Frequently Asked Questions: 4-H Curriculum

What is 4-H curriculum?
4-H curriculum promotes positive youth development through experiential learning. We believe that kids retain more information -- and have more fun! -- when they are part of the learning process. All curriculum is developed by experts at universities across the country and engage youth to learn by doing.

What age groups are your curriculum appropriate for?
We have materials appropriate for youth grades K-12. You can search for titles based on grade level broken up into the following categories: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, and Facilitator Guides. Cloverbud materials are designed for youth in grades K-2.

What topics do your curriculum cover?
We offer over 450 items, including project books, digital products, and educational kits in ten main categories: Animal Science; Citizenship & Civic Engagement; Communication & Expressive Arts; Foods, Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles; Natural Resources & Environmental Education; Personal Growth & Career Development; Plants, Gardening, and Agriculture; and STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Topics include robotics, electricity, cooking, entomology, mentor training, computer science, theatre arts, career readiness, woodworking, water conservation, veterinary science, and so many more!

Are activities better for a group or individuals?
Most 4-H curricula are suited for small groups or clubs; however, many books can be used to guide a young person through an individual course of study. A unique feature of 4-H curriculum is that it can be adapted for use in a variety of settings and situations.

Has your curriculum been reviewed? How do I know it’s high quality?
All national 4-H curriculum has been reviewed and recommended through a blind peer review process, signifying excellence in providing hands-on learning experiences for youth and training guidance for facilitators.

Does your curriculum tie to any national education standards?
Most of our curriculum is tied to national education standards. The standards are typically listed in each book or in the Helper’s Guide. Examples of standards used include Next Generation Science Standards, National Standards for Art Education, National Entrepreneur Standards, and Standards for Technological Literacy.

Who can use 4-H curriculum? Do I have to be a part of 4-H?
4-H curriculum is available for anyone to use; you do not need to be a part of or associated with a 4-H program. 4-H curriculum is appropriate for afterschool and homeschool programs, school enrichment, summer camps, and any setting where positive youth development and fun are encouraged!

Where do I find the answers to questions in Youth Guides?
For questions and activities in Youth Guides with definitive answers, many of the Helper’s Guides provide the solutions.
Am I required to purchase the Helper’s Guide AND the Youth Books for a project?
We strongly recommend purchasing one Helper’s Guide for each facilitator working with a group of youth. Helper’s Guides (sometimes called Facilitator Guides) provide tips and essential background information about youth development and the experiential learning process. Many of the Helper’s Guides also provide answers to specific questions within the Youth Guides. The Helper’s Guides are similar to a Teacher’s Manual for leading a group of students.

Be sure to look at the curriculum series closely as each is structured slightly differently from one another. Most series have several levels of youth guides (for different ages) and one accompanying Helper’s Guide that covers the entire series. There are some curricula that have a Helper’s Guide for each level, and some are designed where there is a Helper’s Guide for each level but only one youth notebook for the entire series. This should be explained on the product description for each Helper’s Guide.

Do you offer any training materials for teens or volunteers?
Yes, we do! We have a variety of curriculum materials to help you train your teams – whether you are training professionals, volunteers, or teen leaders! Check out the selection at https://shop4-h.org/collections/volunteer-training-curriculum

I want to partner with 4–H, how do I find my local office?
We’re glad to hear you are interested in working with 4–H! You can find your local office at https://4-h.org/about/find/

I am completely new to 4–H curriculum, where should I start?
If you are interested in starting a 4–H club, you may want to start with a book like Welcome to 4–H. This curriculum is great for new 4–H members and their families. If you have a young child who is new to 4–H, you may want to start with our Cloverbud materials for ages 5–8. Cloverbud materials serve as an easy and fun introduction to various project areas.

How do I access digital curriculum I purchased?
You should have received an email at the address you used to purchase with a link to your title on RedShelf, our digital curriculum platform. If you have not created an account on RedShelf, follow the steps on the login page. Once logged in, use the “Redeem RedShelf Access Code” Link on your “My Shelf” page and paste the access code from the email you received. It will automatically be added to your shelf.

I purchased more than one copy of a digital curriculum, why can’t I add a second copy to my shelf?
Each RedShelf account can only contain one copy of the same curriculum. Any additional copies must be added to an account with a different email address.

I need to order in bulk, do you offer a discount?
Yes, we do! We know classes and groups sometimes need a lot of books in order for all youth to participate in a project. On all curriculum we have tiered pricing discounts where the more you buy, the more you save! Our current discount tiers are as follows:

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Interested in learning more, or have additional questions?
Visit us at https://shop4-h.org/pages/curriculum, where you can view all our products as well as download a curriculum catalog. You can also contact us at curriculum@4-h.org!