



Create Your Own 4-H Project!

A self-determined project worksheet



STEP
9



STEP
8



STEP
10

CREATE YOUR OWN 4-H PROJECT!

—Self-Determined Project Worksheet*



Create your own **project, timeline, and goals!**

A 4-H project includes all the learning and activities that you do in one subject area during the entire year. It may include citizenship activities, leadership activities, or community service. A project is the whole **enchilada!** (See glossary on page 6 to compare how a “project” differs from an “**exhibit!**” They are NOT the same thing!)



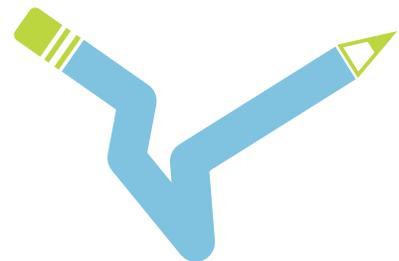
A self-determined project (created by you) allows YOU to decide what you want to learn, what you want to do, and how you want to **share** what you learn. Yes, you can zoom in on your interests and create projects that are not included in the 4-H project list. You can get help from others and **GO CREATIVE!**



Here are some ideas!

- ★ Design a weather station
- ★ Paint and dress a porcelain doll
- ★ Check out careers in the CIA or FBI
- ★ Create a web site on something that interests you
- ★ Learn about Iowa baseball players of the past
- ★ Start a collection of rocks, signatures, maps, or ?????
- ★ Explore the history of a building (or cemetery) in your community
- ★ Create your own family fun night
- ★ Design a family newsletter and e-mail it to your seldom-seen cousins
- ★ Raise llamas
- ★ Cook using a campfire
- ★ Find out how to be an exchange student or IFYE (International Four-H Youth Exchange)

Here we go! Sharpen a pencil, find an eraser, and follow the steps. (Remember this is a worksheet—not a final report.)



* to be used with your record-keeping system

LEARN

Step 1: Define topic

I would like to learn about...

(and/or) I would like to learn how to...

Step 2: Gather and evaluate information

I can get information on this topic from...

Need help?

How about...

- ★ Attending a workshop?
- ★ Going to summer camp?
- ★ Asking for information at the county extension office?
- ★ Checking the library?
- ★ What key words will you look up?
- ★ Interviewing an expert?
- ★ Some possible experts are:

- ★ Surfing the Web?
- ★ Record helpful Web sites here:

http://

http://

http://

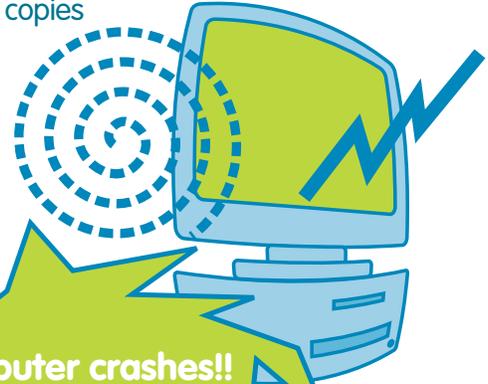


Is the information reliable?

See "Analyzing Information on the Internet" (PM 1789b) and "Online Health Information—Should you believe what you see?" (N-3418) at www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/pubs

(Or request copies

from your county extension office.)



Computer crashes!!

Stop and brainstorm

DO

Step 3: Determine action

What might you do?

For example: (Check all that apply)

- Collect and organize information for my own reference
- Practice my new skill
- Plan and complete a community service project
- Brainstorm** other ideas

What do you **MOST** want to do with this information?





Is this realistic for the time and other resources you have available?

- yes
- no
- I think so

Which ONE thing will I do first?

1. _____

If time and resources allow, what one or two things would I also like to try to do?

Optional

2. _____

3. _____

Specifically, I am going to

by _____ (date).



Congratulations!
You just
set a goal!

Step 4: Design action plan

To reach my goal by the **deadline** I set, I need to



- Make a list of the steps

Will be done by _____

- Make a list of the supplies

Will be done by _____

- Gather the supplies

Will be done by _____

- Get additional help from others

Will be done by _____

Specifically: _____

- Other _____

Will be done by _____

Mark these assignments to yourself on the calendar, and/or copy the list and post it on the refrigerator.

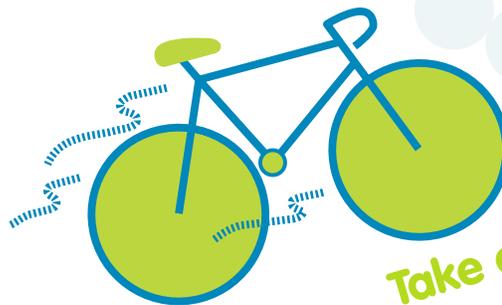
Step 5: Anticipate roadblocks

Everybody has them. Check your family calendar and get advice from a parent or adult. What things might keep you from completing the tasks by the dates you set? What might you need to do differently?



Step 6: Act

List **all** the things you do for your project:

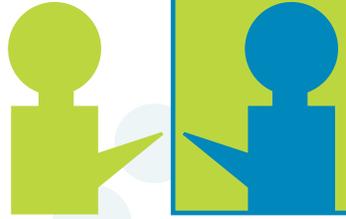


Take a break

REFLECT

Step 7: Evaluate

Did you reach your goal in the timeline you set? _____
 Why? _____



Why not? _____

On this project, my **roadblocks** were:

The thing(s) that was easier than I imagined was:

The thing(s) that was harder than I imagined it would be was: _____

Things I learned were: _____

Some things I would do differently next time are:

Things I would like to learn/do as a result are:

How does this match what you originally wrote for Step 3? Are they all new ideas? If you have time and energy, try another idea, repeating the questions in steps 4-6.

SHARE

Step 8: Share what you've learned with someone else

I will share what I learned by:

Still need ideas?

How about...

- ★ giving a presentation
- ★ writing a description about it in a letter to a friend
- ★ creating a Web site
- ★ showing others how to do (skill) at a club workshop or at a party for friends
- ★ designing a poster
- ★ making an exhibit



APPLY

Step 9: Tell someone else

I shared what I learned by:

on _____ (date).

Write a thank you note to the person(s) who helped you!

CELEBRATE

Step 10: Recognize completion

Congratulations! You set a goal and worked toward reaching it. Your final "product" may or may not be exactly as you imagined it, but you practiced several very important skills in the process. And doesn't it feel good to have finished something you set out to do? Enjoy it!





Glossary for “Create Your Own 4-H Project!”

Apply: Using what you’ve learned in another situation. A simple example is measuring dry and liquid ingredients. You might learn how to do it the first time you make cookies, but you apply it again whenever you bake or cook.

Brainstorm: Letting your mind wander and listing all the things you can think of about the topic. Anything is possible at this point—no judging allowed!

Deadline: Completion date that you set for yourself or that is set by someone else. For example, the county fair entry day and the record book due date are both deadlines you can’t change. But you can change the deadlines you set for working on your goals.

Enchilada: Tortilla usually rolled with meat and/or beans inside and served with chili-flavored sauce. In slang terms, it means the whole thing, the big picture, the whole ball of wax, etc.

Exhibit: What you take to the fair to show one part of what you have learned in your entire project. Smaller and more specific than a project.

Goal: Sentence that defines what you want to do by a specific date. A project is likely to have one overall goal plus several smaller and more specific goals.

Project: All the learning and activities in one area or subject. Usually summarized by year and may continue for more than one year. Often includes

activities in leadership, citizenship, or community service. For example, a project in geology could include a leadership activity, such as organizing a group of club members to go rock hunting; a citizenship (and communication) activity, such as sharing a rock collection with a third grade class; and a community service (and communication) activity, such as setting up a rock identification booth at a county conservation park open house. Exhibits are usually designed to show a part of what has been learned in a project.

Roadblock: Anything that gets in the way of achieving your goals or finishing what you wanted by a deadline. Some—but not all—roadblocks can be anticipated. Getting sick, breaking an arm, or receiving a last-minute invitation to vacation with a friend are surprise roadblocks. Other possible roadblocks might involve being unable to get needed supplies because the supplier has gone out of business or because they cost more than anticipated; learning that your expert is on vacation for six weeks; or discovering that a skill takes more practice time than you planned for.

Rules: For the “Create Your Own 4-H Project!” the rules are to have fun, work with others to share what you have learned, and try again!

Share: One of the most fun parts of learning something new. A few of the ways sharing can be done include conversations with friends, speeches to a class or club meeting, writing a report, or creating an exhibit.

Timeline: A calendar or list that shows the steps needed to reach a goal by a deadline. Making a timeline helps you anticipate and prepare for roadblocks that otherwise might prevent you from meeting your deadline.

Additional words you want to add:

Parents: A leader guide (4H 696 LDR) is available for this project. You may request a copy from your Extension county office, or find it on the ISU Extension publications Web site at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/pubs/yo.htm>.

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... and justice for all

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