

# Do Your Own Thing



## Project Description

Do Your Own Thing is especially planned to encourage youth in grade 8 and above to explore topics other than those included in existing 4-H projects. This project helps youth challenge themselves with new or advanced experiences. Some topic possibilities are:

- astronomy
- glass art
- developing tourist attractions in your community
- metal art
- music/dance/drama
- wood furniture refinishing
- sports medicine
- restoring an old car

If a topic is related to an existing project, the 4-H member should enroll in that project. Refer to "N.D. 4-H Project Guide."

## Selecting Your Project

You already may have a topic in mind to study. Before you make the final decision, you may want to think about all the possibilities. Make an inventory of your interests, needs, dreams and concerns. Include everything that "could be" a Do Your Own Thing project. From this list, you can identify which topic to choose for your self-study.

These definitions will help clarify what each term means:

- Interest:** An interest is something that excites your feelings and gains your attention or curiosity. It causes you to say, "Oh, I'd like to do that!"
- Need:** A need is something you, your family or community seems to want or require. You say, "Yes, I can see doing that is necessary."
- Dream:** A dream causes you to think, "I really want to try to accomplish that."
- Concern:** A concern is something that could affect the welfare or happiness of your family, club, community or world. A concern means, "I really care about that and I could do something about it."

Once you have identified a topic, you will need to find a project helper to talk to or assist as you work on this topic. Then go ahead and develop a plan.

Maybe you will work on this project for more than one year. If the project is in development for more than a year you will need to build on your project plan for each year you are enrolled in this Do Your Own Thing study area.

## Developing Your Plan

When you have selected one topic for your Do Your Own Thing project, the following questions may help you develop your plan and project goals.

- Why do I want to do this? What will I learn?
- Where will I go to find information and resources (libraries, school, Internet, experts in my community, magazines)?
- Who could help me in planning or carrying out the project?
- What personal experience have I had in this area?
- How long will completing my project goals take? How much will it cost?

# My 4-H Self-determined Project

## 1. Planning My Project Goals

To be completed at the *beginning* of the 4-H year.

Plan your project goals for this year. Discuss your goals with a parent/guardian and 4-H or project leader. Think about how you could teach others and get involved in your community through this project, too.

A. What is the topic or area you will study? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Why did you choose to do this? \_\_\_\_\_

Things I plan to do in this project	Target dates	Who will help me	Date when completed
_____ /_____/_____ Signature – 4-H Youth                      Date	_____ /_____/_____ Signature – Project Helper                      Date		

## 2. Results of the 4-H Project Goals I Set

To be completed at the *end* of the 4-H year.

### Knowledge and Skills Gained

List things related to your plan that you learned and skills you gained in this project. List other things you learned, how you improved yourself, and how you worked with other individuals and in larger groups.

(Add pages as needed.)



## Other Learning Experiences in This Project

How did you share what you have learned (displays, project expo, media, lessons for your club/community, demonstrations, talks)?

_____/_____/_____ Signature – 4-H Youth                      Date	_____/_____/_____ Signature – Project Helper                      Date

## Evaluation of the Project

The progress made in working on your project is based on the goals you identified at the beginning of the club year. How well did you accomplish what you said you would? Did you change your plan? Why?

### Accomplishments can be recorded by doing any or all of the following:

- Taking photographs, slides or videos of progress in the project
- Saving newspaper story clippings
- Keeping records
- Sharing what you've learned with others by giving a talk or demonstration
- Teaching someone else what you've learned
- Writing a short paragraph describing your work in this project area this year. (Would you do this again? Why? What was the most difficult? Most fun? Easiest?)

### Exhibit ideas (this record should be included with all Do Your Own Thing exhibits):

- Scrapbook or notebook
- Folder
- Actual item
- Picture story showing project progress
- Poster

*(Special equipment may be the responsibility of the exhibitor.)*

*Visit North Dakota 4-H online at [www.ndsu.edu/4h](http://www.ndsu.edu/4h)*

**For more information on this and other topics, see [www.ag.ndsu.edu](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu)**

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