

WELCOME TO 4-H Project Goal Setting



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In 4-H, youth set goals and document for themselves how well they worked toward achieving those goals.



What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.

-Zig Ziglar



Step # 1: Getting Started (Setting your Goal)

You've chosen your 4-H project! Now let's think about you want to accomplish this year. NOTE: For younger learners, you might think of this as **WHAT YOU WANT TO DO** in your project.

By setting your goal, you are pointing yourself in the direction you want to go. Examples of 4-H Project Goals:

I will enter my dog in obedience at the county fair.

I will learn to make a nutritious snack.

I will learn to ride English.

The most **effective** goals have a timeline, so add a deadline to your goal. Example:

I will learn to make a nutritious snack BEFORE THE DECEMBER 4-H meeting.

Step # 2: Going Forward (Planning the Steps)

Now that you have your goal, let's figure out what you are going to do to get there! What **STEPS** do you need to take to meet your goal?

For example, if your goal is to enter your dog at the county fair, what do you need to do between now and then? You may think of things like this:



4-H Record books

Record Books are a record of what you have done in your 4-H projects over the last year. It's a way of looking at what you learned and experienced.

Think of your record book as a tool to help you understand what you have experienced in your 4-H projects.



Record Books can also show what you have done in your 4-H club and at the county, district, and state-levels in 4-H.

What is the purpose of Record Books?

Record Books give you the chance to record your goal-setting experience and project work, and share it with others.

Why might I want to do a 4-H Record Book?

A record book is a tool to help you **reflect** back at your goal-setting experience. Also, your record book becomes documentation of your time in 4-H. You will be able to "page" through your years in 4-H and recall the experiences that you had with your family, friends, and leaders.

And then there are those **skills** you learn as you do record books - things like communication, organization, presentation skills, and documentation skills.

- Attend 4-H dog trainings
- Order Dog Project Literature
- Practice with my dog every day.

This is your "plan" - what you will do during the year to meet your goal.

Your plan might also include sharing your project work - maybe giving a demonstration at your 4-H club or at a project meeting. You might also want to enter the Demonstration or Speaking contest and share what you have learned about your project.

Congratulations! You're on your way! You have a **PLAN!**

Step # 3: The Last Step (Reflecting)

This happens when you have completed your goal. It's time to step back and ask yourself the big question: **HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR PROJECT?**



While you may be all excited about completing your project — this last step of your goal setting is very important. Take time to look back and ask yourself these questions:

- What did you like about what you did with your project?
- What went well?
- What parts of your project were challenging for you?

Sometimes we don't meet our goals, so then a good question to ask yourself is:

- What would I do differently next time?

Even **not** meeting your goal can be a great learning experience, if you give yourself a chance to think about what happened.

Keeping Track of Your Goals

How do 4-H'ers keep track of their goals and the progress they make during the year? Here's one way of doing it (ISU, 1995-1997):



Beginning of the Year

Here is what I would like to learn this year (list one or more goals for each project):

During the Project Year

Here are the steps I will take to meet my goal (list steps):

Here's how I helped others or taught others in this project:

Here is the recognition I received in my project:work (examples: ribbon, certificate, thank-you, name in paper):

Here's what I learned, and how I felt about my project experience:

Note: Remember that a fair exhibit is just one part of your project.

