Your 4-H journal is a written exploration of who you are as a person and how your involvement in 4-H assists you in becoming the person you want to be. It is a way for you to discover what you want to accomplish in life. Keeping a journal involves recording your thoughts, feelings, experiences, goals, disappointments, successes, fears, and dreams at a specific time in your life. It will help you learn more about your talents and the best way to put them to use.

**Other reasons to keep a journal**

- Your 4-H journal will help you stay focused on what is really important in your life. Write in it regularly about your 4-H experiences.
- Your 4-H journal can be a friend and confidant during difficult times.
- Your 4-H journal is a place to record your memories and experiences in 4-H.
- Your 4-H journal can help you deal with problems more effectively by helping you to reflect on those problems.
- Your 4-H journal is where you can record your participation in daily, weekly, and monthly events that are a part of your life as a member of 4-H.
- Your 4-H journal will serve as something for future reflection.
- Your 4-H journal will preserve your own personal history.
- Your 4-H journal is a way to reflect on your 4-H participation in local club meetings, after school programs, project meetings, project activities, 4-H camp, field days, contests, leadership experiences, citizenship activities, and commitment to develop your head, heart, hands, and health.

**Tips for keeping your 4-H journal**

1. Buy a spiral notebook or three-ring binder to serve as your 4-H journal.
2. Put your name, address, and phone number on the first page.
3. Paste, staple, or place this sheet of recommendations in your 4-H journal.
4. Decorate the cover.
5. Every time you write a 4-H journal entry, record the date, time, place, and location for the day’s entry at the top of the page.
6. Leave space at the top of the page for a title that you can give each entry after you have written it.
7. Write with whatever is comfortable—pen, pencil, markers. You may even want to use a computer.
8. Find a comfortable place to do your writing.
9. Find a special place to keep your 4-H journal.
10. Number each page.
11. Write for yourself—this is your 4-H journal.
12. Include important memorabilia about your 4-H experiences and activities. These might include photos, brochures, certificates, awards, drawings, and newspaper clippings—the possibilities are endless.

13. Draw about your 4-H experiences in addition to or instead of writing about them.

14. Write a poem, song, or short story about your 4-H experiences.

15. Submit a special 4-H journal entry that you would like to share to your 4-H leader so it can be sent to the state Extension office and scanned onto Alabama’s 4-H Web page. Before this can be done, a parent or guardian will have to complete a form granting the Alabama Cooperative Extension System permission to publish your work. Get one from your 4-H leader.

For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county’s name to find the number.