



# LEADERS GUIDE

## *4-H knitting project*

## LEADERS' GUIDE FOR 4-H KNITTING PROJECT

The adult leader is one of the most important factors in a successful 4-H program. The best project materials are only a supplement to the guidance of an understanding and enthusiastic leader who uses 4-H projects and activities to help boys and girls in the all important business of growing up.

This guide will focus on how to work with boys and girls in the knitting project. It was written for leaders with responsibility for teaching the project. Organizational leaders will find it helpful in reviewing project requirements.

### WHY A PROJECT?

The project is a distinguishing characteristic of the 4-H Program. Each project has the potential to be an educational experience which brings about change in what young people can do, what they know, how they act and how they feel about themselves and others.

The project is a means of reaching the primary goal of 4-H Club work which is the development of the boy or girl as an effective citizen. A definition of a good citizen in a democratic society as often used in 4-H Club work is a person who acts with intelligent concern for himself and others.

The knitting project has much to offer in addition to the pleasure and satisfaction of learning a useful skill.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE KNITTING PROJECT

As a leader you can use the knitting project to help boys and girls:

1. Improve their manipulative skills and dexterity in working with their hands as they learn to knit.
2. Learn to read and follow directions carefully and to become more observant as they use their project manuals and watch demonstrations.
3. Develop social skills as they work with others to plan and conduct group activities.
4. Become more self-reliant as they take initiative and assume leadership for their own learning by giving demonstrations, participating in judging and planning club tours and similar events.
5. Learn to accept their own abilities and limitations and develop a positive self-concept and a respect for individual differences in others.

6. Find satisfaction in making useful articles for themselves and others.
7. Learn how to care for knitted fabrics.
8. Improve appearance through good grooming.
9. Develop an appreciation and understanding of color and design and an experimental attitude toward the use of color and design.

#### YOUR JOB AS A LEADER

The leader has a key role to play in guiding boys and girls as they develop skills, acquire new knowledge, and develop an attitude of excitement and adventure about learning.

Your enthusiasm, interest and confidence in the ability of young people to do things for themselves will stimulate their desire to learn and to achieve.

Learning is an active process. A member can read the instructions in the project book and watch you give a demonstration but to learn how to knit he must do it himself.

As a club leader you will be working with individual members, with the club as a group and with other leaders and parents. You'll be expected to attend training meetings which relate to your job as a leader.

How you work with individual members and what they expect from you will vary with the age of the member. You are expected to be responsible for the following:

1. Make sure that the member and his parents understand the project and what will be expected of the member in terms of materials needed, accomplishments expected, meetings to be attended and project activities and events in which he will be expected to participate.
2. Help the member plan his project work so that it meets his needs, interests and abilities and family situation, and record his plan in his record book.
3. See that each member has the necessary project literature.
4. Provide project instruction for members through demonstrations, tours, discussions and supervision of project work.
5. Encourage and help the member plan and give demonstrations in his project and participate in club activities.

6. Help the member keep his record book up to date.
7. Recognize the members for worthwhile accomplishments in project work and participation in meetings and club activities.
8. Keep members and parents informed of project related activities and events such as demonstration days, and fairs and help prepare members to participate.
9. Keep the county Extension office informed of the progress of your club and submit enrollment forms, completion information, and other information as requested.

Your responsibilities with the group will vary with the organization of the club. If you are serving as a project leader in a community club, your major responsibility will be in the area of developing the project program. This includes project teaching and planning activities related to the project. If you are the only leader for the group, you will also be concerned about helping the club plan a program for the year which includes club meetings, participation in non-project activities such as a community service activity, camp, programs for parents in the community, picnics, tours, and other 4-H activities in the local club and outside the community. The club should provide the opportunity for boys and girls to learn to work cooperatively, to arrive at group decisions, conduct meetings and be a participating member in an organized group.

Your work with members will be more effective if parents and others in the community are interested and actively involved in the program. Ask parents to give a demonstration or talk to the group, assist with a club tour, provide transportation, or offer their homes for club meetings and activities. There are many people who would be happy to participate in the program of the club if asked to share their talents with the group.

#### THE ROLE OF EXTENSION

The 4-H Club program is a part of the educational program of the Cooperative Extension Service of Washington State University. County Extension Agents, working with local people, are responsible for the development of a program of projects and activities for members and an information program for adults who serve as volunteer leaders.

The County Extension Agent in charge of 4-H Club work gives leadership to the non-project activities and events. He provides assistance to leaders in organizing clubs, planning club programs, and learning about a variety of teaching methods including demonstrations, judging, tours, and record keeping. This information is provided to leaders through training meetings, leader letters, leader guides, and personal visits from experienced leaders or agents.

The Extension Service provides written project material for members and leaders. The source of project training for leaders in the knitting project will vary

according to resources available within the county. Your county may have a project chairman or a project committee experienced in teaching knitting who will hold informational meetings for the knitting project leaders.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The project material for members is the leader's first source of information. This may be supplemented by information on color, design, wardrobe planning and grooming available from the County Extension Agent in charge of the home economics program. She may also have a list of additional sources of information which are available for your use. A telephone call, a letter, or a visit to her office will keep you posted on meetings for leaders on subjects related to the knitting project such as color, design, and buymanship.

You are encouraged to enlist the help of others who are skilled in knitting. Personnel in local yarn shops and department stores can help you and the members become familiar with the kinds of yarn and tools available.

#### 4-H KNITTING PLAN

The knitting plan is based on a series of steps or phases beginning with learning about tools, terms, how to knit and purl and proceeding to how to combine colors in a pattern design. There are specific skills to be learned in each phase which are needed in order to be able to go to the next step in learning to knit.

Members will feel a greater sense of achievement and satisfaction if they master each step to their own satisfaction before proceeding to the next step. Some will progress faster than others and some will spend more time to achieve a greater degree of perfection than others. You, as their leader, must recognize individual differences and be prepared to adjust to each member's own pace.

It is wise to review the total plan and read the members' project material before you begin to work with boys and girls. You may find that some adjustments need to be made in what's included in the phases. For example, one of the skills to be learned in phase 3 is to block a garment. A better looking article will result if members are taught this skill whenever they make their first large article. This may be in phase two.

The plan is based on the right hand method of teaching knitting. You may want to show members another way with which you are more familiar and feel more confident to teach. You may find that some young people will learn one method more easily than another. Once members start to learn a particular method, it is probably best to continue with that method until they have acquired a good deal of skill. Later they may want to learn a different method so that they can compare the two and choose the one that seems best for them.

Each phase suggests articles to make which use the skills to be learned in that phase. Other articles which use these same basic skills may be substituted for the ones suggested if they seem to more nearly meet the interests of the members.

Knitting is enjoying renewed popularity with the high school age group. Younger boys and girls may also be interested, particularly the 11 and 12 year olds. The interests of younger members change rapidly, but since they enjoy working with things and with their hands, knitting may have a real appeal.

## LET'S LEARN TO KNIT

Phase	Things to Know	Skills to be Learned	What to Make
I With knit and purl	Knitting terms, tools to use, how to select needles and other tools, kinds of yarn, importance of clean hands and a place to keep knitting clean. How to make a knitting basket.	How to wind yarn, cast on and bind off stitches, knit and purl, join the seams, keep an even and uniform tension.	Two small articles or one small and one large article or one large article.
II With increase and decrease	Learn more about yarn--kinds, textures, advantages and disadvantages in using each. Good knitting habits, more about knitting tools and how to care for them. How to care for your shoes.	To combine purl and knit. To make ribbing and stockinette stitch. To increase, to decrease. To make a woven seam. To correct mistakes. How to block a knitted garment.	Two small articles or one large article.
III With pick up stitches and buttonholes	More about knitting tools and terms. How to care for sweaters. To plan your wardrobe, improve your grooming by care of the hair.	How to use markers and measure your work. Join new yarn, make a knitted buttonhole, pick up stitches, do a backstitch, and a crocheted seam.	Two small articles or one large article.

Phase	Things to Know	Skills to be Learned	What to Make
IV With a pattern stitch	Learn more about different types of yarn and their uses. Become familiar with different types of needles and their uses. Increase your knitting vocabulary by learning more about knitting terms. Increase your skill in reading pattern directions. Continue good grooming program by learning about care of the skin, lipstick tips.	Make a pattern stitch. Crochet stitch finishes, grafted seam, setting in a sleeve, how to make yarn buttons, how to wash and block a knitted garment.	Two small articles or one large article made with a pattern stitch.
V With four needles	The basic steps in wardrobe planning. How to select becoming colors, how to recognize common knitting errors and how to avoid them. How to evaluate your finished product. Continue good grooming practices learning more about care of skin and use of make-up.	Work with four needles, turn a heel, the kitchener stitch, how to reclaim yarn, how to replace the heel or toe of a sock.	At least one pair of four needle socks and a pair of mittens or gloves.
VI With mixed colors	Study color effects and combinations. Learn how to interchange yarns. Learn more about knitting terms, such as argyle, Norwegian, Scandinavian, and Fair Isle. Good grooming tips on personal cleanliness and make-up.	How to combine colors, make a knitted mend or patch, how to follow a pattern on a graph.	One large article or two small articles worked in Fair Isle or bobbin knitting.

## TEACHING THE PROJECT

A variety of methods can be used to teach the project. Choose the method best suited to what the member is expected to learn. A member will learn more about the size of knitting needles, for example, if he has the opportunity to see and handle a variety of sizes. A tour to a department store or yarn shop might be one of the most effective ways for members to learn about knitting tools and yarns. Other ways would be to show a variety of tools and kinds of yarn at a meeting.

### Read, Watch, Practice

One of the best ways to teach a skill such as learning to cast on is to have the member first read the directions in his project book, then watch you demonstrate each step as you read through the directions with him, and finally take yarn and needle in hand and do it with your supervision. It is important that practice be supervised so that mistakes can be corrected.

### Leader Demonstrations

As you demonstrate the skills to be learned in the knitting project, remember to sit beside the member rather than facing him so that he will be working in exactly the same way as you are. If you face the member to give a demonstration, then he sees it opposite from the way he will be doing it.

### Project Book

The member's project booklet will be one of his most important tools in learning. You can encourage members to look for information in their project book by referring to it often and using it as you demonstrate some of the skills to be learned. From your own experience in using other instruction booklets on knitting, you may know of some you would recommend to 4-H members because they are well written and easy for the member to follow. One of the important things that a member can learn in this project is to read and follow written directions. Most younger members have a limited ability in this area, but are anxious to improve their skill since they know this is important to them to be able to do many things.

### Member Demonstrations

Showing and telling others how to do something is one of the best ways for a person to learn how to do it himself. Suggest that club members show their parents or other family members how to do the things they have learned. The members themselves may give some of the demonstrations at the 4-H meetings. This helps members to develop new skills, learn more about the subject, improve their ability to express themselves, develop poise and confidence, and to receive recognition. A list of suggested demonstrations is given in each project book. Young members should start with a simple demonstration and progress to more complicated topics.



### Judging

You, as a leader, can help members set standards for a good product by showing them what to look for as they select needles, yarn and begin to knit. Help them recognize correct tension as an important characteristic of good knitting by illustrating with a sample. Help each member to evaluate his own work and see what might be improved. The important thing for the member to be able to accept is that he should attempt to do the best job possible, recognizing that it may not always be of top quality but can be improved as he has an opportunity to practice.

### Tours

A club tour is a good way to stimulate the interest of both members and parents. It is a source of ideas for projects as well as an opportunity to learn what to look for in selecting knitted garments. A tour to be of most value should be carefully planned with the person in charge so that they know exactly what members are expected to learn from the tour. The members themselves should also be prepared ahead of the tour with some idea of what to expect and some questions they might want to ask.

### Exhibits

A 4-H exhibit for parents and others in the community will provide an opportunity for members to learn how to display their completed articles attractively. It provides a chance for them to see a variation in standards and to learn to recognize a good product. This experience will also prepare them if they want to enter their articles in the fair. The member should become familiar with the scorecard which will be used in evaluating their exhibit. If you go over the scorecard with them, they will have an opportunity to ask questions about terms they do not understand or standards being used.

## PLANNING THE CLUB PROGRAM

One of the most important jobs of the leader is to help boys and girls plan a program that is interesting, fun and provides lots of opportunity for member participation.

There are four important parts in any 4-H program for the year. These parts are:

1. The 4-H Club Meeting
2. Activities
3. Events
4. Recognition

The 4-H Secretary's Book provides an outline for developing a club program for the year which includes club goals, a calendar and meeting plans for each meeting. The club members, together with you and the parents, will determine how often they want to meet, where and when. The age of the members will help determine whether the club meets once a week, every two weeks or once a month. Younger members will have the time and will probably want to meet more often than older members.

The Club meeting is usually made up of four parts.

1. An opening which includes the flag salute, 4-H pledge and roll call. This part of the meeting may also include songs, a game, an inspirational poem or thought for the day.
2. The business portion of the meeting will include making plans for coming events, committee reports, a discussion of club participation in community projects, and all other activities of the club.
3. The educational portion is the focal point of the club meeting. This time is spent on talks, demonstrations, judging and learning project skills. The members, leaders and special guests participate in this part of the meeting. The member's project guide indicates the logical order of what to teach in this portion of the meeting.
4. Recreation is an important part of each meeting. The recreation portion of the meeting may be the responsibility of a recreation leader or a committee.

A project group which is a part of a community club may not always have a business meeting. They may wish to spend more time on their actual project work. These should not become just work sessions, however, it is important that fun and recreation be included.

A club activity is a learning experience which is of lesser intensity and duration than a project. The club might choose to study and work on one of the following during the year: Health, Safety, Good Grooming, or Community Service. A good grooming program is especially appropriate for the knitting project.

The events included in the club calendar may be of a local club, community, district, county, state or national nature. A beginning club will be most concerned about their local club activities which might include such things as parents' program, club achievement day, or a club tour. Members will also want to know about county 4-H camp, the county fair and other county-wide activities.

Recognition is an important part of the 4-H member's experience. It may be given in many different ways. A word of praise from leaders, parents and other club members is important. Being asked to serve on a committee or performing a club job makes him feel needed by the group. An opportunity for members to show parents and others in the community what they have learned during the year helps members to build confidence in themselves as well as giving recognition for achievement.

#### WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT OF MEMBERS

Have you often been puzzled by the behavior of a boy or girl, or wondered how one ten year old can be so different from the next ten year old?

The more we know about some of the principles of growth and human development, the more nearly we can understand why boys and girls behave the way they do. This knowledge and understanding will provide the basis for adjusting the knitting project to the needs and abilities of the young people with whom you work.

Each boy and girl is different, a product of his own experience and background. However, research tells us that each child moves through common stages of growing up. These stages consist of a more or less predictable series of growing up jobs. Each child goes through the same stages as other children, but he does so in his own time and in his own way. There are some general guides to behavior which will help you to know what to expect from members.

YOUNGER 4-H MEMBERS  
(Age 9-12, Grade 4-7)

Characteristics

Are eager, enthusiastic, and easily motivated if the job interests them.

Wants to do and make things, interested in skills for skills' sake and not so much the finished product.

Very short interest span and interests change very rapidly.

Limited ability to organize and carry out a plan and follow directions.

Wants to make choices within a given range but too many are confusing.

Accepts leadership from adults and expects leader to be a teacher.

Wants to belong to a group and is beginning to see his place in it and be able to work with a group more easily.

More secure with own sex group.

Likes symbols and regalia and some formality to the club.

Not particularly interested in personal appearance.

Enjoys color and design.

Significance to the knitting project

Making something is important. Begin activity at the first or second meeting.

Guide them in their choice of knitting needles and yarn. Size 8 knitting needles and 4 ply knitting worsted are best.

Provide simple step by step directions. Demonstrate each step as you follow the written directions in the project booklet.

Keep work periods short and recognize progress frequently.

Limit the choice of articles to make but let them select something that is important to them.

Characteristics (cont.)

Significance to the knitting project

Eye, hand, and muscle coordination beginning to improve but still finds it difficult to cope with small pieces.

Desires recognition and encouragement from parents and other adults.

EARLY TEEN 4-H MEMBERS  
(Ages 12-14, Junior high school)

Characteristics

Significance to the knitting project

Are self-conscious as result of rapid growth and a struggle to understand and accept a changing body.

Members will want greater choice in articles to make. What they choose will be determined by what is currently accepted by their own age group.

Have a strong desire to conform and be accepted by own age group.

Still need to use needles and yarn that can be easily handled and choose a simple pattern.

Want to explore but not study intensively. However, the interest span lengthens, especially if the project satisfies a particular goal.

Emphasize teaching the skills needed to achieve the style desired.

Want and need help in grooming and personal improvement.

Members will work for a professional look but not perfection.

Have a strong desire for independence and want to make own decisions but often are better at planning than actually doing.

Buying tips and care of sweaters will be important for this age group.

Might accept greater responsibility for own learning and are interested in group learning experiences, such as trips and tours.

Discuss line, design, and color as it relates to appearance. Group activities will assume new importance.

Interested in learning skills in order to make something specific. They want to do it quickly but they need to be satisfied with the results.

Can work more on their own as their ability to follow directions increases.

Ability to read and follow directions increases.

Will still need help in interpreting directions.

Use their own age group as a testing ground and to gain independence from adults.

Characteristics (cont.)

Significance to the knitting project

Looks upon a leader more as a person who is available when needed to give guidance rather than as someone to teach specific skills.

OLDER 4-H MEMBERS  
(Ages 14-18, high school)

Characteristics

Significance to the knitting project

Becoming more like adults in interests and acceptance of self.

Willing to work with more difficult patterns and kinds of yarn.

Will spend longer periods of time in concentrating on mastering skills that hold their interest.

Encourage experimenting with color and design.

Want to make their own decisions.

May have as much interest in making something for others as for themselves.

High interest in personal appearance and the peak for teaching color and design.

More emphasis on knitted garments in the total wardrobe and wardrobe planning.

At the end of this period, they have less need to be like the group and will be interested in exploring on their own in terms of color and design.

The concept of wardrobe planning is more easily understood.

MEMBER RECORDS

The record book is the member's and leader's measuring stick. It is a member's guide to his progress during the year. Each member should have the regular record book used by all members and E.M. 2577, knitting project record on which he will record information related directly to the knitting project.

PROJECT COMPLETION

A guide for the project is given at the beginning of the member's booklet for each phase of the knitting project. It suggests that the member make two or more articles which use the skills to be learned in this phase. The suggested articles or others which require the same skills should be completed before going to the next phase.

The members should finish at least one phase of the plan as a project. More than one phase may be completed during the club year, depending upon the age, interest, and skill of the member and the time available.

There is no required number of phases to be completed for the completion of the project. You, as a leader, should help each member set individual goals which are challenging but achievable. This is especially important for younger members since they are apt to determine success in 4-H club work by the way they feel about their project.

The older boy or girl who belongs to the group may have already developed the skills to be learned in the first phase. If so, he should start at the point where he will be learning new skills. Older members may progress faster than younger members because of an intense interest and a desire to learn to make a sweater or some other article for a specific occasion. Fifteen or sixteen year olds are capable of long periods of sustained interest if the objective in mind is related to social activities.

Each member should make a plan at the beginning of the year and record it in his record book. He should complete as much of the plan as possible for his project. There may be changes made as he goes along in the project and is better able to determine how much he can accomplish.

Four-H members are recognized at the end of the 4-H club year with an achievement pin if they have met the requirements for project completion within the county. You, the leader, will want to become familiar with the requirements at the beginning of the club year so that you can help members work toward these goals.