



County 4-H Records

A Guide for 4-H Leaders

About the County 4-H Record Forms

The County 4-H Record is designed to be used as a working document by 4-H members. Three levels of the County 4-H Record were developed to be age appropriate for youth. The junior record is for members age eight to 10, the intermediate is for members age 11 to 13, and the senior record for members age 14 and older. The forms are designed for members to use regularly throughout the 4-H year to chart their progress and keep track of their accomplishments. The design of the junior and intermediate record allows members to use the same record for three years, adding information as it happens. The senior record has parts that are completed each year, with new pages inserted for each additional year.

Youth development competencies, workforce preparation models, and the NH 4-H Marketing You material were used to determine the type of information 4-H youth need to record. The County 4-H Record asks members for information about their club membership, their participation in meetings, events and activities, their leadership and community service involvement, significant recognition received, and their development of personal and life skills.

Why Do County Records?

Record keeping is a basic life skill that everyone needs to learn to function in today's busy world. Common tasks like managing a personal check book or more complex tasks such as finding a solution for a serious problem require record keeping skills. Keeping records is something a person can learn to do. Record keeping also helps build skills in organizing, goal setting, and self evaluation. If children learn and practice record keeping at a young age they will be more likely to make it a good habit for the rest of their lives. In addition, the cumulative format of the 4-H Record helps 4-H members track their own progress and development and gives them a sense of pride in their accomplishments. Even if records are not submitted for judging, they can serve as a valuable resource to members as they become older and need to document their involvement and experiences on applications and resumes.

Every 4-H member should try to keep 4-H records. Leaders can help by encouraging members to track their activities and what they have learned regularly at club meetings.

Members should be encouraged to treat their record as an important document. They should keep it in an appropriate holder (a separate notebook or folder works well), and enter information neatly and carefully. Since this is considered a working document and not an item taken out once a year, some normal wear and messiness can be expected. However, if members are encouraged to treat the record as important, legibility and care in entering information will soon become second nature to members.

Recognition System

4-H Records are part of the 4-H recognition system. Records can be evaluated at the club and/or county level. Counties may choose to provide a system for recognizing all 4-H members who complete their 4-H records each year.

Youth who are at least 11 years old who have been enrolled in a project for two or more years may choose to apply for County 4-H Medals. There is an official County Medal Application Form that instructs the 4-H member on how to apply for a project medal. The 4-H Record is a major part of this process.

Cover Sheet

Juniors and Intermediates

The cover sheet is designed to be updated annually. When starting a new record, the member will fill in the personal information at the top of the page. In years 2 and 3, this information is only changed if it is no longer correct. The member circles the correct number for age, years of membership, and grade. In future years the next appropriate number will be circled. See the example for a 9 year old 2nd year 4-H member in the dog project. Both the leader and the member will sign at the bottom of the page each year.

Note that for # of business meetings attended, members may just keep a tally in the block. At the end of the year they can write a number in the bottom of the block. Leaders may want to keep track of total meetings held and give this figure to members at the end of the club year.

Seniors

Since members could be using a senior record for a period longer than 3 years, blanks are provided instead of typed numbers for age, year, grade. The member will fill in the appropriate number in the first blank on each line. The second and third years that they use this record they use blank space 2 and 3 respectfully. After 3 years they will use a fresh cover page, filling out the appropriate information for the year that this new sheet is started. See the example for a 15 year old 6 year member in the sewing project.

Leader Hint To help demonstrate record keeping and to be able to provide information for members/parents about club activities the leader may want to keep a simple club record that is added to at each meeting. Your 4-H Leaders Handbook has some helpful forms that could be used. This could become part of the club's scrapbook. An example follows:

Club Record

DATE	PLACE	Focus
9/12	Jones	Sign up, yearly planning
9/26	Smiths	Parts of dog, demos
10/2	Dr Tom	Field trip to vet hospital

Project Page

The project page is where all information relating to the specific projects a member is involved with. A page has space for two project years (one year per side). Since this is a working record and most time spent in 4-H is on project work, this part of the record should be taken out and worked on regularly. At the beginning of the year, members, working with leaders, should set personal goals and write them down on this page. They can fill out blocks 1, 2, and 3 at this time. During the year members will need to track progress toward those goals, so occasionally setting a few minutes aside at meetings will be helpful for members in this effort.

NOTE - If members have more than one project they should use a separate project page for each project. This allows senior members to group project pages by project area, showcasing the growth in that project area.

If you have a member who writes exceptionally large, a project page with the same format spread over both sides is available instead of the standard one with space for one year on one side. Ask your 4-H office for this.

Reminder: leaders must sign the project page.

Juniors

Members will have simple skill goals such as “to make my dog sit when told,” “to be more patient with my dog,” “to be able to brush out ear mats.” Knowledge would be things like learning “the different dog groups,” “parts of the dog.” How to accomplish this would be things such as: attending an obedience class, having a groomer visit the club, studying dog parts and groups in the member’s book, slowly building practice time from 5 minutes to 15 minutes.

Intermediates

Encourage members to set at least one goal related to life skills or leadership in addition to their project goals.

Seniors

Have members consider block 4 of the previous year before setting their goals. How might they reach some of these unmet goals from last year? Have them consider where they need additional growth personally as well as in the project. Use project curriculum guides for members who have accomplished a lot and need some help identifying additional areas for growth in the project.

Activities

This section allows members to track their involvement in activities beyond the regular club meeting.

Juniors

Members will check off activities as they happen. If a member participates in an activity that is not listed they may add it in one of the empty blocks at the bottom of the page. More advanced juniors may make a note in the block of what they did.

Intermediates

Members will write a few words telling how they participated. Refer to the example. Encourage members to use a few specific words rather than writing a lengthy sentence.

Seniors

Members will use a fresh page for each year. Write in the year at the top of the page and then list briefly what the participation was. Make sure to use an action verb that explains the type of involvement. Refer to the example. From this activity sheet, seniors should then flip to the Skills section. If any of the skills listed were used in an activity note it under the skill area, explaining how this skill was used. Refer to the example.

Leadership, Citizenship, Service

Leadership and service are important parts of what 4-H is about. In this section members keep track of their efforts in this area. Have members use as many lines as needed for each year. The following year will start on the next blank line. If members run out of space they can add another piece of paper or start a second page from a fresh record.

Juniors

Members list the year and then briefly tell what they did. Help members keep their note brief but precise. First year members can do service projects such as spending time with a senior citizen or helping clean up a playground. Many youth in this age group can serve in a leadership role as a member of a planning committee for a holiday party or club celebration.

Intermediates

Have members keep their descriptions brief but precise. Ask them “What part did you take in this effort - planner, helper, caller, etc. What did you actually do?” For example: caller - remind 8 families of meetings, service chairman - asked Humane Society needs, helped collect 150 pounds of pet food. Use numbers to show hours, dollars, # of people when possible.

Seniors

Keeping this part of your record up to date regularly will help greatly when you complete your skills section. Keep a log of the different roles you played in these areas along with a quick note of what your responsibilities are. Whenever possible after one of these experiences, flip to the skills section. Jot a note under specific skills telling how you used this in your leadership, promotion, or service activity. Refer to the example.

Significant Achievement or Recognition

Recognition is one way for members to build pride in themselves. While recognition can vary from a note of appreciation or a comment from an adult to a ribbon, trophy, or scholarship, not all of them are so important over the span of a 4-Her's years of membership. Members should not list every certificate or ribbon they have received. Help them note the difference between all recognition and recognition that really had significant meaning for them (their first blue ribbon, a special certificate for an outstanding service project, etc.) Remember that camperships and scholarships are a form of recognition.

Life Skills

Life skills are specific skills that members need to learn to be successful as adults. Members might recognize that they learned one of the listed life skills through their 4-H work and can note this on their record. Other youth will see that they had already learned specific life skills but 4-H gave them lots of opportunity to practice these skills and should note this.

Juniors

Youth at this age should begin to recognize and practice important life skills like feeling good about themselves (self esteem), getting along with others, and making decisions. Have members check any of the skills they used during the year. Have them use an X for skills done for the first time. Have them give an example of how they used one of the skills at the bottom of the page.

Intermediates

Members usually have not learned or used all of the listed skills. Just have them leave the lines for unused skills blank. Note that there is one line for each year of this 3 year form. While a member may have used communication skills 6 times over the course of the year, he/she does not have to list each one. Just have them give one example of when this skill was used. Use phrases, not sentences and be specific.

Seniors

If members have done a good job of noting skills used when updating their leadership or activity pages, this section should be complete. If not, have them read through this section and note a specific example if they recall using a particular skill. Generalizations such as “I always try to help others” should not be used. Specific examples like “taught 5 novices to clip calves” are.

My ___ 4-H Year

This is a chance for members to highlight their year's work and to make their record more personal. A new story page needs to be added each year.

Note - For those that have access, a computer can be a helpful and creative way to do a 4-H story. This must be the member's work. If an adult must do the computer work, it should be just as the child dictates it and the child should be involved in any editing.

Juniors

Have members respond to a few of the questions noted below. Have members use their own words. Grammar is not as important as the thoughts members want to share and the self esteem they experience as they tell about the highlights of their year. Do encourage complete sentences and have the child read it over for obvious mistakes that can be corrected. If you have a member who has difficulty writing, a drawing or series of drawings is acceptable.

Intermediates

These members should be more careful about their format, grammar, and style. They should also proofread their work. Stress that this must be the member's own words but help them smooth over rough spots. Spelling and punctuation should be checked when this page is finished. If the child has trouble with spelling an adult may help. Judges will not disqualify a record with grammatical and spelling errors but will note under comments when a member needs to be more careful in this area.

Seniors

Seniors need to show that they can reflect on the past year and start to identify personal gain from their experiences. The same guidelines for proofreading as the intermediates should be used.

Addendum

Members may add up to two pages of pictures and mementos to finish their record. These should not be overdone. Do not overlap pictures or items. Only pictures and items from the current 4-H year should be included - items from previous years should be removed and put in a memory book. If members have an active life in other organizations they may wish to use one of the pages to show their involvement in these activities.

A Final Note

If the 4-H member is not interested in completing a 4-H record but the parent wants to keep track of what their child has done, the parent may use a 4-H record form. This use of the record is for home use and reference only and should NEVER be submitted for judging.