you saw in Denver. What type(s) of transportation did you use? What was your favorite thing to see or do? Share your scrapbook with family and friends.
  - c. Ask the office staff or the guidance counselor at your school if there are any new students from out of state at the school. Offer to explain to them how to get around downtown. Who knows, you might make a new friend.