My 4-H Project Plan

Through 4-H projects you can explore what interests you! Project work is hands-on and self-paced, which means you will choose what you want to do and then work on it independently, outside of club meetings. (Cloverbud 4-H members do not choose individual projects and will do all activities as a group during club meetings.)

Doing a 4-H project includes setting goals, researching your project topic, practicing project skills, and then showing what you've learned by exhibiting your work in the county 4-H Show. This booklet will guide you through the process of doing a 4-H project. You should use a separate copy for each project, and blank copies are available at go.illinois.edu/LMSprojects.

My name: _____

My 4-H age (How old were you on September 1?): _____

My 4-H Club: _____

1. Choose a project

You must choose at least 1 project when enrolling in 4-H each year. The list of projects is included in the Illinois 4-H Project Guide and at 4H.extension.illinois.edu/ways-participate/projects. There is no limit on how many projects you can do, but most new members will focus on 1 project, and most experienced members don't do more than 3 each year. You can take the same project for multiple years, increasing your knowledge and the complexity of your exhibit from year to year. **March 1 is the enrollment deadline for most projects.**

Project name: _____

Project level: _____

Years in project (If this is your first year doing this project, put 1.): _____

2. Request the project book

For every 4-H project, Illinois 4-H recommends a specific 4-H project book to help you learn about that topic. Members can receive up to 3 project books each year for free. Request your free book(s) by filling out the online form at go.illinois.edu/ProjectBooksLMS. If you need more than 3 books, you can purchase the additional books at go.illinois.edu/shopIL4H.

Date I requested/purchased my project book: _____

3. Set goals

What do you want to do and learn through your project this year? Write down at least 3 things you plan to accomplish. Remember that the best goals are SMART goals – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely. You can add or change your goals throughout the year as you learn more about your project topic.

What will I do or learn?	Who will help me?	When will I do it?
Example: Make 3 kinds of cookies I've never made before	*dad*	*January-March*
Example: Learn what type of soil is best for growing tomatoes	*librarian*	*November*
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

4. Learn new information and practice skills related to your project

Use your 4-H project book and other resources such as websites, books, and local experts to learn more about your project topic. This is your time to try new things! Your project book will include activities you can do, and you can also practice project skills using kits or other resources. (For most project areas, you are not required to complete all the activities in the project book.) **If doing a live animal project, complete the required ethics training and watch your email for additional important project details.**

Keep track of what you do for your project.
- items you made
- workshops or events you attended to learn about your project topic
- project-related community service activities
- project-related leadership you demonstrated

Project work done:	Cost:
Example: Baked and decorated a cake I donated to the school bake sale	*$10*
Example: Watched a YouTube video on paper quilling and then practiced doing it	*none*
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(continued) <u>Project work done:</u>   <u>Cost:</u>

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

5. Give a talk/demonstration to your club on a topic related to your project

Show your fellow club members how to do something, such as how to properly measure wet and dry ingredients when baking; or tell them about something you learned through your project. Work with your club leader to know what date you will be presenting to your club.

Talk/demonstration topic: _____

Date presented: _____

Number of people present: _____

6. Read the Show Book

The Show Book includes the show schedule, important Show Rules, and the specific "Exhibit Requirements" for each project area. The Exhibit Requirements will tell you exactly what you must prepare and bring to the 4-H Show to demonstrate what you have learned through your project.

The Exhibit Requirements for my project are:

_____

_____

_____

7. Register to exhibit

Being *enrolled* in a project does not automatically mean you will *exhibit* that project. You are not required to exhibit, but it is strongly encouraged. Exhibit registration instructions will be sent to you by county 4-H staff in the spring, and you must register by the following deadlines:

- June 1 – registration deadline for Sangamon and Menard 4-H General Projects Show & Livestock Shows
- 4th Friday in June – registration deadline for Logan 4-H General Projects Shows & Livestock Shows
- Watch for emails about Public Speaking and live animal exhibits

Date I submitted my exhibit registration: _____

8. Prepare your exhibit

Be sure to carefully follow the Exhibit Requirements for your project as you prepare the item/display you will exhibit. *Parents can guide and assist with project work, but members are expected to complete their exhibits themselves.*

9. Participate in the County 4-H Show!

The 4-H Show includes "conference judging" which means that you will talk with a judge about your exhibit. You must be present for in-person judging. The judge will ask you questions about what you learned, where you got the idea for your exhibit, what you would do differently next time, etc. You will receive feedback from the judge and a blue, red, or white ribbon. The very best exhibits may be given special awards.

County 4-H Show ribbon received: ☐ blue   ☐ red   ☐ white

Other awards my exhibit received: _____

10.   Review and reflect on what you accomplished

Which goals did you accomplish? Which goals were you unable to accomplish and why?

_____

_____

_____

What are your favorite things you learned or did through your project? (Consider things you learned through mistakes as well as through successes.)

_____

_____

_____

How can you improve or expand your project next year?

_____

_____

_____