

## Ashland County 4-H Record-Keeping Purpose & General Resources

### Why do we have 4-H Record-Keeping?

The purpose of 4-H record-keeping is to teach and practice an important [life skill](#) for clearer understanding and future planning. Keeping records is an ongoing process for reflection and adaptive learning. To meet individual record-keeping needs and styles, youth members can choose reflection activities from a variety of options. Members in grades 4-12 are encouraged to track their 4-H journey to help identify the knowledge, skills, and interests they are developing, opening their eyes to potential projects and programs to try next. Their records become a [useful tool](#) to check when preparing awards applications, resumes, scholarships, speeches, etc.

### Goals for 4-H Record-Keeping:

- Understand the value and skills of organized record-keeping to use both in the present and future.
- Practice how to set goals, recognize experience highlights, and make positive changes.
- Practice how to summarize and communicate individual activities, talents, and styles.
- Practice evaluating and explaining experiences to be prepared for later application opportunities.
- Practice accountability and responsibility with time management and completing tasks.
- Practice using different media tools for creative and educational presentations.
- For more on record-keeping goals and benefits, visit other extension resources [here](#).

### All 4-H members are encouraged to develop a record-keeping system that may include, but is not limited to:

1. Records for one or more projects: please [click here](#) for the difference between a project and an exhibit.
2. Goal setting for project areas and exhibits: the tipsheet [here](#), calendars, or other charts and guides can help.
3. Summaries of overall learning by writing a [4-H story](#) or using the [Yearly Member Summary](#).
4. Reflections on the journey: use the [Yearly Self-Evaluation](#) individually or by talking with a mentor.
5. Project records keep information in a [basic](#), [experienced](#), or [advanced](#) way depending on preference.
6. Project [Worksheets](#) are optional tools that can help plan or track aspects of a project.
7. Some other creative recording methods could be [making a website](#) or a video showcasing work.

### Developing Your Personal Record-Keeping System

Sometimes specific record-keeping forms may be necessary in certain counties; for example, they may provide a clear process for determining youth award recipients. Most of the time, however, 4-H record-keeping is an opportunity for members to test out different methods to find ways that fit their personal needs and learning styles. This database offers a [selection of record-keeping forms](#) that members may use to guide their record-keeping process, but they are suggestions, not requirements. Some people prefer to keep track of information on a computer with a spreadsheet or in 4-H Online, while others handwrite records in a notebook or on a document. Alternative record-keeping could be taking photos throughout a class, making slideshow presentations, or video recording a 4-H journey! Regardless of the formatting or organization methods you choose, ensure that your record-keeping reflects your true goals, lessons learned, triumphs, and next steps.

