

IOWA 4-H SAFETY & EDUCATION SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM  
EXTENSION & OUTREACH 4-H YOUTH PROGRAMS  
IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
4-H EXTENSION YOUTH BUILDING  
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## **What is Iowa 4-H SESS?**

The what, why, who and how of a 4-H Special Emphasis Club. Start one today!

### **How do I get started?**

#### ***What is a 4-H Safety and Education in Shooting Sports (SESS) Club?***

A 4-H SESS club is young people and trained adults who get together at several times for each shooting discipline during the 4-H year. Because of the nature of this activity, we recommend that youngsters be 9 years old before they start.

#### ***How do you start a SESS Club?***

- Find a team of adults (a county coordinator and at least one instructor per discipline) who will attend the statewide leader training workshop.
- Find other adults who will assist as needed.
- Find boys and girls interested in shooting sports.
- Enroll the club with the Extension office.
- Meet with the club and plan a year's program.
- Have fun learning together.

#### ***When will the club meet?***

Clubs may meet whenever it is convenient for everyone and wherever there is a safe shooting range available. Meetings can be held at established ranges in armories, in ranges group set up in fair buildings, or at adapted outdoor ranges set up by the club. Meetings may consist of an hour of shooting and a short program. Some clubs meet throughout the year, while others combine several experiences in a one- to two-month period. Our emphasis is on safety and ethics.

#### ***What do 4-H'ers do at club meetings?***

- Practice safety techniques and response to range commands
- Learn basic shooting fundamentals
- Clean and maintain firearms and equipment
- Learn about eye and ear protection
- The ethics about responsible gun usage.
- Take field trips
- Develop shooting skills
- Explore wildlife conservation

***Who leads the club?***

A SESS club leader may be a parent or other adult in the community who is interested in working with young people on basic shooting skills and safety and willing to attend a State SESS Leaders training. Interested adults do not have to be expert marksmen to become involved in the program but must spend a weekend learning techniques necessary to teach youngsters the basic fundamentals of shooting. Statewide leader training workshops are conducted twice a year.

***What special 4-H activities are available?***

- The following disciplines are currently available in Iowa
  - Archery
  - Rifle
  - Shotgun
  - Muzzleloader
  - Wildlife Skills
- A Club may elect to specialize in one of the disciplines, or if trained leaders are available, the club may choose to offer two or more disciplines to its members.
- Clubs can add to their learning by adding programs in:
  - Wild Game/Outdoor Cookery
  - Taxidermy
  - Trapping
  - Hunter Ethics
  - Photography
  - Outdoor Clothing Tips
  - Natural Resources and Conservation
  - Game and Gun Laws
  - Gunsmithing/Making Equipment
  - Giving Demonstrations
  - And Much More

***What is the cost?***

SESS participants are expected to become members of the 4-H Club. Contact your county extension office to find out the program development fee. Individual Clubs may collect dues or hold fundraising events to help members cover the cost of supplies.

***Can parents be involved?***

Yes! 4-H is a family program. Parents often come to the meetings and act as range safety officers or assistant instructors. One or more may serve as club leaders.

***What support is provided?***

Leader training materials are available only through participation in the statewide leader training workshop. (There are no 4-H member materials in this project.) Each County should have one identified 4-H SESS Coordinator to help Club Leaders. In addition, the State 4-H SESS Committee works to promote this activity across the State to identify potential corporate sponsors.

***Where can I get more information on 4-H Shooting Sports?***

Your local county extension office will have information about what is happening in your county. You can also check the website,

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/ShootingSports/>

If you still have questions, contact Jacki Luckstead ([luckstea@iastate.edu](mailto:luckstea@iastate.edu) or 319-465-3224).

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