



LOW COST 4-H PROJECT IDEAS

Consider these ideas to use your time, energy, money and materials wisely!
Select projects that:

- Help your family and community
- Are inexpensive
- Meet your goals!

Here are some ideas to start you thinking:

Citizenship

- Make baskets filled with garden flowers or produce for a nursing home or older neighbor
- Write a thank you note to your 4-H leader. Develop a club award for leaders. Make it fun!

Child Development

- Teach a small child how to ride a bike, play a game or tie his shoes.
- Make a homemade toy, game, or activity for kids. Learn finger plays to teach kids.
- Plan an activity for a sibling, neighbor, or the children you babysit.

Clothing

- Make a tote bag from fabric remnants or old blue jeans.
- Select an accessory/clothing item at a garage sale, second-hand store.
- Consider recycling a clothing garment to make a different or more update garment.
- Tell about a project you organized at your home or in your community, for example, a fabric or pattern exchange, used clothing sale, or a poster to inform others of the most inexpensive ways to do laundry.
- Teach another member of your family or 4-H club how to sew on a button or hem a pair of jeans

Photography

- Select a neutral mat for your photo. Reuse a mat from previous years.
- Consider a disposable camera, try a panoramic one for some fun effects.
- Make a calendar using your own photos.

Camping

- Plan the meals for a summer family camping trip. Be sure to think about how you'll safely pack the food.

Conservation

- Plant a tree, seedling or flowers. Demonstrate how your plantings will help conserve the soil, attract wildlife, conserve energy or help your family.



Woodworking

- Use scraps of wood to make a project. Check the 4-H project materials for plans for bird houses, toolboxes, bookends, bookracks, key holders and other items.



Home Improvement

- Use a table linen you already have, select pictures from magazines of tableware (flatware or dinnerware) that would be used to create a pleasing table.
- Clean a furnishing found in your home and explain and show photos of the process.
- Organize your closet. Inventory your clothes, shoes, accessories to determine needs.
- Using photos, video, or written summary; explain a project that cannot be taken to the fair. For example, weather stripping, installing washers in dripping faucets, installing a water saving shower head, developing an energy efficient home plan.
- Finish or refinish small household items, such as a wooden salad bowl, picture frames, step stool, candle holders, etc.
- Check out *Fabric Furnishings* 4-H Project book for ways to make pillows, curtains, place mats, tablecloths, hot pads, etc. to accessorize your home.
- Consider preserving a family historic furnishing, a crocheted doily, a family tree prepared for display, a picture collage of family members, diplomas or other certificates.
- Rearrange your room and draw a floor plan explaining the changes and reasons for them.

Safety

- Pick up the Farm Safety materials at the Extension Office and use to check the safety on your farm.
- Design a fire escape plan for your family, check the smoke detectors and have a fire drill—time how long it takes your family to escape to safety.
- Make a list; take photos or video of the personal property in your home to be used in the event of a disaster.
- Check your family's first aid kits to make sure they have needed supplies. Check the medicine cabinet and throw away outdated medications.

Food and Nutrition

- Make plans for packing a safe, litter free school lunch.
- Make a poster detailing how to keep picnic food safe.
- Plan a picnic menu for under \$5.00.
- Investigate the "in season" fruits and vegetables during spring and summer. Make lists for other members of your club. Try some recipes for fruits or vegetables you've never eaten before.
- Learn about the food pyramid and/or food labels. Make a display of the places you found your information.
- Make a Recipe Calendar for a gift. Suggest daily meal plans. Include a recipe of the day, week or month.
- Plan the recipes for a theme party. Choose a theme and find recipes that fit the theme and go well together.
- Make a recipe book for someone with special diet needs. (diabetics, low salt or fat.) Give to them as a gift.





ANIMAL PROJECTS ON A SHOESTRING



Livestock & Pets

- Make a health care schedule for your animal(s).
- Use home raised stock for your 4-H project.
- Build your rations around the feed supply you have. If you have moderate quality forage, balance your rations for that. Fast gains may not be the cheapest.
- Create a display about grooming your pet or livestock and cleaning their pen or cage.
- Share equipment for exhibiting livestock.

Project ideas you can do with OR without an animal.

- Learn the **body parts** of an animal that interests you. Make a poster to teach others. Develop your communication skills by doing a club presentation or a class project.
- Learn about different **breeds** of animals. Find out about the strengths and weaknesses of each breed. Develop your decision-making skills by doing an exhibit about the best breed and why it's your choice.
- Learn about the parts of a **horse's hoof**, how to care for them and why hoof care is important. Share your problem solving skills with others through an exhibit or presentation on the importance of hoof care.
- Explore the advantages and disadvantages of using **beef implants or feed additives**. Share your findings with others. Do an exhibit showing how you made a decision about implants for your calves.
- Research the withdrawal times for **feed additives and medications** you might use on your pigs. Communicate the importance of following withdrawal times with others in a poster. You might share your poster with a feed dealer.
- Build a **lambing (or calving) time tool kit**. Research the items needed and how to properly use them. Make an instruction sheet on how to make the kits and share the instructions with other 4-H'ers.
- Explore vaccinations needed to prevent reproductive diseases, their costs and consequences if you don't use them. Analyze the cost benefits and share them in an exhibit. Strengthen your communication skills by sharing your information with your club or other producers.
- Learn about the care of **newborn puppies or kittens**—when they open their eyes, when to wean, what vaccinations are needed, how to feed the mother and how to start puppies on solid food. Decide if you are ready to raise a pet.
- Learn more about a **disease** that affects your animal. What are the symptoms, prevention, it's affect on humans, etc. Share your knowledge with others.
- Learn about the **basic colors and markings of rabbits**. Teach other rabbit project members how to identify color patterns and markings so they can identify different breeds and colors. Develop a kit for other leaders to use in teaching about rabbit breeds.
- Work with another 4-H'er or farmer to **track market animals** from start to finish. Record health treatments and problems, weather effects on performance, cost of production and carcass merit.



Project In a Project

- Remember that you may have a project developed without even realizing it!
- Anytime you find a way to save money, materials or time you've done an extra project.
- Write a summary or create a display that demonstrates what and how you saved. Share tips with others on how they also can reduce the time, energy, money or materials expended to develop a 4-H project.