

---

# 4-H LEADS FOR LEADERS

---

## RECREATION LEADER

90501M

Leader's Guide



A recreation leader may help club members plan songs, games, skits, parties, and other recreational activities for regular meetings or special events.

### Qualifications

The qualifications necessary for anyone assuming the role of activity leader are:

- interest in young people and ability to communicate with them;
- willingness to devote time and energy toward working with youth;
- knowledge of recreation and ability to stimulate interest, secure resources and teach these skills;
- patience, enthusiasm; and
- ability to cooperate and organize.

### Responsibilities

Generally, the recreation leader assist with the club in planning the yearly program by:

- suggest the kinds of activities to include in certain areas of recreation;
- point out how such activities can be used in a 4-H club;.
- suggest and use techniques for involving 4-H members of all ages and abilities;
- suggest sources for additional ideas and assistance;
- encourage youth to enroll in the leadership project and use skills gained as they work with the entire club.

The recreation leader should assemble a kit of books, records, supplies, gimmicks and other materials needed in the club. Providing the right activity, game or song at the right time is a skill that comes only through planning, practice and experience.

A good volunteer does not do all the planning nor all the work. The secret of success is how well the recreation leader works with youth.

A group or committee of youth should plan events. The planning committee may serve for one event or for a long period to provide an overall recreation program. The leader should help the committee members look at the total program. What do members enjoy doing? What new interests do they like? Make a calendar of events. Vary the program to give new experiences. Encourage each member to express ideas and take responsibility.

### **Tips for a Good Leader (Youth or Adult)**

#### *Show enthusiasm!*

Seventy-five percent of the success of a leader depends on enthusiasm. Begin with the idea that all members expect to have a wonderful time and never let them down. Enthusiasm is contagious.

#### *Plan the program!*

Know exactly what to do, how to do it and what material or equipment is needed. Begin with something familiar and simple and build upon success. Prepare more to do than is needed for the allotted time. Have variety in the program. Keep the group moving quickly from one activity to another. Be full of surprises! Time the program. Start and end on time. Never hurry the program.

#### *Keep your head!*

Remember, be a leader but not a boss. No matter what happens, keep the situation under control. The players will have as much confidence in the leaders as the leaders have in themselves.

#### *Know the games!*

Good leaders must know tunes, words and directions before they can teach them to others. If possible, practice before the mirror, family or friends.

#### *Explain briefly—demonstrate!*

Simplify the directions. Explain a small part of the action at first. If possible, work with a group of youth beforehand so they can demonstrate the activity.

*Use your voice!*

Speak up so everyone in the room can hear the directions. Pitch the voice low. If the group is noisy, wait until it is quiet before saying a word. Or, try raising your hand as a signal for those watching to be quiet and raise their hands too. If the group is large, you may need to use a whistle.

*Overlook mistakes!*

Remember, recreation is for fun, not for perfection. If mistakes are made, stop the action and point out how to improve with good humor. Some people may need extra help. Give it to them without scolding.

*Have the equipment ready!*

Prepare and collect everything needed for each activity ahead of time and have it at your fingertips. Pick helpers to organize the group and distribute material.

*Do not do it all yourself!*

Organize a team of three or four helpers ahead of time to share the responsibility. One helper can lead active games, one quiet games and one can be in charge of songs.

*Know when to stop!*

Play the game until all enjoy it, but stop before anyone loses interest. Activities tend to start slowly, build to a peak and tail off. Stop when you are at or near the top.

*Have fun with the group!*

Always be a part of the group, and observe what happens so that you are able to fulfill your responsibility to the group.

## **Recreation for Meetings**

*Starters*

Use ice breakers or mixers as members arrive to give them something to do together. This helps build teamwork in the group.

*Songs*

Singing is a universal language and may be a part of every meeting. Good singing near the beginning will set the mood for the entire meeting. Use a variety of active songs.

*Spiritual recreation*

A brief devotional period may be used for quiet reflection. If used, select readings, songs, stories, and poems that are acceptable to all beliefs represented in the group.

### *Stretchers*

Stretchers give the members an opportunity to reenergize. Action songs, stunts, specialties or simply standing are good at this time.

### *Socializers*

Follow the educational phase of the meeting with socializers. This brings the group together for its social development. It provides the feeling of “wasn't it good to be here!” Games, music and contents are examples.

### *Signature*

End the meeting so all know it is over. This can be done by singing, forming a friendship circle or other planned activity.

## **How to Lead Songs (for youth or adults)**

Music is an important part of the club meeting. Singing helps club members feel at ease, lose their self-consciousness and focus their interest on the group. The song leader may stimulate enthusiasm or quiet a boisterous group, depending upon the selection of songs.

Song leadership is 60 percent personality, 30 percent tact and poise and 10 percent musical ability.

- Be enthusiastic.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Be a leader, not an entertainer.
- When teaching a new song:
  - know the song;
  - sing it for the group;
  - break it into small parts;
  - have the group sing;
  - work out difficult spots; and
  - have fun!
- Use your hands to lead.
- Involve others who know the songs.

## **Helps for Leaders**

Each Extension office can provide help for leaders. This may be given through personal visits, telephone calls, scheduled training meetings, manuals or printed materials, letters, newsletters, radio or TV programs.

Help for a recreation leader may also be found in materials that may be purchased through the National 4-H Supply Service, borrowed from your local library or learned from others.

## **Position Descriptions**

If you are interested in having a position description that describes your specific responsibilities and opportunities, follow the outline on the next page.



## Position Description

Name:

Title of Leadership Position:

Purpose:

Responsibilities:

Adviser:

Resources:

Time commitment:

Qualifications: