



**Ohio 4-H**  
***Recreation***  
***Leader's***  
***Handbook***

Name of Recreation Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Age as of January 1 \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Club \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Advisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_



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**References** *So You Are Recreation Leader of Your Club*, adapted from Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

*Recreation Leader*, Ohio 4-H Club Officer's Guide

*Huron County 4-H Recreation Leader Manual* written by Bonnie Malone, Extension Educator

*How to Lead Games* by Dr. Bill Michaelis

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# 4-H Recreation Leader



## Welcome

Congratulations on being elected your 4-H club recreation leader! Your club has bestowed upon you both an honor and a responsibility – and an interesting and fun job! You are being given the opportunity to raise awareness about the 4-H program in your county – the fun your club members are having, the work your members are doing, and the help your members are giving to the community. And, as a 4-H club officer, you represent your club, your county, and the 4-H program throughout Ohio. Good luck!

## What is Recreation?

Recreation is doing activities that are fun. They may be active games (moving games) or passive games (sitting games). A good recreation leader uses a variety of active and passive games. Sometimes recreation has a specific purpose, like getting acquainted. Other times recreation can simply provide an opportunity to have fun. Recreation is also a very effective educational tool and gives members a chance to be creative.

## What does recreation provide?

- FUN in a club program
- Interest in club meetings
- A chance to learn cooperation
- A healthy outlet for competition
- Mental stimulation
- Opportunities for physical development and a chance to practice leadership and social skills

## Your Duties

As the club recreation leader, you will:

- Make recreation an important part of your club's meetings.
- Serve as chairperson of the recreation committee, if your club has one. If not, and your club has enough members, it is a good idea to talk to your advisor about organizing one at the beginning of the 4-H year.



- Based on the interests of club members, prepare games or activities for each meeting and lead those games or activities.
- Practice each game or activity before using it at a meeting.
- Teach your fellow club members how to learn from teamwork activities.
- Make sure to have all “equipment” needed.
- Teach the rules of a game or activity.
- Encourage everyone to participate.
- Be sure that all members have FUN!
- Make sure that all facilities are cleaned up following a recreation game or activity.

### Suggested Activities

Singing	Frisbee	Tell stories or jokes	Crafts
Playing checkers	Volleyball	Fishing	Holiday parties
Dancing	Softball	Card games	Bingo
Riddles, puzzles	Kickball	Relay races	Hayride
Skating	Jump rope	Sack races	Darts
Magic tricks	Four Square	Wiener roast	Soccer

## Good Recreation Leader Tips and Tricks

A good recreation leader patiently explains the game or activity, and demonstrates if possible, then fully participates with his/her club members. You should:

- Check with your Extension Educator for resources on recreation.
- Show enthusiasm!
- Plan a program appropriate for the setting.
- Thoroughly practice and prepare—it helps to write out the instructions you will give.
- Speak clearly.
- Explain the signals you’ll use for starting and stopping.
- Know when to stop or change games—it’s always best to stop while everyone is still having fun.
- Overlook mistakes—remember recreation is for FUN!

# How to Lead Games

## Two Important Rules for any Games Leader

First of all—have fun! Next, remember that you don't have to be perfect. Be willing to laugh at yourself, and learn from each experience so you can fine tune for the next time.

## FUNDamentals of Games Leadership

### Safety and Enthusiasm

Before you begin your activity, do a **Physical Safety Check**: inspect the field or room looking for hazards, make sure all the equipment is in good repair, and prepare yourself mentally as a games leader.

Now you are ready for the **Emotional Safety Check**: ensure a positive group process by starting with mixers, name games, and warm up activities. Keep in mind that they don't have to be perfect and make sure everyone participates.

### Attention Getters

The hardest part to leading recreational activities is getting everyone's attention. Try these suggestions with your 4-H club.

- Shout "*Time Out.*"
- Shout "*5, 4, 3, 2, 1.*"
- Shout "*If you hear my voice, clap once...*", "*If you hear my voice clap three times....*"
- Raise your hand—hands up, mouths shut.
- Start clapping in a rhythm and members will stop talking to see what everyone is doing.

### Positive Reinforcement Rituals

- "Good job everyone – give yourself a hand!"
- "Give yourself a BIG hand!" (Everyone raises a hand in the air.)
- "Give yourself a pat on the back."

### Remember the DDADA Principle

- **D**escribe the game
- **D**emonstrate the game
- **A**sk for questions
- **D**o it
- **A**dapt it – would you do something different next time?

# Team Dividers

Try some of these ideas when you want to add some fun to the process of dividing into smaller groups.

## Dividing Into Pairs

**First Names.** Have everyone count the number of letters in their first name. Now ask them to find someone who has the same number of letters. Those two are now partners. If a person can't find someone let him/her use another name he or she is called by (i.e., a student named Matthew may use the name Matt and then look for someone with four letters instead of seven). If they still can't find someone, pair up with a person who has the closest number of letters.

**Line Ups.** The group lines up according to any variable you can think of to use. Examples are: oldest to youngest; tallest to shortest; alphabetically by first or last name; or chronologically by month and date of birthday. If you want to add challenge to the process, do not allow people to talk. The two people at the ends of the line become partners, the next two become partners, etc.

**Finding "Twins."** Decide ahead of time on a category such as animals, famous people, occupations, emotions, sports, etc. and prepare slips of paper with specific examples of the category you have chosen. Make two slips for each example (one set of three for an odd number). After distributing the slips, each person makes a noise associated with the example and/or performs a movement. The group circulates until partners have been found.

**Name That Partner.** Divide the group in half based solely on seating. Ask each group to name an example of a category (same as the above categories) that starts with A and name one person as that example. Continue through the alphabet until everyone has a name. Don't skip any letters. The A's, B's, C's, etc. become partners.

**Pick a Number.** Ask everyone to pick a number between 1 and (choose the upper number depending on the size of your group). Those who have picked the same number become partners. If only one person chooses a particular number, ask them to choose another number.

## Dividing Into Groups

**Cries of Animals.** This game is filled with laughter and fun with the intention of forming the participants into groups of 4-10. Write the names of animals (cow, cat, pig, etc) on a slip of paper. Once the group is ready to play, distribute these written slips of paper to all. Tell the participants not to show their slip to anyone so their animals remain a secret. Then tell the group to make the sound of the animal that they have on the slip and form a family of the same animal (in separate corners of the hall). When they carefully listen to the similar sounds from the others, you'll have your groups in no time.

**Form A Band.** Each band must have a drummer, guitar player, keyboard player, and singer. Then they mime out their band; complete with air instrumentation. Then all of the drummers are in one group, all singers in another, etc. This example will make four groups. You can create as many band members as



you need groups. Similarly, you can do the same with a baseball (any sports) team. Use pitchers, catchers, hitters, outfielders, and hot dog salespeople to get five groups. This is a good method for kids or adults because it lets them play.

**Arm/Finger Cross.** Have everyone cross their arms across their chest. Amazingly it almost always works out to about 50 percent cross right over left, and the other 50 percent cross left over right. Have students close their eyes and then put their hands together so their fingers are interlocking and their palms are touching each other. Have them open their eyes and look down at their hands. If their right thumb is on top, then they are one team and if their left thumb is on top, then they go to the other team.

**Rainbow.** This activity works for dividing into up to seven groups. Decide how many small groups you want and ask people to divide themselves into groups with this number of people. Give them the colors of the rainbow, or ask for someone who knows them, and have each group assign one person to each color, starting with red. They are to stop when each person has a color. Groups are formed by colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet).

*Source: Youthwork Links and Ideas at <http://www.youthwork.com/activitiesdivide.html>*

## Sportsmanship

Become familiar with the meaning of sportsmanship and its elements by reading through these definitions:

**Sportsmanship.** Conduct becoming of an individual involving fair and honest competition, courteous relations, and graceful acceptance of results.

**Becoming conduct.** A mode or standard of personal behavior, especially as based on moral principles; behavior in a particular situation.

**Fairness.** The quality or state of being honest and just; free from injustice, prejudice or favoritism; conforming to codes or rules of a competitive activity.

**Honesty.** Fairness and straightforwardness of conduct; integrity; adherence to the facts; freedom from deception; truthfulness; sincerity; of unquestionable authenticity; genuine; real; reputable.

**Competition.** Seeking to gain what another is seeking to gain at the same time, usually under fair or equitable rules of circumstances; a common struggle for the same object; a contest or trial between contestants.

**Courtesy/courteous.** Well-mannered conduct showing respect and consideration of others.



**Relations.** Dealings; connections; affairs; state of affairs existing between those having **dealings** or relationships.

**Grace/graceful.** Disposition to kindness, favor, or compassion; the display of kindly treatment; acting with the intention of pleasing; thoughtfulness.

**Acceptance.** The act of accepting; to take without protest; to endure or tolerate with patience; to regard as proper, suitable, or normal; acknowledge as appropriate, permissible or inevitable; agree to results: consequences, effects, or conclusions; decisions or resolutions; that which is achieved, obtained, or brought about through a process or competition.

*Source: Kathryn J. Cox, Ph.D., Extension 4-H Specialist, Youth Development, The Ohio State University*

## Recreation Web Sites

Check out these web sites for great recreational activities.

<http://www.ohio4h.org/members/officers/documents/RL%20BlueRibbonGames1.pdf>

[http://www.funandgames.org/active\\_teamgame.htm](http://www.funandgames.org/active_teamgame.htm)

<http://www.thesource4ym.com/games/outdoor.asp>

<http://www.youthwork-practice.com/outdoor-indoor-games-collection.html>

[http://www.funattic.com/game\\_list.htm](http://www.funattic.com/game_list.htm)

<http://wilderdom.com/games/>

<http://www.group-games.com/category/action-games>

[http://www.boyscouttrail.com/game\\_search.asp](http://www.boyscouttrail.com/game_search.asp)

<http://www.utahafterschool.org/ideas.php>

<http://www.ohio4h.org/members/officers/> offers supplemental materials to the Recreation Leader Manual

## 4-H Publications Related to Recreation

### Ohio State University Extension project books

Bicycle Adventures, Levels 1, 2 and 3; 4-H 517, 518, and 519

Basic Archery, 4-H 631

Fishing for the Beginner, 4-H 623

Fishing for the Intermediate, 4-H 624

Trail Riding, 4-H 188

You're the Athlete, 4-H 300

# Forms for the Recreation Leader

Visit the Club Officer Resources web site at [www.ohio4h.org/members/officers](http://www.ohio4h.org/members/officers) for these helpful forms:

- Activity Planning Sheet—Use a planning sheet for each activity at your meetings so you will be sure to have everything you need to be a GREAT Recreation Leader.
- Recreation Plan for the Year—Use this form to develop your recreation plan for the entire club year. This form makes it easy to see at a glance what kinds of activities you have planned.

## Make it a Project (optional activity)

Your efforts in this officer position can be turned into a project by completing the requirements for a self-determined project. Every self-determined project requires the 4-H member to identify and complete areas of interest and related activities, learning experiences, leadership/citizenship activities, and a brief report. Just like other projects, self-determined projects can be reviewed and are eligible for fair participation. Learn more about self-determined projects and download the 4-H 365 Self-Determined Project Guide at [www.ohio4h.org/publications](http://www.ohio4h.org/publications).

### 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.**

