4-H CLUBS FAQ

What is a club?

A club is a group of five or more young people, guided by an adult leader. Members can elect officers and each member chooses one or more projects. Each club may explore a single subject or several subjects. 4-H members elect club officers, conduct their own business, work together on community service activities, meet new friends, and most important, have lots of fun!

Why do young people like 4-H?

4-H provides a chance to learn new things, develop new skills, travel to new places, experience new situations, make new friends, and most importantly have lots of fun. Most importantly, they get to decide what they want to learn and how.

What does it cost?

4-H has no membership registration fee or required uniform. There may be minimal costs for project manuals and some 4-H activities or events. Some clubs have dues to help defray the costs of project materials and refreshments; others take turns or secure private sponsors to cover costs.

Where do clubs meet?

A 4-H club may be organized on community or neighborhood basis and use local facilities, such as the public library, or member's homes. Also it can be organized within a school using the school's facilities, time, and staff. Any place large enough and convenient for the club members is a good choice.

How often do clubs meet?

Most clubs meet once or twice a month all year long, depending on what the group wants to do. The 4-H year runs from January 1 to December 31.

When do clubs meet and how long does a meeting last?

This depends on the group. Many community clubs meet for an hour or two after school, in the evening, or on Saturday. The most important thing is to have a regular time to get together.

How big should a club be?

This depends on the age of the members, the places they have to meet, and the leadership available. The ideal club is big enough to have fun together, but small enough for everyone to feel a part of the group.
What are 4-H projects?

4-H projects are challenging, but practical, planned courses of study with learning experiences centered around a specific subject. Members usually work on a project (subject area) for a year at a time. Hands-on, learn-by-doing involvement is the most important aspect of a project. Making, growing, caring for, observing, and participating are all involved in 4-H projects. The areas range from traditional agricultural and horticulture to modern things like computers, aerospace and even pets!

One of the most important aspects of 4-H project work is that the 4-H Member decides what they want to learn and do as they explore a subject they have chosen. They may select one or more projects, and receive a project manual which guides them through the activities. This allows the project to be self-paced, and gives children important skills in setting and working toward their goals.

What does a 4-H project cost?

It varies. Members are responsible for the cost of supplies for projects. Some projects might use supplies from around the house while others might spend hundreds of dollars in their project. The cost of the project should be realistic to the family situation.

Are 4-H members expected to do their own project work?

Yes, with help. Members are expected to select at least one or more learning experiences related to the project during the year. 4-H is a "learn-by-doing" program. Leaders, junior leaders, and parents may tell or show members how, but members are expected to learn to do things themselves.

Are projects done individually or as a group?

Both. It varies among projects and among clubs. Some projects, like breads or visual arts, are more fun done as a group. Others, like making a dress or growing a garden, will be done individually. Some clubs have several project leaders and do specific project work at club meetings while others rely on parents and others to help members individually.

What do 4-H clubs do at meetings?

4-H clubs usually participate in four general kinds of activities during the meeting. They have a business meeting, special interest programs, project work, and recreation and social activities. Clubs may have a little business to conduct, may work on their projects for a while, and then play a game or two. Some meetings are devoted to one specific topic.
**What are 4-H leaders?**

Volunteer leaders are the backbone of the 4-H program. They are adults who work voluntarily with a group of 4-H members. Volunteers go through a youth protection application and screening process before they are enrolled as leaders. Additionally, volunteers receive training in skills they will need to become a successful 4-H volunteer.

Organizational leaders guide the overall organization of the club, help it function smoothly, and maintain communications among the member families and between the club and the 4-H Office.

Project leaders work with members enrolled in a specific project or project area, assisting them to plan and carry out experiences that will help them reach their learning goals in the project.

Activity leaders work with members planning and carrying out specific activities for the club as a whole.

**Can the same person be project and an organizational leader?**

Sure, if they have the time and interest. Sometimes big clubs divide these jobs and have several project leaders to meet the interests 4-H members have.

**How many leaders should a 4-H club have?**

That depends on the size of the club and the age of the members. At least two are recommended.

**What's expected of parents?**

Children need parental encouragement to get them started in 4-H and to keep them involved in the program in later years.

**Parents can help by:**

- **Sharing**- provide encouragement and take an interest in 4-H projects and activities. Listen, look, and offer suggestions, but avoid the temptation to "take over" and do things. Children learn by their mistakes as well as successes.

- **Preparing**- assist by helping children understand the value of doing projects, having duties in the club, and following through on responsibilities as expected by others.

- **Being there**- Children gain more from 4-H by attending meetings regularly and getting involved in 4-H activities. Parents are welcome at meetings and are encouraged to stay, observe, and become volunteer leaders. However, remember that 4-H clubs are for the youth.
Caring - arrange to participate whenever possible. Parents' presence shows the child that what he or she is doing is very important.

What else can a 4-H member do outside of the local club?

4-H members can participate in a variety of county and state activities depending on their age and ability.

County Workshops & Events – Members are encouraged to attend learning sessions scheduled throughout the year. Fun and competitive events like Public Speaking, Presentations, Fashion Revue, 4-H Entertains and others are offered annually. Many of these events earn trips to District, State and even National events.

4-H Teen Council – Teens age 13 & up meet monthly to help plan county 4-H events, gain leadership skills, and plan community service projects they complete as a group. The County, District and State Councils elect officers annually.

District and State Events – Teen Retreats, NC State 4-H Congress, District Activity Days, State Council Conferences.

National Recognition Trips – Teens can qualify for special trips to National 4-H Congress, National 4-H Conference, and other National events in Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and other exciting cities.

Whatever They Decide – The possibilities are endless. Different areas of interest lead to opportunities that can’t be listed on the page.

Who funds 4-H?

The North Carolina 4-H program is conducted by NC Cooperative Extension through NC State & NC A&T State Universities with funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the state of North Carolina, and local county government.

These funding sources cover professional positions to support local volunteers, curriculum development, and administrative costs. However, individual 4-H clubs receive no direct funding from government sources. Private donors and corporate supporters provide additional funds for specific project areas, youth recognition programs, volunteer development opportunities and other programs in their communities.