



Recreational Activities Coordinator's Guide

Congratulations on being selected Recreational Activities Coordinator of your 4-H Club. Recreation is an important part of the club program. It helps members get to know one another, have fun, and enjoy success. Through activities, members have fun, learn how to share, and learn to be part of the group.

One of the big challenges for recreation coordinators is to **help all members enjoy success**. As the recreation coordinator, you should reach out to others and include them in the planning and conducting of activities. The more involved members are, the more fun they will have and the more they will learn!

Before the Meeting

- Ask members, youth and adult leaders what they would like to do at meetings.
- Consider the place where recreation will take place (chairs, size, tables, and space to move).
- Plan many activities so that you will have more than you need.
- Plan a variety of starters, stretchers, performance, theatre, music, and or socializers. See “types of activities” for more info!
- **Utilize your resources for creative ideas** (libraries, recreation and park departments, other youth groups, schools and teachers, members of other 4-H clubs).
- Arrive at the meeting early so you have time to prepare and confirm that you have all of the required supplies and equipment. Be ready when the first member arrives!

During the Meeting

- Have a signal for attention. You may have heard, “if you can hear me clap once, if you can hear me clap twice...” Or try if you see someone’s hand in the air, be quiet and raise your hand as well. Eventually everyone will be quiet and raise his/her hand.



- Wait until it is quiet to give directions and be sure that directions are clearly understood before starting. Patiently answer any questions there may be.
- Use “When I say ‘go,’ you are going to “. Once everyone understands what is happening, say, “go!”
- Teach the words or movements of games before action is started.
- **Assume that all persons present will play (parents, adult leaders, older youth, Cloverbuds, etc.).** If some hesitate, find a kind way to include them. Something like, “Parents, you can participate too. Come join us!” A variety of activities may help to involve everyone.
- Remember that the person leading the activity should be thoroughly familiar with the games, enthusiastic, in control of the group, alert to the reaction of players, patient, and self-confident.
- Attempt to keep sportsmanship and "playing for the fun of playing" the focus of all activities.
- If any game does not go as it should, quickly change to another.
- Time the program wisely. Stop when the interest is high so members are willing to come back the next time.
- Everyone playing helps generate enthusiasm (includes recreation committee members, all officers, guests, adult leaders, etc.).

Types of Activities

A **starter** should be used with people as they arrive at a meeting. A member of the game committee should be on hand to greet the early arrivals. Make them feel at home and provide something interesting for them to do. A good starter often gets the stage set for group singing, discussion, and other parts of the meeting which follow.

Brain teasers	Have puzzles out	Decorate name-tags	Host a guessing contest
Create thank you cards for 4-H leaders, police, nurses, EMTs, firefighters etc.	Make cards for youth who have recently “graduated” from 4-H or 4-H members who are away at college	Have members bring in projects that people can look at and talk about as they arrive	Informal sticker votes on topics like dog or cat, chocolate or vanilla or what the snack should be at the next meeting

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Stretchers are games which are generally used to energize the group after they have been sitting for some time.

Cheers -- The roller coaster one is fun!	Short icebreakers	Brain Breaks -- www.gonoodle.com .	Simple stretches --many can be done in a chair
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Performance/Theatre/Music often take some time to prepare and often require several people to do them well.

Musical numbers (duets, trios. etc.)	A short skit or play	Have a member perform a magic trick or tell a few appropriate jokes	Songs (Get your camp counselors to lead a few!)
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Socializers generally come at the close of a meeting.

Dances (square, line, YMCA, ...)	Games ("The Great Wind Blows...")	Make a snack or craft	Do a community service activity (rake leaves, pick up trash, ...)
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Questions for Thought

1. What is the purpose of recreation?
2. How can recreation help individuals?
3. How can recreation help the club?
4. How is a new activity taught to a group?
5. What are some special recreational activities which can be included in the program for the club?
6. What resources (written material, equipment, and people) are available?
7. What are some games that might be used at meetings?
8. Will any special events such as parties, picnics, or hayrides be planned?
9. Can everyone participate in your activity?
10. Are any modifications necessary to make sure that everyone is included?
11. Consider youth who have not yet learned to read, youth who may not be able to walk, and youth who have other limitations.
12. How will I know if my activities are going well?

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