



Welcome to 4-H

WSU EXTENSION 4-H
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

4-H has been around since the 1900s. The first groups were boys' and girls' agricultural clubs. In 1914, Congress established the Cooperative Extension service, which is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Washington State University is part of the Extension service and hires educators to help organize 4-H in the county and community.

4-H is open to all youth ages 5 to 18 (on or before October 1st of the current 4-H year) without discrimination. Youth are divided into the following age groups:

- Cloverbud: ages 5-7
- Junior: ages 8-10
- Intermediate: ages 11-13
- Senior: ages 14-19

4-H leaders are volunteers who help 4-H'ers learn and have fun. They are trained and background-checked. There are many different types of leaders, such as club leaders, project leaders, and activity leaders.

Parents and family are also important in 4-H. They help with project work and other activities, and they are always encouraged to participate in the 4-H experience.



The four-leaf clover is the official 4-H emblem. The four H's stand for head, heart, hands, and health.

The **4-H pledge** is:

"I pledge
my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service, and
my health to better living,
for my club, my community, my
country, and my world."

The **4-H motto** is:

"To make the best better"

What do you do in 4-H?

In 4-H, youth "learn by doing." They gain useful skills, practice how to get along with people, and find ways to help their community.

Much of this learning is done through project work. 4-H members will choose at least one project that they are interested in each year. Possibilities include:

- Animal Sciences: Dairy, Livestock, Equine, Small Animals, and Veterinary Science.
- Science and Technology: Aerospace, Bicycle, Computer, Small Engines, Robotics, and Electronics.
- Environmental Education: Outdoor Discovery, Forestry, Beekeeping, and Shooting Sports.
- Expressive Arts: Applied Arts, Photography, Performing Arts, Fiber Arts, Woodworking, Metalwork.
- Healthy Living: Family Living, Financial Literacy, Food and Nutrition, and Fitness.
- Plant Sciences: Gardening, Soil Science, and Agriculture.
- Social Sciences: Citizenship, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, and Introduction to 4-H.

Cloverbuds have some limitations on projects.

County Office

Spokane County 4-H
222 N Havana St
Spokane, WA 99202
509-477-2160



<https://extension.wsu.edu/spokane/4h/>

Over 6.5 million members and nearly 450,000 leaders are involved in 4-H nationwide!

What is a 4-H Club?

A 4-H Club has a planned program and meets regularly. They may offer one project or many projects. Club activities can include demonstrations, project work, community service, and social events.

Clubs have two types of meetings: club meetings and project meetings. Club meetings are for members to bond and make plans as a group. Project meetings are gatherings where members work on their projects or learn new skills.

A club also offers opportunities for leadership. Club members will elect officers to lead meetings and appoint committees to make decisions.

Other types of 4-H programs include special interest groups, school enrichment, and after-school groups.



How to Join 4-H

- Find a club and contact the club leader to make sure it will be a good fit for your family. If you don't know where to start, contact your local extension office.
- Attend a meeting to learn more about the club.
- Enroll through 4-H Online. Youth must be enrolled to participate in 4-H activities.
- There is a small, yearly state-wide enrollment fee and sometimes an additional county fee. Financial assistance is available for anyone in need.
- The 4-H program year is October 1 through September 30. Enrollment closes July 31.



WSU EXTENSION

Spokane County 4-H



Other activities that 4-H members can participate in are:

- ◆ Demonstrations
- ◆ Workshops
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ Record Keeping
- ◆ Club Projects
- ◆ County Contests
- ◆ Exhibits at club meetings, local fairs or the State 4-H Fair
- ◆ 4-H Camp
- ◆ Know Your Government (ages 14-19)
- ◆ State 4-H Teen Events
- ◆ Regional and National 4-H Events
- ◆ International 4-H Exchange

Awards & Recognition

Aside from pride in their accomplishments and recognition from leaders, 4-H'ers can receive other awards, such as:

- Certificates and achievement pins
- Scholarships for higher education
- Scholarships to 4-H camp, or state and national events
- Ribbons for contest entries and exhibits
- Premium money for ribbons earned at contests and fairs

Adapted from *Welcome to 4-H: New Member's Information (EM4487)*, November 2025.

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