

JULY 4th – Independence Day

What really happened on July 4, 1776? On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress unanimously adopted the Declaration of Independence, announcing the colonies' separation from Great Britain. From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American independence, with festivities ranging from fireworks, parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and cookouts or picnics.

The tradition of setting off fireworks on the 4 of July began in Philadelphia on July 4, 1777, during the first organized celebration of Independence Day. Ship's cannon fired a 13-gun salute in honor of the 13 colonies. The *Pennsylvania Evening Post* reported: "at night there was a grand exhibition of fireworks (which began and concluded with thirteen rockets) on the Commons, and the city was beautifully illuminated". I *Girl Scouts could work with their local fire department or hospital burn unit to create videos or distribute information about fireworks safety, first aid for burns, and pet protection during fireworks displays.*

Interestingly enough, Girl Guides in the **UK** often choose to learn about and celebrate America's Independence Day as a multicultural activity - the same way they do Chinese New Year, Diwali, Holi and Dia de los Muertos! In return for sharing typical American Fourth of July cookout menus with *them*, Guiders (troop leaders) from the UK are sharing recipes for the "fireworks" cookies and snacks their Brownies and Guides make at Fourth of July meetings. These are for **edible sparklers**:

- "We have done this with Cadbury's Fingers. Just dip the end into hot water, then straight into the hundreds and thousands [*tiny, round non-pareil sprinkles.*]" (Heather D. and Zoe P.)
- "You can always use breadsticks and dip in melted chocolate then some cake sprinkles if you don't have a version of Cadbury chocolate fingers." (Catherine S.)
- "Dip Mikado [brand] biscuits in warm water, not hot or the chocolate melts off, then dip or roll in cake sprinkles [*they come already chocolate coated*]: <https://groceries.morrisons.com/products/mikado-milk-chocolate-biscuits-112794011>] (Carly G.)
- Lucy. F. says, "You can do **rockets** with marshmallows or fruit on a skewer. These space-themed fruit rockets are from <https://www.eatsamazing.co.uk/bonfire-night/easy-fruit-rockets-for-bonfire-night>

[“Bon fire night” is Guy Fawkes Day] Coloured Marshmallow rockets are even better if you can coat them in crushed Poprocks/popping candy. Here’s a tutorial for making marshmallow rockets from Pinterest:

<https://www.pinterest.ru/pin/105130972522011313/>”

The most common symbol of the holiday is the American flag. In many communities, Girl Scouts are invited to march in parades, place flags on the graves of veterans, or present flag ceremonies to community groups. Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta has a “[Flag Ceremonies](#)” activity guide, with sample ceremonies and flag etiquette tips.

Encourage the Girl Scouts you work with to put a little Girl Scout patriotism into their family and friends celebrations on Independence Day:

- **Girl Scouts and Patriotism: 10 Fun Facts to Celebrate July 4** from *gsblog*, July 3, 20217:
<https://blog.girlscouts.org/2017/07/girl-scouts-and-patriotism-10-fun-facts.html>
- **“On my honor, I will try to serve...my country”** In addition to flag-related service activities (above), troops and groups could present a program of patriotic songs for seniors or veterans, create short videos on flag care and courtesy, and send some love from the home front to active military members stationed overseas with a thank you note to commemorate Independence Day.
- **Girl Scouts of the USA offers a Citizen badge at every grade level** that helps girls learn to celebrate their communities—from their towns and states to their country. The badges include Good Neighbor for Daisies, Celebrating Community for Brownies, Inside Government for Juniors, Finding Common Ground for Cadettes, Behind the Ballot for Seniors, and Public Policy for Ambassadors. If girls have already earned these, look at the new Democracy badge for your Girl Scout level.

BE PREPARED! It’s Georgia in July: have a rainy day plan in place and know what to do and where to go during an electrical storm.

