4-H POSTER HINTS

18 USC 707

Tips for Making 4-H Posters with Impact!

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4-H Poster Rules

All 4-H poster exhibits (unless otherwise specified in project manual) must be 22" x 28" in size, ***displayed horizontally,*** and backed with a solid 22" x 28" ***foamcore backing***.

- Plywood, masonite, or similar materials ***MAY NOT*** be used for poster backing (unless otherwise specified in project manual—i.e., small engines).

- Poster must be displayed horizontally. Vertical posters will be dropped one place.

Correct Way	**Wrong Way**
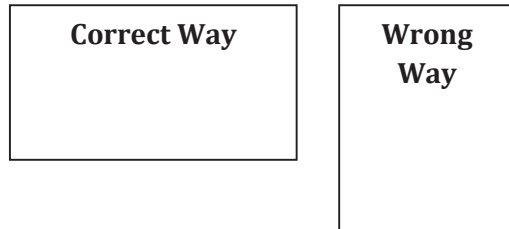
All poster exhibits may be made on any color of poster board or suitable material (i.e., fabric, wrapping paper, etc.), and then be securely attached and mounted on the foamcore backing.
  - It is best to use rubber cement to attach the poster board to the foamcore backing, as then the foamcore backing can usually be used again.
  - Attaching the poster board or other material to the foamcore backing BEFORE you put anything else (pictures, labels, etc.) on the poster works best. If you do this, make sure you let it dry for a couple of days or the cement will retain moisture and ruin the poster.
  - The foamcore backing itself can be used as the poster.

The Extension Office has the correct size of foamcore backing, available for $2.25 each.

All poster exhibits should be covered with a clear plastic, acetate, or transparent covering to protect your exhibit and make it more attractive.
  - Plastic sleeves available from the Extension Office
  - Heat shrink plastic available at craft, hardware, and discount stores. Lay a sheet of plastic (approximately 28" x 34") on a hard surface. Place your poster (including foamcore backing) facedown and tape the plastic to the backside of the exhibit). The final thickness should be about ¼ to ½ inch.
  - Do NOT use Saran Wrap!

The Extension Office has plastic sleeves, available for $1.00 each. The sleeves are the correct size to fit your poster board and seal at the one end.

Every poster (except Minis) must have Velcro dots secured to the back of the poster.
  - Use at least 8 circles per poster, placing dots in from the edge of the exhibit (outside the plastic sleeve) about 8 inches.
  - Have the dots attached BEFORE bringing the exhibit to the fair. It takes about 12 hours to cure.

The Extension Office has Velcro dots available for $0.25.

Each poster must have a label. The label should be placed in the lower right-hand corner of your poster. This is the information that is required (unless instructed differently in the project manual).
  - Name; County; 4-H Club; Project; Division

Planning Your Poster

- Read the project manual

- Read your county project requirements in the Fair Book

- Decide on a subject to express *ONE THOUGHT OR IDEA*

- Look at the **WHO – WHAT – WHY – HOW**
  - ➤ **WHO** is audience you wish to reach?
  - ➤ **WHAT** is the subject matter you wish to present?
  - ➤ **WHY** – the purpose of the poster.
  - ➤ **HOW** to express your message.

*Only when you have clearly defined the answer to **WHO, WHAT,** and **WHY** can you proceed to **HOW!***

- Select a *TITLE.* The title you choose would:

  - ➤ Identify the exhibit   (tell content)

  - ➤ Short   (limit it to 4-5 words)

  - ➤ Simple   (use short, simple words)

  - ➤ Attract attention
    - *Personal* – "Your Food Dollars"
    - *Action* – "Make Your Own Belt"
    - *Question* – "How Well Are You Fed?"
    - *Catchy* – "Freeze Food for Fresh Flavor"

- Plan an *ARRANGEMENT* to:

  - ➤ Attract and interest the viewer

  - ➤ Provide good balance – formal or informal

  - ➤ Be simple, neat, clear, interesting, and in good taste

- Influence the *VIEWER'S EYE* by:

  - ➤ Direction the objects or figures face. The eye should lead in and around the display not out of it.

  - ➤ Keeping heavy materials from coming too close to top, bottom, or sides of the poster.

  - ➤ Sequence of information. The eye moves from one object to the next in logical order.

  - ➤ Pull of directional line. Attention is directed to specific objects in the display. Use devices to pull groups together (lines overlapping, color repeats, etc.).
  - ➤ Amount and arrangement of contrasting areas. A pattern of lights and darks leads the eye in a given direction.

Effective 4-H Posters

Your poster needs: **STOPPING POWER**

APPEARANCE

- Simple - not too much information on one poster
- Can be read at a glance
    - ➢ Specific main idea
    - ➢ Brief wording, short and to the point
- Title is short, simple, and catchy
- Title may suggest a theme (refer to project manual for required themes)
- Arrangement is well-designed
- Framing or border is done within the 22" x 28" poster dimensions

Your poster should be: **INTERESTING**

ATTRACTS INTEREST

- Attracts attention immediately
- Contrast-- unusual lines, shapes, and textures (color & design)
- Good use of color (in background, objects, & lettering)
- Display is attractive and shows creativity

Your poster should be: **CONVINCING**

HOLDS INTEREST

- Idea expressed well
- Conveys a message
- Tells the message accurately and completely
- Message--expresses **only one idea** in each poster

But you have to remember the: **MECHANICS**

WORKMANSHIP

- Soft pencil (no. 2) can be used to make guide line marks which are easily erased (art gum eraser)
- Items must be securely attached or mounted to poster board or background material
- Lettering
    - ➢ Use a guide line or ruler for consistency and neatness
    - ➢ Lettering should not be crowded onto poster
    - ➢ Use plain, bold lettering and lines
    - ➢ Lower case letters are more easily read than capitals
    - ➢ Horizontal letters are easier to read and design than vertical letters
    - ➢ Be sure your lettering is large enough to be seen
    - ➢ Do not mix colors in a message. Keep letters all one color.
    - ➢ Various **types of lettering** can be used. Gummed letters, cutout letters, pressure-sensitive transfer letters; as well as letters in felt, paper, cardboard, plastic, metal, or wood are available at bookstores and office supply stores.
    - ➢ Your local bookstore or office supply store should carry **lettering aids** such as rubber stamps and lettering stencils.

- Color
  - Use neutral or soft colors for backgrounds (grays, greens, and blues in pastel shades are excellent background colors)
  - Color of lettering should contrast with background
  - Limit to two or three colors--usually it is best to select one lettering color to go with your overall background color. A third color may be used in small amounts for accent and attention.
  - Use bright, intense colors for the smaller areas and if possible for the center of interest. Red is a good accent color.

Color combinations ranked in order for legibility:

1. Black on yellow
2. Green on white
3. Blue on white
4. White on blue

5. Black on white
6. Yellow on black
7. White on red
8. White on orange

9. White on black
10. Red on yellow
11. Green on red
12. Red on green

Here is a list of color combinations which may help you to select colors for your poster. Some of the combinations may seem unusual but you will find they will work magic to attract and hold attention.

Accent (least amount)	Props (happy medium)	Background (largest amount)
Green	Chartreuse	Light yellow
Violet	Lilac	Light Gray
Red	Pink or black	Light Gray
Blue	Light blue	Light gray
Blue and gray	Light blue	White
Violet and white	Medium gray	Pink
Red	Ivory	Light yellow
Blue	Light blue	Chartreuse
Green	Beige	Light gray
Black and white	Light gray	Chartreuse
Black and white	Medium blue	Light gray
Blue	Deep Pink	Light blue
Black	Orchid	Pink
Black	Light green	Light yellow
Black	Medium blue	Light gray
Blue and silver	Cream	White

DO! DO! DO!

- Do keep it organized

- Do use correct spelling!

- Do use only one idea

- Do use devices to pull groups together (lines overlapping, color repeats, etc.)

- Do keep heavy materials from coming too close to top, bottom, or sides of the poster

- Do make lines (the viewer's eye) carry to main center of interest, not out of the poster

- Do make cuts evenly, paste cleanly, measure for centers and parallels

DON'T! DON'T! DON'T!

- Don't use staples, tacks, or tape

  - ➢ Tape is acceptable in a few areas (i.e., attaching leaves to poster)

- Don't use fluorescent poster board

- Don't create a poster with all words or all pictures

- Don't use complicated designs or naturalistic drawings

- Don't use several small centers of interest

- Don't use fine, threadlike writing or very small lettering

- Don't forget the need for good balance and proportion

Need ideas?
- Look at advertisements, billboards, theater signs, travel posters, and magazines

POSTER PREPARATION WITH VELCRO

All posters need to be 22' x 28' and must be displayed **horizontally**.

All posters need to be covered with plastic. Several methods of covering are popular. The most popular is a plastic sleeve made to fit. These sleeves are available at the Extension Office. Other methods include: Heat shrink type plastic, available at craft and hardware stores or plastic purchased at craft/sewing store. You may also have framing shops cover your poster for a fee.

All posters must use foamcore board as the backing product. **You may not use plywood, or masonite or similar materials for poster backing.** Remember if you purchase foamcore board from some other source it may not be the correct size! You may use the foamcore as the poster or you can have a poster board attached to it.

Velcro must be attached to the back of posters before display. It takes several hours to cure (at least 12 hours). Please secure your velcro to the back of your poster **before you bring it to the fair.**

We suggest you use at least 8 circles of Velcro per poster. Placement should be in from the edges of the poster about 8 inches.

All posters must have a label in the front lower right corner. It should include: Name, County, 4-H Club, Project, Division.

Please refer to Poster General Rules in the 4-H Fair Book for more information!