

# Kalamazoo County 4-H Dogs Project Guidelines

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## Project Objectives & Life Skills\*

- Our goal in the 4-H Dog Care Project is for our members to have a well-mannered dog that is fun to have around. To accomplish this, we teach and compete in Obedience, Jr. Showmanship, Rally, Agility and Family Living classes.
  
- **Head**
  - Wise use of resources
  - Keeping records
  - Service learning
  - Decision making
- **Heart**
  - Social skills
  - Concern for others
  - Nurturing relationships
  - Communication
- **Hands**
  - Leadership
  - Responsible citizenship
  - Self-motivation
  - Teamwork
- **Health**
  - Self-responsibility
  - Character
  - Disease prevention
  - Personal safety

*\*note these life skills are just some examples of what 4-H members will learn in this project*

### Additional Resources:

[Michigan 4-H dog project snapshot](#)  
[Cloverbud dog project snapshot](#)  
[Michigan Junior Showmanship Manual](#)  
[Shop 4-H Dog Curriculum](#)  
[4H Dog Manual Updates 1-22#](#)

[Assistance Animals in Action curriculum](#)  
[4-H Animal Science Web Series: Dog Showmanship - YouTube](#)  
[PAWS WITH A CAUSE](#)  
[4-H Dog Training Nibbles - YouTube](#)

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# Dog Project

## **Guidelines:**

- All youth must be registered with a community club and fulfill community club requirements or they will not be eligible to show at the fair as a 4-H member.
- All youth must fulfill individual dog project club requirements.
- All families must participate in one fundraiser.
- All members are expected to volunteer in the set up and tear down of the dog show at the fair.
- Members are limited to exhibiting one dog, which he/she has trained, at the Kalamazoo County 4-H Dog Show, unless participating in a Puppy or Retired Dog class.
- **The Best Overall Award** will be based on combined scores of obedience, agility, showmanship, family living, rally, notebook/community service, educational exhibit
- **Other Awards:** notebook of the year, high point in obedience, showmanship, family living, and rally

## Section A –Obedience

- Dogs and handlers will be judged at the 4-H Dog Show according to 4-H scoring sheets.
- If there is a question in the Kalamazoo County 4-H rules the AKC rules will be followed.
- For the safety of the 4-H member and the dog, the member must be able to control the dog. This will be decided by the project leader and the superintendents.
- Noncompetitive Cloverbud classes will be offered at the superintendent's discretion only.
- B classes apply to the exhibitors for the following reasons:
  - Exhibitor/dog did not pass their classes at the previous fair
  - Exhibitor has an experienced dog with an inexperienced handler
  - The exhibitor is an experienced handler with a new dog

## Section B–Agility

- [Dog Agility Manual](#)
- Dogs and handlers will be judged at the 4-H Dog Show according to 4-H scoring sheets.
- If there is a question in the Kalamazoo County 4-H rules the AKC rules will be followed.
- For the safety of the 4-H member and the dog, the member must be able to control the dog. This will be decided by the project leader and the superintendents.
- Noncompetitive Cloverbud classes will be offered at the superintendent's discretion only.
- B classes apply to the exhibitors for the following reasons:
  - Exhibitor/dog did not pass their classes at the previous fair
  - Exhibitor has an experienced dog with an inexperienced handler
  - The exhibitor is an experienced handler with a new dog

## Section C–Dog Care Science

- Educational project requirements
  - Every youth must complete an educational notebook or educational exhibit annually up to year 4. For year 5 and up youth may complete a community service project instead of a notebook and still compete for best overall award or compose your notebook in the form of a video (additional information for community service and video requirements are on page 8-9.
  - Notebooks/exhibits are due to project leaders or superintendent one week before judging interviews.
  - Members must talk to the judge on Saturday of still exhibit judging. If members cannot speak with the judge, they will not be eligible for special ribbons, awards, or best overall.
- Dog care project notebook requirements
  - Put all your materials in a three-ring binder.
  - Items required to be included are listed in order below:
    - [4-H Project Record Form](#)
    - [Dog Registration Form](#)

- Table of Contents
  - **NOTE - Place the above three items in order at the beginning of your notebook**
- Personal Story Narrative
- Personal Story Pictures and Labels
- Answers to the 3 questions you choose in order of level (starts on page 4)
  - **Choose 1 question from each difficulty level to include after your Personal Story each year, a total of 3 questions per year. If you have participated in 4-H previously please choose questions that are not already included in your notebook.**
  - Put a title at the top of the page or use a title page before each answer.
  - When you answer each question, you can include more information but be sure not to leave the answer to the question out.
  - Label all illustrations, drawings, or pictures.
  - Be sure to answer all questions in your own words.
  - Have someone proofread your notebook to check for spelling and grammar mistakes.

**\*NOTE - Number all pages per year, a separate table of contents is required per year. The most recent year should be at the beginning/front of the notebook\***

- Educational exhibits are designed to educate the public. The information presented should be condensed so the poster is understood quickly.
  - The exhibit can be any kind of display such as a poster or model.
  - Label every illustration neatly on the display.
  - Make sure the display is readable from 3 feet away.
  - Illustrate with pictures of your dog, pictures from magazines, drawings, or 3-D items.
- The following are a few suggestions for the exhibition; there are many other opportunities so use your imagination:
  - Daily dog care
  - Body language cues
  - Parts of the dog
  - Collars and leashes
  - Health: diseases, vaccines, parasites, genetics
  - Breeding and reproduction
  - Professions
  - Dog sports
  - Training/showing

1. Describe 2 collar types or 2 leash types. Use pictures and words.
  - a. Size
  - b. Uses
2. Identify 2 common substances that are harmful to dogs. Describe the information below.
  - a. Affects/symptoms
  - b. Treatment
3. Describe 2 of the 6 basic body language cues. Use pictures and words.
4. Identify 2 different species of animal that dogs can contract diseases from, describe below information.
  - a. Types of disease the dog can contract from the species
  - b. Transmission method between species
5. Describe the purpose and penalties of 2 laws in your community relating to your dog.
  - a. Ex: Number of dogs allowed, leash laws, animal attacks, etc.
6. Describe 2 “tricks” you could train your dog.
  - a. How you would train them
  - b. What use they may have in an everyday or emergency situation. Ex: crawling, opening a door, retrieving the remote, etc.)
7. Describe 2 different methods you can use to exercise your dog. Include below information.
  - a. Precautions or time restrictions to implement
  - b. Proper equipment to use for each exercise
8. Describe what breed you would choose if you started over with a new dog. Consider/discuss the below information regarding the breed that would fit your lifestyle.
  - a. Space you must exercise or active you are or what you plan to compete in
  - b. What temperament best fits your personality.
9. Identify a training method you are unfamiliar with.
  - a. How it is used
  - b. What sports or behavior it may be beneficial for. Ex: Clicker, Monks of New Skete, etc.
10. Describe how you groom your dog, and the tools needed to do so. Use pictures and words.

1. Describe how you care for your dog, include the tasks below and the tools needed to complete them. Use pictures and words.
  - a. Feeding
  - b. Exercising
  - c. Shelter
2. Describe the information below concerning spaying/neutering your dog.
  - a. One health benefit to your dog
  - b. One economic benefit to yourself or your community
  - c. One program that assists qualified individuals with the cost of the procedure
3. Describe one genetic disease and one fault common in your dog's breed, including below information.
  - a. Possible Cause
  - b. Symptoms
  - c. Treatment
4. Describe the recommended nutritional needs for your dog.
  - a. Caloric intake needed per day or volume of food this equates to
  - b. Desired percent daily values for necessary nutrients such as protein, fat, fiber
  - c. Preferred ingredients (ex: lamb vs. chicken, corn vs. rice, etc.)
5. Describe correct conformational structure of the dog. Give 1 undesired example for each structure listed below. Describe why the incorrect structure you chose is not desired. Use pictures and words.
  - a. Forequarters
  - b. Rear Quarters
  - c. Foot Structure
6. Describe basic skills needed to enter an AKC obedience trial at the level you are currently showing at the fair. Include the information below.
  - a. Exercises you would perform in order (Include jump height regulations if required)
  - b. Equipment needed
  - c. Basic rules to observe while performing your course
7. Describe basic skills needed to enter an AKC Jr. Showmanship competition. Include the information below.
  - a. Compose a diagram of the appropriate pattern listed below with hand changes.
    - i. First Year: Down & Back
    - ii. Second Year: L
    - iii. Third Year: T
    - iv. Fourth Year: Triangle
  - b. How to appropriately stack your breed of dog
  - c. Equipment needed
8. Describe what you would need to put together a dog first aid kit. Include the information below.
  - a. What items would you put in the kit
  - b. Where you can purchase the needed items
  - c. What each item is used for
9. Describe basic skills needed to enter an AKC Agility course at the level you are currently showing at the fair. Include the information below.
  - a. Acceptable collars and leashes
  - b. Pictures of 3 obstacles you may encounter and description
  - c. Basic rules to observe while performing your course
10. Identify a volunteer opportunity you and your dog could participate in together.
  - a. Describe how you can become involved/what type of events you would contribute to
  - b. Explain the benefit of volunteering for yourself and your dog
  - c. Explain the benefit of volunteering for your community

1. Describe the proper way to introduce your dog to a new animal and a new person (method varies for animals and people), include the information below.
  - a. How/if the dog should be restrained
  - b. Where the meeting should take place
  - c. How they should be approached by the new animal/person
  - d. What precautions to take during the meeting
2. Describe your dog's breed in detail, include the information below.
  - a. Country of Origin
  - b. Breeds used to create it
  - c. Purpose of Breed
  - d. Desired weight/height/temperament
  - e. NOTE: If you have a mixed breed, pick the dog most like your own. See a project leader if you need assistance.
3. Describe 2 internal parasites.
  - a. Prevention
  - b. Symptoms
  - c. Transmission
  - d. Treatment
4. Describe 2 external parasites.
  - a. Prevention
  - b. Symptoms
  - c. Transmission
  - d. Treatment
5. Choose a dog-related sport that we do not compete in during 4-H, describe the below aspects. Ex: bikejoring, sledding, lure coursing, dock jumping, etc.
  - a. Skills needed to compete
  - b. Equipment needed to train and participate
  - c. A club that recognizes this sport
  - d. Location of an event hosted this year
6. Describe the body parts below desired for your dog's breed. Use pictures and words. NOTE: If you have a mixed breed, pick the dog most like your own. See a project leader if you need assistance.
  - a. Hair Coat Type and Color (Include variations of hair coat (ex: curly, wiry, double coated etc.) and colors that are acceptable for your breed)
  - b. Ear Type
  - c. Tail Type
  - d. Bite Type
7. Interview a dog related professional and write an overview of the information below.
  - a. Education
  - b. Daily responsibilities
  - c. Salary
  - d. Job Availability
8. Create a breakdown (diagram or spread sheet) of yearly costs to care for your dog. Explain how you contribute (does not have to be monetary). Include below categories.
  - a. Food, treats, or toys
  - b. Equipment (ex: leashes, collars, bowls, clothing, etc.)
  - c. Preventative Medication, vet visits or vaccinations
  - d. Special Medication or Supplements

## Dog Notebook Questions

### Year 1-8

### Level 3 continued

9. Identify one local rescue, describe the aspects below.
  - a. How they accumulate funds
  - b. How they get supplies
  - c. Different ways you could volunteer
  - d. Methods used to find homes for the rescued dogs
10. Explain how you prepare your dog for travel. You can describe what you do if you are taking your dog with you or taking them to a boarding kennel.
  - a. Items you pack for your dog
  - b. Precautions taken in case of emergency (ex. locating a vet in the area you are traveling to or along the way, having a friend/relative on call if the boarding kennel requires assistance with your dog, etc.)
  - c. If the dog is traveling with you, requirements you have for your hotel/plane/route you take to get to your destination. If the dog is staying at a kennel, requirements you have for the facility
  - d. Vaccinations your dog should have prior to traveling and extra medication you should bring in case of emergencies

## Dog Notebook Questions

### Year 9

- Choose any dog related topic of your choice and compose a 5 – 10-page report or a 30 – 45-minute video describing your topic.
- There are a few examples below:
  - Design your own breeding facility
    - Include size of the facilities, cost for food, vet care, breeding contract, purchase contracts, licenses needed, how you would choose your breeding stock, and regulations for your township, etc.
  - Explain the history of a dog rescue
    - Include the history of the breed it supports, how they were founded, how they acquire their animals, how they adopt them out and the requirements for adoptees, how they are funded, etc.
  - Describe a dog career you would like to pursue
    - Include what schooling is necessary, where would you apply or would you start your own store front, what would your day-to-day responsibilities be, how much you could make per year, how would you acquire clientele, etc.

## Dog Notebook Questions

### Year 10

- Write an overview of all your years in the 4-H Dog Care Project

## Additional dog video format information

## Years 5+

- Participants in year 5 or above have the option to answer the questions in the form of a video instead of a notebook if they choose.
- Put all your materials on a flash drive.
- Items required to be included are listed in order below:
  - Image of Project Record Sheet
  - Image of Dog Project Report Sheet
    - Write the year of your project in the upper-right corner of your Dog Project Report.
  - Overview of Contents
  - Personal Story Narrative
  - Answers to the 3 questions you choose in order of level
  - Introduce each question, have the video broken down into chapters (Personal story, question 1, question 2, question 3)
    - When you answer each question, you can include more information, but be sure not to leave the answer to the question out
    - Be sure to answer all questions in your own words
    - Has someone view your video for mistakes
- NOTE - Include the past years' notebook in order of year after your current year. If you have more than one year of recordings, please save files by year. (Ex. Joe Smith, dog project, 2025)



## **Additional Community service information**

## **Years 5+**

- The 4-H Dog Care Project benefits from many individuals who give their time, talents and money to support us. Members can also support their communities through community service.
- Members must have completed 4 years in the Dog Project to participate in a community service project in place of an educational notebook. The community service project will be judged and can earn the same number of points as notebooks. Community service projects will count towards the overall Dog Project Award.
- Community service projects must contain the information below. They may be presented in any format that you wish. Example: notebook, poster, Power Point. PowerPoint displays may be run during the dog show. Please make sure if a notebook is used that it is presented in a creative orderly fashion. Loose papers will not be accepted.
- Requirements to be added to your community service project
  - Request for Community Service Project:
    - This should be signed by your project leader and your parent(s) and must be done prior to your participation in a community service project.
  - Documented Hours:
    - Your community service project should have a minimum of 3 hours of service. The project should focus on dogs but will not be penalized if you volunteer to help animal organizations and they do not give you an opportunity to work with dogs. Include a Verification Form to document your hours. (50 points possible)
  - Project Content:
    - Explain in writing or show with photos or drawings what your project was, how it helped others, and how you helped others learn about dogs. (45 points possible)
  - Knowledge/skills learned:
    - Explain in writing or show with photos or drawings what new skills or knowledge you learned from preparing for this project or during your project. Show or describe what you liked best about doing this project and what you liked least. (60 points possible)
  - Make 4-H part of the Project:
    - Explain or show with photos or drawings how you identified yourself as a 4-H member and what you did to let people know that 4-H youth care about animals and their communities. (30 points possible)
  - Organization and Neatness:
    - Your community service project presentation will be judged on organization and neatness. (15 points possible)
- The following are a few suggestions for community service; there are many other opportunities so use your imagination:
  - Demonstrations for groups
  - Nursing home visits
  - Pet therapy in hospitals
  - Volunteer at animal control, pet rescue, kennels, etc.
  - Volunteer at vet clinics
  - Assist at a dog show
  - Plan and organize a fun dog show