



Reflect and Record

The end of summer is a great opportunity to stop and reflect on the past 4-H year. Many 4-H members reflect on their successes, their challenges, and their experiences through a 4-H record book. Record books are presented in a variety of ways, sometimes through journals, videos, or slideshow presentations. All of these formats allow 4-H members to reflect on their project goals and determine how much progress was made over the past year.

Keeping record books throughout a 4-H career will help youth end up with a summary of all that they've done through their time in 4-H. This summary can be helpful when filling out job and college applications. Record books may also be helpful when applying for county scholarships or awards.



Credit: Alyssa Zirbel

Developing Life Skills

Keeping records of work during a 4-H career helps to grow important life skills.

- » **Self-reflection** on experiences and accomplishments
- » **Goal setting** for the future
- » **Planning and organizing** a successful project or experience
- » **Critical thinking** when challenges arise or things don't go quite as planned
- » **Budgeting** time to meet deadlines and budgeting money to cover the cost of supplies

Adults can create space for youth reflection.

- » Help your youth consider what their goals were for the past year and determine if they met their own expectations.
- » Begin to consider goals for next year. Ask questions like, "If you were going to do things again, how would you do them differently?"
- » Reflect regularly with your youth about their experiences at meetings and events.
- » Take a lot of pictures. Photos and videos are great ways to record participation in activities while also recording achievements.
- » Set aside a few minutes every month for 4-H youth to fill out records.

Clubs and counties may offer awards for keeping high quality records. Check with your local club leader or county educator to learn more.





Track Your Progress

4-H members like you do awesome things every year. Keeping track of what you do in 4-H can help you to talk about your accomplishments with others. Many members keep track of what they did with a 4-H record book. Record books can be really helpful when you apply for college, jobs, or scholarships! If you are unsure of what record keeping your county does, ask your 4-H educator or a club advisor. A sample might be posted on your county webpage.

What should I record?

There's a lot that you can do in 4-H, so keeping track of everything might seem like a lot of work. If you answer "Yes" to any of these questions, you should include it in your record.

- » Did you learn something?
- » Did you complete a project?
- » Did you accomplish a goal that you set for yourself?
- » Did you receive an award or a scholarship?
- » Did you travel somewhere with 4-H?
- » Did you spend or receive money for your project?
- » Did you make a presentation or give a speech?
- » Did you participate in a club activity?
- » Did you serve in a leadership role?



Completing a craft project or helping out with a club community service project are great things to include in your records!

How do I record it?

Once you've got something to record, you have a lot of ways to keep track of it. Use whatever works best for you and the situation! You might use a mix of all of these things!

- » Write your record on a piece of paper, and keep all the paper in a folder.
- » Write all your records in a notebook.
- » Create a 4-H career scrapbook.
- » Set aside a box for ribbons, photos, and all your records.
- » Take a video of yourself where you talk about what you did.
- » Type your records in an online document.

If you store your records online, have an adult help you keep your information safe! It's always good to store an extra copy of your digital records somewhere.



Club officers should record their time spent learning to lead.

Records should **always** answer these questions:

1. What did you do?
2. When did you do it?
3. What did you learn along the way?
4. What important details do you want to remember?

Background Image Credit: Alyssa Zirbel

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