



PETS PROJECT AREA



The pet project helps you explore what kind of pet fits into your family's lifestyle and how to be an excellent caretaker for your pet.

Ideas for Project Area Learning

- Gather information and determine the best pet for your family.
- Learn about the proper care, grooming, and feeding of your pet.
- Learn to identify the different parts of your pet for conversations with your veterinarian.
- Create a plan to prevent your pet from getting lost.
- Purchase and use the appropriate grooming equipment and techniques for your pet.
- Practice appropriate training for your pet.
- Plan a training and exercise program for your pet.
- Prepare for participation in a cat or pet show.
- Make a decision about breeding or not breeding your pet.
- Compare the labels on pet foods to make an informed decision on content and price.
- Keep a diary of your pet's health and eating habits.
- Do some comparison shopping for setting up an aquarium.
- Assess careers related to pets and the pet business.
- Help a friend decide on pet ownership.
- Research diseases of pet mammals, birds, and fish.
- Identify symptoms and a course of action for a disease in your pet.
- Discover how pets affect the environment.
- Learn and practice animal ownership responsibilities.
- Explore health regulations, first aid, and simple treatments for ailments.

APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

Communication

- Explain how to prepare a pet for showing.
- Show how to select a nutritional diet for your pet.
- Do an educational presentation on how to make a carrier for your pet.

Civic Engagement

- Clean up after your pet in public spaces.
- Volunteer at an animal shelter.
- Write a letter to your local paper about the importance of having household pets spayed or neutered.

Leadership

- Organize a pet show for your club.
- Organize a fundraiser to help benefit an animal shelter.
- Research and share with others why it is not a good idea to keep wild animals as pets.
- Develop a plan to foster the pets of deploying soldiers.

Entrepreneurship

- Develop a business plan for a pet care or pet sitting business
- Start a dog walking business.
- Design pet accessories like scratching posts or toys.



Goal Setting and Record Keeping

Goal setting is an ongoing process that guides your project area learning. Having goals is like having a road map to show you how to get you to where you want to go. Record keeping is also an ongoing process and another important life skill. In 4-H, you are encouraged to select from a variety of record keeping formats to meet your own personal needs and your preferred learning style. Keeping records of your learning experiences helps you determine how well you met your goals. Goal setting and record keeping improve your skills in organization, communication, planning, and evaluating.

Iowa 4-H Event Opportunities

- Participate in **county and state fair** exhibit classes.
- Check with your local county 4-H youth development staff to see if there are special events or **workshops in your county** that you want to attend to learn more about your project areas.
- Iowa 4-H members in grades 9–12 can apply for **State Project Area Awards** at State Recognition Day. Applications are open December through January.
- Meet young people from around the state who have completed grades 8–12, and share your interests at the **Iowa 4-H Youth Conference** held at Iowa State University in late June.

Share Your Learning With an Exhibit

- Exhibit your cat or pet at the fair.
- Make a first aid kit for a pet. Tell when and how each item is used.
- Share health and nutrition information for raising a healthy pet.
- Interview your veterinarian about a microchip to identify your pet. Develop a video about your options.
- Attend a pet show. Take photos and make a notebook about pet breeds.
- Make a poster on diseases your pet can get. Tell about its discovery, effects, and treatments.
- Research jobs related to pets. Make a poster showing three jobs that interest you.
- Develop a video showing the steps in training your pet.
- Research the county or area your pet came from. Take special note of the people, traditions, and other types of animals that live in the area.

CAREER CONNECTIONS

- **Small animal vets** diagnose diseases, give vaccinations, prescribe medication, and treat wounds for pets and livestock.
- **Pet groomers** work in boutiques that shampoo, shape fur, clip nails, and care for pets.
- **Agricultural education teachers** teach students about livestock production, lead activities, and get students involved in the community.
- **Animal control workers** care for animals they take in and educate the public on pet laws.

EDUCATION CONNECTIONS

- Students in **animal science** focus on the management of livestock species, as well as meat science, reproduction, and nutrition.
- If you enjoy microbiology, chemistry, and genetics, studying **biology** may interest you.
- Learn **veterinary technology** if you're interested in animal health, anatomy, and disease transmission.
- Study **zoology** if you enjoy working with wild animals in controlled environments and studying animal lifestyles.

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