

When Something Important Happens

Write it Down

A. Calendar Method - Keep a calendar in a handy location (such as on the refrigerator) and every time the member does something related to 4-H, school, church or other organizations, write it down.



Then at the end of each month place the calendar in a safe place until it is time to assemble the Record Book.

B. Index Box Method - Get a 3-inch by 5-inch box, index cards and some dividers. Label each of the dividers as one of the sections in the report form discussed later in this guide. Then each time the member does something, write it down on an index card, then file the card in the section marked by the divider. For example: If the 4-H member were to go to the nursing home for recreation with the residents, then have him/her write it down and put the card behind the community service divider. After maintaining the "4-H File Box" for a year, pull the cards out and select the most important activities for the 4-H recordbook. Do not forget to date each card.

C. Binder or Spiral Notebook Method - Grab an old school binder or notebook and organize each of activity by type or by date. This is an easy first step to start out, until the member gets the hang of record keeping.

D. Electronic Device – If an electronic device is available, use an "app" or some other software to record or document activities, trainings, clinics, leadership roles, service activities, project experiences, etc.

The 4-H Story

The 4-H Story is your chance to tell the judge/s about your project, and your experiences in this past 4-H year. Consider these things when you begin writing your story:

- When and why you joined 4-H
- Project Goals
- Things about your involvement in the Record Book category you are entering and the most important things that you have learned in 4-H
- Highlights of other 4-H projects and activities
- How 4-H has helped you become a better leader and citizen and what you have learned through your community service and leadership activities
- How being a 4-H member has helped you reach your goals/achievements and developed new interests, and if 4-H has influenced your future plans or career goals
- Be sure to use proper grammar and spelling!

4-H Goals

Goals are important to set before you get to far ahead in your 4-H year. Goals should be set for both yourself and your project. Ideas can include:

- Leadership or development goals
- Rate of gain or Fair placing
- Showing at a new or more difficult level
- Making new friends
- Encouraging or being a good sportsman at Fair
- Going to State or National 4-H Conferences
- Getting a great score on your Record Book



What Judges look for

- **Project information and Activity Log:** It is very important to include your club meetings, demonstrations, and community service here
- **Completeness:** Judges are looking to make sure you read the directions and left nothing blank.
- **Income and Expense Record:** Keep your receipts! They will come in handy when filling out your expenses. Income can be easy for some and hard for others to put a value on. Do your best! Don't forget to check your math!
- **Project Evaluation:** This is a self-evaluation of how you did this year (including if and how you reached your GOALS!)
- **Photos:** All photos should have captions. Photos add to your 4-H Story by allowing the Judge to see you throughout the year
- **Use proper grammar and spelling throughout your record - it will look professional**

Final Tricks & Tips

- Read the Directions before filling out sections – some pages may not apply to you.
- Always fill out the page with information or N/A if it is not applicable to your project.
- Use your record to evaluate your success with this project.
- Use a calendar, barn sheet, or journal to track important dates and all purchases.
- Refer to previous records for help in deciding what to do in the current year.
- Be detailed and accurate
- **Do not wait until the last minute! Record books completed the night before are VERY easy to ID and will usually not score well**

Why Records?

The 4-H Record Book is one of the biggest aspects of the 4-H project. Every member, aged 8-18, is required to keep one record book per project. This helps not only teach responsibility and attention to detail, but also increases your knowledge about each of your projects (Health, Purchases, Expenses, Income, Etc...).

Completing Your Record Book can:



- Give you a sense of personal accomplishment
- Make you eligible to participate in other activities
- Help you learn valuable life skills
- Give you the opportunity to be recognized on the county, district and state levels
- Allow you to attend National 4-H Congress as an Advanced Winner
- Qualify you to apply for record book scholarships
- Help you set challenging goals – and more!

Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Delta, Mesa, Montrose and Ouray Counties cooperating.
Cooperative Extension programs are available to all without discrimination.



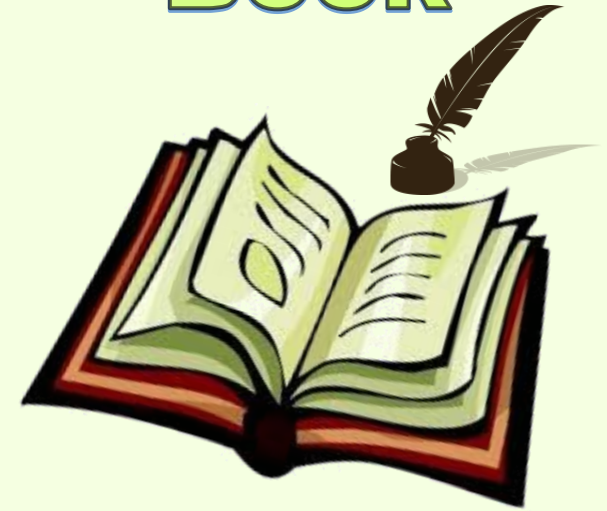
Colorado State
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Questions?

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Survival Guide to your 4-H Record Book



Tips to a Successful Record Book!