

**Colorado  
4-H Users Guide and Tips  
For 4-H Project e-Record for  
General and Family Consumer Projects**

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**Colorado  
State  
University**

**Extension**

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## Introduction for Leaders and Parents

This guide has been prepared to assist you in completing the 4-H e-Records for General and Family Consumer Science projects. It provides instructions, suggestions and examples to aid you as you fill out your record. The 4-H Project e-Record is for all General and Family Consumer Science projects. You will need to fill out an e-record for each project. This record is for juniors, intermediates and seniors. Members are expected to complete as much of the record as possible on their own, however younger members will likely need assistance in understanding some of the concepts.

Members will want to fill out as much of the record as they can, as soon as they get their records. This will make less for them to do later when it gets closer to the fair. **DO NOT WAIT TO DO YOUR RECORD BOOK AT THE LAST MINUTE!** Members should have enough time to do the record correctly. We believe that leaders and parents should counsel young members in the preparation of their records. These records are developed for the member to need only a minimal amount of leader assistance. *The member is responsible for the actual completion of the record.*

Your record book is just that, a record of this year's work with this particular project. Securely attach extra items that are required by the project such as manuals, plans, experiments, etc. in a sturdy binder.

This e-record is available to you in one of the three ways described below. Along with the record, you will need to find out if your particular project requires specific project information then make sure that you also obtain it. This information can be found in the **Colorado 4-H Clover** at <http://www.colorado4h.org>.

### **Online**

You will access the website and download the required e-records yourself. You will need to check and make sure that all the materials need for your project. Some projects will require a manual that will need to fill out and other projects will require additional information that will need to be completed. For example: the entomology workbook is required and can be ordered from CERC (Cooperative Extension Resource Center) at Colorado State University or can be downloaded from the 4-H website. The 4-H Project e-record is available on the Colorado 4-H Webpage:

[http://www.colorado4h.org/project\\_resources/erecords/index.shtml](http://www.colorado4h.org/project_resources/erecords/index.shtml).

On the 4-H website, you can either go to the Project/Record Resources to choose your project and the unit that you are in and the e-record will be available on the page or go to [http://www.colorado4h.org/project\\_resources/erecords/index.shtml](http://www.colorado4h.org/project_resources/erecords/index.shtml) and find all the e-records. Click on the e-record and you are ready to download it to your computer.

### **Paper**

You may elect to receive all records for your projects from the Extension office or via your club leaders at the appropriate costs.

### **CD**

A Colorado 4-H E-Record CD containing all records for all 4-H projects is available from your local Extension office.

OpenOffice.org is a program that will enable you to open word documents without problems when you do not have Microsoft Word on your computer. Just go to OpenOffice.org website and download the program Writer. OpenOffice.org offers there programs free to the public.

We hope that this User's Guide will help you in teaching record keeping skills. While this is a statewide e-record there will be small differences in how information is put in the record. If you have questions or suggestions concerning issues that may not be covered in this guide, please contact your local Extension office.

## COVER

This is the easiest page in the record book! There is no reason why this page should not be completed when you receive or download your record.

Begin this page by indicating what project you are taking, unit number or title and how many years you have taken the project including the current year.

Check your age group. Remember that your age is as of December 31, 2007.

Juniors 8-10

Intermediates 11-13

Seniors 14-18

Clearly indicate the members' name, 4-H club, county, birth date and age as of December 31, 2007.

Make sure you get all signatures required at the completion of your project.

## PROJECT GOALS

Why do we have 4-H members set goals? 4-H is a youth development program. Facilitating youth development is the role and responsibility of adults who work with youth in 4-H. One way to fulfill this role is to help 4-H members plan, write and evaluate their progress toward goals.

The project goals should be completed at the first project meeting or at the beginning of the project. Leaders and parents should guide the 4-H member in setting good goals. A good goal is one that is obtainable and can be finished. The ability of youth to set and attain goals is affected by the age and developmental stage of the individual child. The following age/grade ranges can be used as a guide, but remember that children are individuals and all advance at a different pace.

**Ages and Stages**

**Ages 5-8 ~Grades K-3**

- Thinking is here and now, not in the future
- Learn best when physically active.
- May complete simple projects
- Exploring possibilities is more important than reaching a goal.

**Ages 9-11 ~Grades 4-6**

- Acceptance by peer groups is important.
- Feelings of competence enhances self-concept
- Can set short-term goals.
- Interests expand from home to neighborhood, to community.

**Ages 12-14 ~ Grades 7-8**

- Can take responsibility in planning and evaluating his/her own work.
- Want to make decisions but still depend on adult guidelines.

- Can set long-term goals and plan strategies to reach goals.
- Implement simple plans.

**Ages 15-19 ~Grades 9-12**

- Abstract thinking and problem solving reach a higher level.
- Implements strategies for reaching long-term goals.
- Manages resources to achieve a goal.
- Exerts effort and preserves toward goal attainment.
- Needs life planning guidance.

To help you identify your goal(s) you may want to answer this question “What do I want to accomplish this year by taking this project”. Once you have answered this question then you will need to list how you are going to go about completing the goal. Who will help you? What type of tools do you need? What type of skills or techniques will you need to learn?

From the table above, you will notice that 8-10 year olds will need help in setting a goal for their project. It should be a simple goal and one that can be reached. Here are some examples of Junior goals:

**Woodworking:**

- I want to learn how to make a birdhouse out of wood. (GOAL)
- 1. Learn what tools I need (Action)
- 2. Find a pattern for a birdhouse (Action)
- 3. Find someone to help me (my dad or my leader) (Action)

**Shooting Sports:**

- I want to learn about archery. (GOAL)
- 1. Learn what equipment I need (Action)
- 2. Talk to the Archery Leader (Action)
- 3. Go to Archery practice (Action)

## Bicycle

- I want to learn how to do hand signals. (Goal)
1. Read about hand signals (Action)
  2. Practice hand signals (Action)
  3. Go to a Bicycle Rodeo (Action)

## Entomology

- I want to learn about bugs. (Goal)
1. Read the entomology unit 1 manual (Action)
  2. Go and look for bugs (Action)
  3. Learn how to pin the bugs right. (Action)

## Foods

- I want to learn to bake two kinds of cookies. (Goal)
1. Learn how to measure right. (Action)
  2. Learn how to make the right size of cookies (Action)
  3. Learn how to read a recipe (Action)

## Clothing

- I want to learn how to sew a pair of shorts. (Goal)
1. Learn how to cut a pattern (Action)
  2. Learn how to use the sewing machine. (Action)
  3. Learn how to sew by hand. (Action)

## Ceramics

- I want to learn how to paint a vase. (Goal)
1. Learn how to clean a ceramic vase. (Action)
  2. Learn how to paint the vase. (Action)
  3. Learn how to put the glaze on. (Action)

## Photography

- I want to learn how to take pictures. (Goal)
1. Learn how to use a camera. (Action)
  2. Practice taking pictures (Action)
  3. Learn about the different films. (Action)

For the younger intermediates, the two goals should be simple and for the older intermediates, the two goals can be more detailed. For the senior member the three goals should be detailed.

If you are not certain that a member can carry out a goal easily, you can give it a “control test”. Does the youth have control over what they want to do? Does the action part of the goal tell what they will do? A member will have control over a goals such as “I will learn to identify ten kinds of trees on my property this fall.” However, if the action mentioned in the goal is what someone else will do, it does not pass the control test. The goal statement, “I will win the high point trophy at the state 4-H Horse Show, does not pass the control test because the judge provides the action that decides who will win the high point trophy.

We are looking for quality goals not quantity. So make your goals mean something to you and make the goals something that you can easily accomplish.

## Project Information and Activity Log

This section is designed for members to record 4-H project information such as project meetings, tours, baking of items, at home project work and specific project requirements (examples: sportfishing requires a certain number of fishing trips). Once you have recorded the date and description of the meeting then you will need to put down what you learned or what you did during that meeting, tour or special project requirement. It will be important to put down when you worked on your project at home on your own and what you learned during that time. In addition, you will need to put down the approximate amount of time that you spent on project work. This means the time you spent learning about your project at the meetings, the time you spent working on your project at home, field trips related to your project, etc.

### Demonstrations

It will be very important to record your demonstration in this section of the record book. We encourage 4-H members to do a project related demonstration and would like to have one for every project that a 4-H member enrolls in. We understand that this may not happen. ***If you do only one demonstration, make sure that you put it down in each of your project record books.*** The requirement is that a 4-H member does a demonstration. You will not be counted down for only doing one demonstration but the judges may comment that they would have liked to have seen a project related demonstration. There are two types of demonstrations; one is an informal demonstration where a skill or technique is demonstrated to other members in the project; the second type is a formal demonstration where you present your project to the entire club. Remember to put down the title of your demonstration and who was there.

### 4-H Community Service

It will be very important to record your community service in this section of the record book. We encourage 4-H members to do a project related community service and would like to have one for every project that a 4-H member enrolls in. We understand that this may not happen. ***If you do only one community service project make sure that you put it down in each of your project record books.*** The requirement is that a 4-H member does a community service project. We would also like to see the community service projects be a service learning project. This means that the 4-H members participate in planning, implementing and celebrating the community service project. The community service project should reach beyond family and friends. Remember to put down what your 4-H community service project was and what you did. The community service project can be something big that the whole clubs does together or it can be something small that just the project members do together.

### EXPENSE RECORD

This section is designed for you to record all of your expenses required for your project. You will want to list any tools, equipment or supplies purchased for use with your projects this year. Some people will list each item separately and that is acceptable

while others will lump all the items together and give one cost. If you lump all the items together, please identify all the items that you are putting together.

**Juniors need only to put down the expenses of the exhibited project.**

Here is a suggestion of what you might consider when thinking about expenses of your project:

Transportation	fuel cost for project meetings Purchasing supplies, tools, etc
Supplies	items needed to complete project

Example: Foods project may want to figure the cost on a batch of cookies and then divide that by the number of cookies to get the individual cost for the project

Only include the cost of items purchased this year. If you already have a camera then the project cost would be the film and film developing.

You may add sheets as necessary to complete the record.

## HOW DID YOU DO?

This section is designed to help the 4-H member evaluate how well they did in accomplishing their goal (s). The member will need to look back at the goals they listed on page 2 at the beginning of the year. Re-list your goals from page 2 and rate yourself on how you did with your goals. Using the scale from 5 to 1, rate how you feel you did on each goal. You will need to give a short explanation of why you think you deserve the rating you gave yourself. It will be very important to give the short explanation so that everyone who reads the record will understand why you rated yourself the way you did. When rating your goals, put parenthesis around the number you choose (example: (5) or (4)).

If you reported more than 3 goals, insert additional copies of this page.

## Specific Project Information

This section is for the additional information needed from these specific projects such as: Artistic (Creative) Clothing, Bread Experiments, Cake Decorating, Ceramics, Clothing Construction, Heritage Arts, Home Environment, Model Rocketry, Photography (Units 4A & 4B, 6), Shooting Sports, Small Engines, Sportfishing, Wildlife, Weeds, Woodworking, and Visual Arts.

A link to a specific supplement page for some of the projects has been provided. You are welcome to use the supplement page and either copy or paste it onto this page or print it out and place in the e-record after the "How Did You Do" page. You can also delete the information from this page and use it the page for your information. These supplements are located at [http://www.colorado4h.org/project\\_resources/erecords/index.shtml](http://www.colorado4h.org/project_resources/erecords/index.shtml). Then select the supplement according to the project. Visual Arts does not have a supplement because the information needed for this project is pictures of their completed art techniques. These pictures can be placed on this page or a separate page and placed in the e-record. These photos are in addition to the photo page requirements.

## PHOTOGRAPHS FROM YOUR 4-H PROJECT

Attach up to 2 pages of pictures, a minimum of four pictures is expected with no more than 5 pictures per page.

Photos should be:

- Pictures of the 4-H member working on their project
- Pictures should tell the story of your project.
- Pictures can either be digital or glued on.
- Don't forget to put captions on your pictures---gives for a better presentation

If you choose to use a digital camera, you will be able to insert the pictures on this page. There will be limited ability to format the picture but it will work. You will be able to put a caption near the picture.

Be selective when putting your photos in your record. Do not overcrowd your page with photos because it is hard to understand what you are trying to show.

ALWAYS INCLUDE CAPTIONS---MAKES THE PICTURES EASIER TO UNDERSTAN

## 4-H STORY

This may be the most important section of your record. The 4-H story can make or break a 4-H project. When a judge is looking for a way to break a tie in judging projects, they will go to the story and see which 4-H member has the best story.

Your story should:

- Be organized and well thought out
- Use correct grammar and punctuation
- Tell of the 4-H member's experiences in the project
- Be a good place to discuss the progress toward the goals
- Include any interesting events whether good or bad.
- Story should be at no more than two pages.

To help you get started with your story you can use the following questions:

- Why did you choose this project?
- Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?
- Did anyone help you?
- What did you like the best about your project?
- What would you do differently?
- How will you use what you learned this year to improve your project next year?
- What results, difficulties or challenges did you have with this project?

### Length and Format Guidelines

You can either type or hand-write your story. If you hand-write the story, use pencil or ink on lined white notebook paper. If a typewriter or computer is used to write the story, use plain white paper with no smaller than 12-point font. Leave a wide enough margin

so the story can be read if when inserted into a sturdy binder/notebook. For younger members using the computer, encourage them to use a larger font (14-16) because it is easier for them to see what they are writing. Also for older members who might use different fonts especially the writing fonts, please use a larger font point such as 14. It will make the story much easier to read. **You will be able to spell check your story.** You may use either single or double-space when writing your story as long as it does not exceed two pages. Younger members may want to double-space their story so they can see what they are writing. You may start your story where indicated in the record or attach a separate sheet at the end of the record.

*Remember a good story is worth the time and effort in the end!*

### **Remember:**

- Start filling out your e-record right away
- Select meaningful goals
- Check to see if your project requires a supplement
- Record all project related information in the activity log
- Enter your demonstration and community service in the activity log
- Enter all of your expenses for your project and put a value on your finished project if applicable
- Evaluate how you did
- Provide pictures of you doing your project
- Create a good story
- Place e-record and required items in a sturdy binder

### **BACKUP YOUR 4-H e-RECORDS!**

With the introduction of all electronic records it is essential that members, parents and leaders develop good file backup habits in order to avoid potential loss of e-Record files and project information.

With today's computers, it is relatively easy to create backup copies of your 4-H e-Record files. It is as simple as copying either the files themselves or the entire file folder where they reside to some type of removable media. The trick is to do it regularly and to then remove the media to a place that is secure and away from the computer where the original project e-Record files are kept.

How regularly? A very simple rule of thumb when considering when to backup your project e-Record files is: How much information are you willing to reenter to get your records back to the point where they are now? I think that answering this question honestly will give you a clue on how often to back up. The key is **to actually do it!** Don't procrastinate! Do it today!

Where to put the backup copy? Getting your project e-record files off of your computer's hard drive is the first thing. That way if the hard drive crashes, your records are safe! In most cases that would be all that you need to do... but ... What would happen if your house was damaged in a disaster and your backup was destroyed? You would be out of luck unless you put your backup in an

entirely different location ... which is what a lot of businesses do! Maybe take your backup to a relative's house or maybe ask your parents to take your backup disk and secure it at work. Maybe e-mail your backup files as attachments to a **trusted** friend or relative and have them save them for you!

Rule of threes! If you physically remove your backup copies to a different location, you will need three copies of your e-Record files ... the original on your computer's hard drive, a "stored backup" at a separate location and a second "in transit" backup (this is the most recent copy that replaces the "stored backup" when you do incremental backups during the course of the year). The "in transit" copy gets left at the remote location and the "stored backup" comes back to be used as the new "in transit" copy!

You have several options as to the media used when backing up your e-Record files. Some of these options are better than others.

Most computers have the old 3.5 inch floppy disk drives and using them for file backup is better than nothing ... barely better than nothing! The old floppy disks are limited in the amount of data that they can hold (no more than 1.44 meg. of space) and they are notoriously prone to failure at the most inopportune of times!

The same things apply to Zip Disk technology. The only thing better about the Zip Disks is that they have larger capacities. However, they too are prone to failure (maybe not as bad as floppy disks but the possibility is still there). With Zip Disks and floppy disks, you need to be careful to keep them away from magnetic sources and they are susceptible to failure due to heat and cold.

CD-R disks are great for archiving files. By their nature, they are designed to be written to only once. At the end of the 4-H year, 'burning' your final 4-H project e-Records to a CD-R disk and then storing them in a cool dry place is an excellent way to keep a permanent copy of your records. However, because you can only write to them once, using CD-R media for multiple backups during the course of the year for active project e-Records would be impractical.

A better option is to backup your e-Record files to CD-RW disks or to use the new USB flash drives (also known as "thumb drives" and several other brand names). Both these technologies allow you use the media over and over by simply copying over the old files with the new ones and the capacities of these drives are more than enough for all your project e-Record files! Both media are very hardy in nature and can take quite a bit of abuse before they fail.

In conclusion, using technology to help 4-H members keep their project records is the right way to go! The majority of members have access to computers either at home or at school and they should be encouraged to use them to complete their 4-H projects ... however a bit of common sense should be used when using computers for record keeping. Keeping computers free of viruses and spyware is critical as is making sure that important files are backed up regularly!