WHAT IS A 4-H PROJECT?

4-H Fact Sheet: What is a 4-H Project?

Dear Current and Future 4-H Member:

We bet you're wondering the answer to the question, "What is a 4-H Project?" Well, this fact sheet is designed to provide the answer to that question. It turns out that the term "4-H Project" means many things! We hope to clarify for you what terminology we will be using throughout the 4-H year and what that terminology means.

We hope you enjoy exploring new areas of interest and continue to explore project areas that you have previously been interested in. Please take this opportunity to learn as much as you can and share that knowledge with your club members, leaders, family members, and friends!

Sincerely,

Your 4-H Staff

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

The expert in anything was once a beginner…

-Helen Hayes

What if…..

You have questions about 4-H Projects?

Please contact your local 4-H office with further questions.

University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Maricopa County

Phone:
(602) 827-8275
Website:
http://extension.arizona.edu/4h/maricopa
Email:
4Hinfo@cals.arizona.edu

What is a 4-H Project?

A 4-H project is what a 4-H'er learns about a particular subject (i.e. learns to grow a vegetable garden, learns to build a robot, or learns to build a first-aid kit for a hiking trip). There are nearly 70 different project areas. Project areas vary from Aerospace to Woodworking, from Forestry to Rabbits, and from Sewing to Small Engines.

4-H members should select at least one or more projects each year, complete a project display or exhibit for County Fair, and complete a record book for that project area, if they choose. However, there is a recommended maximum number of project areas a member should select during the 4-H year. Those maximums are:

1st year ……………2 project areas
2nd year …………...4 project areas
3rd year & up ……....6 project areas

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- What is a "4-H Project?"

- "4-H Project" Terminology

- What is a Project Manual?

- A Year Long Glance at a Project

- Project Area Listing

4-H "Project" Terminology

"Project" Category
Overarching theme or curriculum focus

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"Project" Category Examples:
1) Animal Science
2) Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences

"Project" Area
A specific topic area in which an individual completes study and/or work

➡️

"Project" Area Examples:
1) Horse (one area under Animal Science)
2) Entomology (one area under Natural Resources)

"Project" Level
Level of project manual you choose based on experience and knowledge In project area

➡️

"Project" Level Examples:
1) Giddy Up & Go! Horse Level 1 project manual
2) Teaming with Insects Level 1 project manual

"Project" Class
What specific class within that project area you choose to show in at the County Fair or County Finals

➡️

"Project" Class
1) Horse: English Equitation
2) Entomology: Class 103 - Beginners collection of 25 or more different insects

"Project" Display/Exhibit
The result of study/work in specific project area which is then shown at County Fair or County Finals

➡️

"Project" Display/Exhibit
1) You riding your horse in the show ring demonstrating your ability to handle and maneuver your horse through a specific pattern in the English Discipline.
2) A visual display of your ability to collect and accurately identify native or invasive insect species.

IMPACTS OF 4-H ON YOU!

According to the ten-year study: *The Positive Development of Youth: Comprehensive Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development*, 4-H'ers are about:

- **Two times** more likely to be **civically active** (Grades 8-12);

- **Two times** more likely to make **healthier choices** (Grades 7).

What in the World is a 4-H Project Manual?

4-H Project Manuals are workbooks or study books designed for youth by youth development professionals, field experts, or researchers, which provide a step-by-step independent study.

The purpose of the manual is not to create experts in any field, but to rather spark an interest to explore a topic more in-depth. With three or more levels available for each project area, the manuals are appropriately written for each skill level. Each level is designed to carry a 4-H member through three years of study; however, manuals are designed to assist in the learning process, which means youth can begin at any level based on their experience in that topic area.

How do you obtain 4-H project manuals?

There are two ways to obtain 4-H project manuals, the following takes you through the steps:

1) Let your 4-H Club Organizational Leader know which manuals you would like to order;

2) Your 4-H Club Organizational Leader may order them directly from 4-H Mall, shop4-h.org;

The benefit of 4-H project manuals is priceless! They usually range in cost from $3.00 - $10.00 per manual. Your club may decide to do a fund-raiser to cover the cost of these manuals or your club may charge each member for the manuals they choose. Prices can be found on the 4-H Mall website.

Why should I use project manuals?

4-H project manuals are a great way to learn the fundamentals about a 4-H project area. While you may have project meetings in your club, they provide you the opportunity to learn on your own, at your own pace.

4-H project manual activities challenge you to engage with experts within the field of study, and give you ideas for further exploration. Project manuals are a fun way to gain knowledge, skills, and expertise in a project area.

4-H project manuals are an inexpensive way to help you discover potential career paths too!

Cooking science

Group Projects:

This project choice is led by a Club Project Leader, who is considered knowledgeable in that area or a caring adult willing to become knowledgeable in a specific project area. The Club Project Leader may choose to use a Project Helper's Guide developed by 4-H and another educationally based curriculum, to lead a group of youth through the exploration of a project area. Group projects result in a single display or item that is exhibited by the entire club or several members representing the club.

Independent Project:

This project choice encourages individual, self-exploration of a project area through the use of 4-H Project Manuals or with the help of the Club Project Leader. Once you have enrolled in a 4-H club, you may sign-up for a project via 4HOnline. Youth are allowed to select any project that your club supports, or you can ask your club leader if it can be added as an option. The result of the independent project is an individual display or exhibit to be showcased at the County Fair or FCS Day.

Self-determined Projects:

This is an advanced project option established for youth who have delved deeper into a project area than the average 4-H'er and has successfully completed all the project levels prior to aging out of 4-H. Through the self-determined project, 4-Her's will work closely with their Club Project Leader to determine their goals, objectives, and method of display to showcase at the County Fair or FCS Day.

Step 1) Select a project category you're interesting in learning more about.

Step 2) Choose a specific project area to explore.

Step 3) Determine your level of expertise and order the appropriate project manual.

Beginners – have no previous experience in this project area. You will learn the fundamentals of the project area and may gain a greater appreciation of the sub-areas to explore next year.

Intermediate – you have a general knowledge of the fundamentals of the project, including terms, careers, and safety. You may be focusing on a specific sub-area of the project area.

Advance – you have a thorough understanding of the project area and have selected a sub-area to explore more in-depth.

Step 4) Discover the power of knowledge by exploring the 4-H Project Manual and participating in club and county level project learning experiences.

Step 5) Decide your medium of display or exhibit based on the classes offered at the County Fair or FCS Day.

Step 6) Create your display or exhibit based on the guidelines provided.

Step 7) Demonstrate your gained skills and knowledge through conference judging and presentation to a judge.

Step 8) Complete a record book, if you choose, for judging at the county level and potentially the state level to compete for National 4-H congress.

4-H youth participates in the County Dog Finals

Updated 4-H Project Area Listing

Animal Science
Beef
Cat
Cavy
Dairy Cattle
Dog
Goat
Horse
Poultry
Rabbit
Sheep
Small Pets
Swine
Veterinary Science

Cloverbuds
Cloverbuds

Community Involvement
Citizenship
Service Learning
Leadership

Engineering & Technology
Aerospace
Computer Science
Electricity
Geospatial - GPS
Robotics
Small Engines
Woodworking

Environment & Natural Resources
Backyard and Beyond
Beekeeping
Entomology
Exploring Your Environment
Forestry
Geology
Natural Resources
Outdoor Adventures
Shooting Sports
Sportfishing
Water Conservation

Family & Consumer Sciences
Child Development
Entrepreneurship
Financial Management
Sewing & Textiles

Food, Nutrition and Health
Food & Nutrition
Food Preservation
Food Science
Health & Fitness

Personal Development
Cake Decorating
Communications
Creative Writing
Journalism

Leadership
Personal Development (cont.)
Photography
Public Presentations
Self-Determined
Theatre Arts
Visual Arts

Plants & Soils
Floriculture
Horticulture
Flower Arranging
Herb Gardening
Vegetable Gardening