

4-H PETS PROJECT



Step It Up!

Pass it on! Now that you know how, share it with others. Here are ideas to get you started.

Communication

- How to approach a pet safely
- How to prepare a pet for showing
- How to train a pet for exhibition
- How to select a nutritional diet
- How to select a cat, gerbil, hamster, etc. as a pet
- How to make a carrying cage

Citizenship

- Clean up after your pet
- Volunteer at an animal shelter
- Write a letter to your local paper about the importance of having household pets spayed or neutered

Leadership

- Organize a pet show for your club
- Organize a fundraiser to help benefit an animal shelter
- Research and share with others why it's not a good idea to keep wild animals as pets
- Develop a plan to foster pets of deploying soldiers

4-H
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Are You Into It?

"Lions, Tigers, and Bears, oh my!" Do not make good pets but many other animals do. The 4-H pet project helps you explore what kind of pet fits into your family's lifestyle and how to be an excellent caretaker of your pet.

- Identify breeds and animal species and their characteristics.
- Learn about the selection, care, needs of pets and basic principles of pet behavior
- Demonstrate care and management in feeding, handling, grooming and fitting/showing
- Explore health regulations, first aid, and simple treatments for ailments
- Learn and practice animal ownership responsibilities

Here's what you can do all year!

Starting Out Basic / Level 1

- Gather information and determine the best pet for your family
- Learn about the proper care, grooming and feeding of your pet
- Learn to identify the parts of your pet for conversations with your vet
- Create a plan to prevent your pet from getting lost or finding it if it gets lost
- Purchase and use the appropriate grooming equipment and techniques
- Practice appropriate training for your pet

Learning More Intermediate / Level 2

- Plan a training and exercise program for your pet
- Prepare for participation in a cat or pet show
- Make a decision about breeding or not breeding your pet
- Compare the labels on pet foods to make an informed decision on content and price
- Keep a diary of your pet's health and eating habits
- Do some comparison shopping for setting up an aquarium

Expanding Horizons Advanced / Level 3

- Develop a business plan for a pet care or pet sitting business
- Assess careers related to pets and pet business
- Help a friend make a decision about pet ownership
- Research diseases in pet mammals, birds, and fish
- Identify symptoms and a course of action for a disease in your pet
- How do pets affect the environment



Take Pets further!

Here are other opportunities to explore Pets:

- Contact your county Iowa State University Extension Office for information about local pet related events www.extension.iastate.edu/ouroffices.htm
- Learn about service animals and how they compare and contrast to pets
- If you are interested in veterinary science and taking care of pets, visit with Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine <http://vetmed.iastate.edu/>
- Job-shadow at a local business (pet store, veterinary clinic, breeder, etc.) in a career that interests you
- Explore health safety issues with cats and pets – what diseases do cats and pets have that might make humans ill?
- Explore what kinds of birds make the best pets
- Learn how pet birds and fish arrive at the local pet store. Do breeders in the United States raise them or are they imported from other countries?
- Research all the kinds of parasites your pet might get and how to protect you and your pet
- Research the difference between fresh water fish tanks and salt water tanks
- Sometimes people give bunnies and chicks for presents at Easter – explore the pros and cons
- Explore what kind of restrictions your community might have on pets? Can a pet owner keep a large snake in their backyard – or call a chicken or pot-bellied pig a pet?
- Explore the subject of animal assisted therapy, how it is used and what the benefits are
- If you are in high school, consider attending the annual Iowa 4-H Youth Conference

Exhibit Ideas

- Exhibit your cat or pet at the fair
- Make a first aid kit for a pet. Tell why and how each item is used
- Share diet and nutrition information for raising a healthy pet
- Interview your veterinarian about a microchip to identify your pet; develop a video about options
- Attend a pet show; take photos and make a notebook about pet breeds
- Write a story about famous pets for a younger sibling (Garfield, Lassie, Snoopy)
- Visit a pet store and find as many pieces of cat or pet equipment as you can. Identify necessary equipment and costs
- Make a poster on diseases your pet can get. Tell about its discovery, effects, treatments, etc.
- Research jobs related to pets; make a poster showing three jobs that interest you
- Develop a video showing the steps in training a pet
- Research the country or area your pet came from. Take special note of the people, tradition and other types of animals that live in the area. Design a poster showing your pet's origin
- Design a toy for your pets; tell about your decisions related to safety and cleanliness

Resources

4-H Resources	Other Resources	Record Keeping
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa 4-H Pets www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/pets • The Veterinarian's Way of Selecting a Proper Pet (4H 560A) • Pet Pals Level 1 (4H 563A) • Scurrying Ahead Level 2 (4H 563B) • Scaling the Heights Level 3 (4H 563C) • Pet Leader Guide (4H 563 LDR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Animal http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_animal • Animal Assisted Therapy http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal-assisted_therapy • Healthy pets http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets http://vetmed.illinois.edu/pet_columns http://www.avma.org/firstaid/ • For Cat Fanciers http://kids.cfa.org/index.html • Cats and Wildlife: a Conservation Dilemma http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife/files/cats_and_wildlife.pdf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-H Yearly Summary (4H 0096) • Basic 4-H Project Record (4H 0096A) • Experienced 4-H Project Record (4H 0096B) • Advanced 4-H Project Record (4H 0096C) • Recordkeeping Self-Evaluation (4H 98, PDF)

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