

4-H Record Keeping Guide

What is a 4-H record book?

A 4-H record book is a summary and evaluation of a member's 4-H experiences throughout their years of membership.

Who keeps records?

Everyone keeps records – your parents, your friends, and 4-H'ers like you!

Why should you keep a 4-H record?

- 1. Records teach you how to set goals, how to make plans for action, and how to evaluate yourself.*
- 2. To learn to communicate and summarize effectively*
- 3. Records help you see the good things you've done and what improvements you can make.*
- 4. Records teach you responsibility by completing tasks.*
- 5. Records help you make decisions.*
- 6. Completing a 4-H record book gives you practice in record keeping and organization, which are two things you will use the rest of your life.*
- 7. To evaluate information that will market personal skills through future resumes and application forms.*
- 8. If you want to be considered for an award sometime, you will need your 4-H records.*

When should you start to keep a 4-H record?

As soon as you enroll or re-enroll in 4-H for the year! Do not wait until the end of the year or when 4-H record books are due to be judged. Write down your goals at the beginning of the 4-H year and record your activities and participation in 4-H events as they happen.

How do you start a 4-H record book?

The basic information to include in your 4-H record book is:

- 1. Title Page **
- 2. 4-H Story*
- 3. Table of Contents*
- 4. 4-H Yearly Summary**
- 5. 4-H Personal Goals**
- 6. General photographs*
- 7. General Clippings*
- 8. 4-H Project Records**
- 9. 4-H Project Worksheets (i.e. market and breeding animal worksheets)* - financial records*
- 10. Project photographs*
- 11. Project clippings*

**Each asterisk denotes required forms, so long as the form is applicable.*

Example: A project worksheet is not required for a visual arts project.

NOTE: At the end of this guide is the evaluation form that the judges use when judging record books. An awards nomination form is also included in this guide.

Title Page

Use an unlined sheet of paper and include your name, address, age (at the time of enrollment), years in 4-H, and the current year. It is nice to include a photograph of you but it is not required. If you have computer access, typing your title page makes your book look neat.

4-H Story

Your 4-H story is your biography, meaning it is a paragraph or more of who you are. Included would be your name, age, grade and anything your want to remember about yourself or want others to know. Many include the projects they enjoy in 4-H, club and county activities they enjoy and other things that happen in their life (i.e. school, church, family, etc.). The 4-H Story most often follows your title page but does not necessarily need a tab.

Table of Contents

This is an optional page, but it adds a lot to your record book. If you tab your book, it would simply be a listing of those tabbed sections.

Example:

1. 4-H Yearly Summary
2. 2008
3. 2009
4. 2010
5. Woodworking
6. Food & Nutrition
7. Pets
8. Photography

Yearly Summary

- This should follow your Table of Contents in your record book because it is the summary of all your 4-H activities.
- Make it clear, complete, and to the point.
- This is a summary, so it should be filled out at the end of the year.
- If you need more space than what is provided, feel free to add pages.

4-H Personal Goal Record

You'll complete one of these forms each year. It helps you to set some 4-H goals that are not related to your 4-H projects. Project goals belong on the 4-H Project Record sheet.

Setting Goals

There are three important parts to a goal: What, How, and When

- What is it that you want to do?

- How will you do it?
- When will you finish?

Another important test for a goal is called the “control test”. That means you must have some control over what happens.

One example of a 4-H personal goal might be this:

“Help people in my community this year by helping to plan and carry out a club community service project”.

The HOW is “helping to plan and carry out a club community service project”.

The WHAT is “help people in the community”.

The WHEN is “this year”.

And the goal passes the “control test” because the 4-H’er does have some control over whether he or she will help carry out a community service project.

Setting Goals

As you work towards your goals throughout the year, record the things you’ve done and learned. The 4-H’er with the example goal listed above would record what kind of community service project the club decided to do and how they did it. He/she would want to highlight his/her participation in the project, as well as things he/she learned.

This is the place that you record information about any 4-H activities that are not directly related to a project. Examples are presentations, Share-The-Fun acts, camps, parties, community service projects, etc.

Evaluation

On the back of this form is the place to write down how you feel and/or how you have changed by working towards your personal goals. If you changed your goals during the year or didn’t complete a goal, this is a good place to tell why. That’s important too!

If you need to add extra pages to your 4-H Personal Goals Record, that is fine!

General Photographs

Photographs are fun to look at and help tell your 4-H “story”. In this section include general 4-H photographs not relating to your 4-H projects and those that relate to your personal 4-H goals. Photographs about 4-H projects will go in the project section.

Examples to include would be photographs of you leading an activity at your club meeting, you and your club on a club tour, you being installed as a club officer, a photograph of you helping to set up your club’s fair booth, etc.

Here are a few tips to remember:

1. Title or explain all photographs. Ten years from now you may wonder what they were.
2. If you are pasting photographs to paper use glue. Rubber cement, clear tape and picture tabs do not hold for long periods of time.

3. Mount photographs on plain paper – could be colored if you wish.
4. Photographs that relate to a specific 4-H project should be kept with that project.
5. General photographs could also be placed with the yearly summary because they are a visual summary of the year.

General Clippings

This is the section for any general newspaper clippings that pertain to your general 4-H year or to your personal goals. For example, you can include the published reports of your 4-H club meetings that the club reporter sends to the newspaper. Perhaps the newspaper covers an activity that you participated in. This is the place for it.

If you don't take the newspaper that a clipping is in, ask a friend to save it for you or make photocopies.

Keep in mind:

1. You may use photocopies, but the original is preferable.
2. Trim them neatly and mount on white, unlined paper.
3. Use glue, not clear tape. Tape yellows and becomes brittle with age.
4. Arrange your articles neatly.
5. Clippings of a project should be kept with that project.
6. Underline or highlight your name and/or club where it appears. Don't save clippings that don't pertain to you in any way.
7. General clippings could also be placed with the yearly summary because they are a visual summary of the year.

4-H Project Record

You'll need to fill out one of these forms for each project (and for each year) you carry to completion. You may add extra pages as needed.

Basic Information

At the top of the form, write down the project and the number of years you have enrolled in the project. Remember this is for the project area not your exhibit (example: Food and Nutrition not Cookies). Project meetings are regularly held for some projects, such as dog. Be sure to write those down. Project meetings are any special county wide 4-H meeting you attended that pertained to your project. If your 4-H club holds a special project workshop that you attended, that may also be included as a project meeting.

Setting Goals

At the beginning of the year you should write down your goals and plans in the first section. Remember (see 4-H Personal Goals) that you need to include the three parts of a goal: What, How, and When. Your goals should also pass the "control test". Here are two examples:

Good Goal: Learn to sand and finish wood before next summer by finishing a set of bookends for the fair.

Poor Goal: Get a blue ribbon on my bookends at the fair this summer.

Why is one goal better than the other? First let's look at the good goal example and its parts.

- What – learn how to sand and finish wood
- How – finish a pair of book ends
- When – before next summer

The goal is under the 4-H'ers control – in other words, learning to sand and finish wood is something that he/she decides to do. It isn't dependent on someone else.

Now let's look at the poor goal example.

What – a blue ribbon on my bookends

How – not given

When – at the fair this summer

The goal is not only missing HOW, it is also not under the 4-H'ers control. The color of the ribbon earned at the fair is determined by the judge, not by the 4-H'er.

Record What You Do

As you go through the year, record in this section what you've done and learned. Use number to tell "how many". Write down what things you made or selected, what animals you took care of, etc. If you have a market beef project, for example, and you are responsible for feeding all your families feeder calves be sure to write that down! Be as specific as possible and tell about the decisions and plans you carried out.

Citizenship

Citizenship involves helping and assisting others. This includes community service projects that may be project related – for example, planting trees at the nursing home as a part of your forestry project. Activities may benefit your club, community, school, church, individuals, etc.

Leadership

Leadership is taking the lead on giving direction, planning, and organizing. Effective leadership depends on help and assistance from others. An example of leadership in a project would be organizing a bread baking workshop for your club as a part of your food and nutrition project.

A NOTE – If you would ever like to be considered for an award in this project, citizenship and leadership are very important. For state level consideration, leadership and citizenship within a project area each count for 25% of the criteria, with the actual project work counting for the remaining 50%.

Communications

If you give an educational presentation, working exhibit, make radio tapes, etc. within this project area, this is the place to record those activities. Write down what it was about, the kind of presentation, the group you gave it to, and the number in the audience.

Recognition and Exhibits

Here is where you will list any recognition you have received in this project area. This includes any exhibits that were judged. Write down what the exhibit was, the placing it received, and the level at it was judged. Here's an example:

Single photograph of a lamb – Blue, best of Union County – county fair
Photograph series of balloons – Purple – county fair, Red – state fair

Also, if you receive an award in this project area during the current year, include that in this section. If you earn a county award, you'll need to record that in this section after you get your record book back.

General Financial Summary

If you are carrying a project that asks for detailed financial summary in the project worksheet (i.e. market livestock), you do not need to complete this section. For all other projects, you'll need to summarize your financial expenses and any income resulting from your project work. If the project is not completed before you turn your record book in, write the final figures in pencil. When your record book is returned you can finish it in ink.

Be sure of your figures. Double check them for accuracy. Don't just make them up.

Evaluation

Here's where you write down how you feel about your goals and accomplishments in this project year.

4-H Project Worksheet

In addition to the 4-H project record (which is completed for each project), some projects also have a specific worksheet; worksheets are available at the Extension Office and online. You also need to complete this worksheet. Make sure you are complete and accurate. Some of the projects with special worksheets include any meat animal, dog, horse and pony, photography, and horticulture.

If your project does not have a special worksheet, you are not required to complete any more records other than what you already have written in your 4-H Project Record form. However, you are encouraged to include any other appropriate information about your projects if you want. You may "make up" your own project worksheet to suit your needs.

Project Photographs & Clippings

Photographs of your project are important to have and add a lot to your 4-H record book. Ask someone to take pictures of you as you are working on your project as well as the finished product. Photographs of you at the sewing machine or feeding your lambs are important records of what you've done. Many include pictures of themselves while having their project judged.

Any newspaper clippings that pertain to your project or project work should also be included.

Attach photographs and clippings to paper. Be sure to follow the suggestions given earlier in this book under “General Photographs” and “General Clippings” section for mounting, displaying, and labeling.

General Helps

1. Be neat.
2. Be accurate in your reporting.
3. Check your math, spelling and grammar.
4. Use a black or blue ink pen if writing, if printing from the computer, make sure the ink is dark and not faded. Exception: pencils are to be used when project worksheet totals are not complete and shouldn't be finished in ink. Remember that white-out can be used to correct a mistake that is written in ink.
5. Use white, unlined paper.
6. Use glue, not rubber cement or tape.
7. Always put the most current year on the top; think: new first.
8. Use tabs to identify the sections in your book.
9. You may include but are not required:
 - Project books and guidelines
 - Ribbons and medals
 - Souvenirs
 - Programs
 - Pamphlets
 - Newsletters
 - Letters

How Do You Arrange Your 4-H Records?

One good way to arrange your record book is this:

1. **Title Page** – include your name, address, age, club, years in 4-H, and the current year. You may also include a photograph of yourself.
2. **4-H Story**
3. **Table of Contents** – (optional) A listing of all the sections in your record book.
- *4. **4-H Yearly Summary.**
- *5. **Current Year** –
 - 4-H Personal Goals
 - General Photographs
 - General Clippings
- *6. **Previous Year(s)** – (one sections for each previous year)
 - 4-H Personal Goals
 - General Photographs
 - General Clippings
- *7. **Project A** – Current year's 4-H Project Record
 - Current year's 4-H Project Worksheet
 - Current year's Project photographs and clippings
 - Previous year's Project Record
 - Previous year's Project Worksheet

Previous year's Project photographs and clippings
(continue back, always keeping the most recent year on top)

***8. Project B, C, D ...** - Arrange the same as Project A

*Each one of the asterisk sections should be tabbed for easy reference. Label them 4-H Yearly Summary, by the year (i.e. 2002), and by project (i.e. visual art).

The next section in this book is a "sample" 4-H record book that will demonstrate the order that is outlined above.

Your 4-H record book is a written record of your accomplishments in 4-H. In years to come, you'll enjoy looking back through it too. You'll be able to see how much you've grown and learned. So start collecting photographs and clippings now. Think about your goals for the coming year and then ... start DOING! Because that's what 4-H is all about – learning by doing.

Miscellaneous Information

1. Records can be kept in a binder, the green 4-H record book cover, a scrapbook, or they can even be a video record book. There are many possibilities!
2. Remember that this is a guide to the traditional 4-H record book.
 - a. Record books can be in a variety of formats (scrapbook, video, etc.) so long as all required information is included.
3. The most important thing to remember about record books is that you include all of the required information. Example: A write up can be used in place of a project record so long as the member includes all of the information on the record form in the write up. If you do this, double-check that you have all the information by looking at a project record.
4. Members can start a record book whether they are a first year member or have been a member for seven years. However, it is best to start your first year so that you can better see how much progress you have made.
5. Use the evaluation from as a self-check list for your record book. It will help you understand what the judges are looking for in a quality record book.
6. Awards are listed on the county website. 4-Her's must qualify and apply for these awards, and some of the awards require references.

Helpful Online Resources

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/>
Iowa 4-H

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/recordkeeping.htm>
Record Keeping in Iowa, online record book forms

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/union>
ISU, Union County Extension website

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/union/kidsteens.htm>
Scroll about halfway down the page to find Personal Goals Sheets, awards nomination forms, and much more.

Title Page

Photograph

Name:

Address:

Age:

Club:

Years in 4-H:

Current Year:

Table of Contents

1. 4-H Yearly Summary
2. Current Year (2010)
3. Past Year – (2009)
4. Past Year – (2008)
5. Past Year – (2007)
6. Project Section – Market Beef
7. Project Section – Food and Nutrition
8. Project Section - Astronomy
9. Project section – Woodworking

*You do not have to write “current year”, “past year”, or “project sections” just list the year or the name of the project (project = food and nutrition, exhibit = cookies).

General Information

A section for each year (current year on the top) should include:

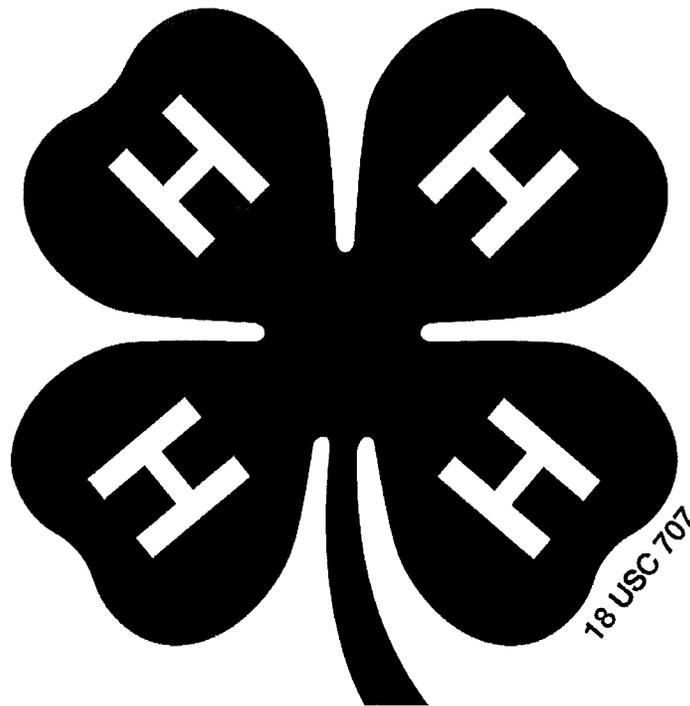
1. 4-H Yearly summary
2. General Photographs
3. General Clippings

Project Sections

A separate section for each project should contain (this information should be arranged within each section with the current year's project records on top):

1. 4-H Project Record
2. 4-H Project Worksheet
3. 4-H Project Photographs and Clippings

Union County 4-H Record Keeping Guide



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