

BEGINNER'S GUIDE, PART 1

TO TEXAS 4-H RECORD BOOKS



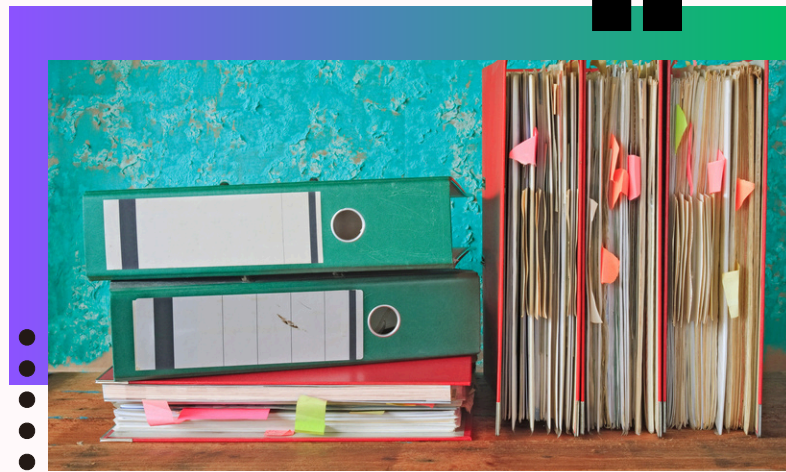
2024 - 2025

PURPOSE

Record-keeping is a valuable skill taught to members of the Texas 4-H program. Members are encouraged to keep project records and have these records reviewed annually by submitting a Texas 4-H Recordbook. **The primary purposes of completing a Recordbook are for a young person to develop the skills necessary to set goals, work toward achieving those goals, reflect on his/her experiences, and set new and higher goals for themselves.** A secondary benefit is to prepare young people for the process of completing academic scholarship and/or collegiate admission applications.



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Goal Setting -Getting Started

Prior to or at the beginning of the 4-H year, a member should **begin identifying, setting, and recording personal goals for themselves in each project area.** Parents, club managers, adult volunteers, and County Extension Agents play an important role in helping guide young people through this process. Members should record their personal goals and then begin work toward achieving those goals. It is important to record anything the member would like to learn or do.



The **main project** a 4-H member selects for their Record Book should have at least 3 goals.

START NOW

TIPS FOR SETTING GOALS

Does your goal pass the CONTROL TEST?

Do you have control over all parts of what happens?

If you can answer “yes,” then you are ready to begin record keeping.

For example, “I want to win grand champion with my cookies at the county fair,” does not pass the control test. A 4-H member cannot control ribbon placing, since it is done at the discretion of the judges.

Keep in mind that younger 4-H members will have fewer, less complex goals than older, more advanced 4-H members. The longer a member is a project area, the more in-depth goals will become. A good rule of thumb is:

- three to five goals per project for members in 3rd to 5th grade
- four to eight goals per project for members in 6th to 8th grade
- six to ten goals per project for members in 9th to 12th grade



Project Goal Examples

Action	Results	Timetable	Who will help me?
Learn	About lamb nutrition	Before the county show	My Dad
Make	Two baby quilts	Before the State Fair	My Project Leader
Lead	A project activity	By February	My Mom
Keep	Records of project experiences	Monthly	Another 4-H Member
Coordinate	A community service activity	By the June project meeting	A Community Leader
Demonstrate	My skills in cooking	Before the Food Show	My Project Leader

To ensure goals are reachable, 4-H families can use the **SMART** goal test:

- **Be Specific** - When writing a goal make sure to include the what, why and how.
- **Measurable** - How will the 4-H member know they have completed the goal? What is the tangible evidence used to know you met the goal's intention?
- **Attainable** - Make sure the goal is something the 4-H member has the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve.
- **Realistic** - Think about what kind of control the 4-H member has in achieving the goal.
- **Time-bound** - Discuss timelines on when each goal can be accomplished. Is the goal short term? long term? or somewhere in the middle?