



# Recreational Activities Coordinator's Guide

The recreation coordinator is an important team member of the club. As a member of the team, the coordinator is responsible for developing and carrying out the total club program.

Recreation is an important part of the club program. It helps members to learn to know one another, have fun, and enjoy success through games, stories, dances, parties, picnics, etc. Through these activities, members have fun, learn how to share, and learn to be part of the group. One of the big challenges to recreation coordinators is to help all members enjoy success.

As recreation coordinator, others should be involved in the planning and conducting of activities. The following suggestions should be considered:

Ask the members, junior leaders, and adult leader what they would like to do at each meeting.

- Consider the place where recreation will take place.
- Plan many activities so that you will have more than you need.
- Prepare some activity which members may begin as soon as they arrive at the meeting. Have games, puzzles and get-acquainted mixers. These activities will involve everyone as soon as they arrive.
- If any game does not go as it should, quickly change to another.
- Give a signal for attention, and be sure that directions are clearly understood before starting to play. Do not try to talk above the noise of the crowd.
- Get the players into positions before giving detailed instructions. In rhythmic games, walk the groups through each movement while the directions for it are given. Teach the words of singing games before action is started.
- Assume that all persons present will play. If some hesitate, tactfully interest them by finding a special need for their participation. A variety of activities may help to involve everyone.
- Remember that the person leading the activity should be thoroughly familiar with the games, enthusiastic, pleasant but in control of the group, alert to the reaction of players, patient, self-confident, and have the necessary equipment and materials.
- Attempt to keep fair play, sportsmanship, and "playing for the fun of playing" the most important things in all activities.
- Time the program wisely. Stop when the interest is high so members are willing to come back the next time.
- Everyone playing helps generate enthusiasm (includes recreation committee members, all officers, guests, adult leaders, etc.).



## Some Types of Games You Can Use

Games have sometimes been listed under the following headings:

- Starters or "get acquainted"
- Stretchers
- Stunts or specialties
- Socializers

A starter should be used with persons as they arrive at a meeting. A member of the game committee should be on hand to greet the early comers. Make them feel at home and provide something interesting for them to do. Puzzles, guessing contests, magic and get-acquainted games are suitable. A good starter often gets the stage set for group singing, discussion, and other parts of the meeting which follow.

Stretchers are games which are generally used to energize the group after they have been sitting for some time.

Stunts or specialties often take some time to prepare and often require several people to do them well. Some specialties might include musical numbers such as solos, duets, trios and quartets. Other kinds of special numbers would be readings, skits, and short playlets.

Socializers generally come at the close of a meeting. They may include musical as well as non-musical games, social dances, square dances, or athletic contests such as softball, baseball, and dodge ball.

## Some Resources for Ideas Are

- Public and school libraries
- Recreation and park departments
- Other youth groups (Scouts, etc.)
- Schools (physical education teachers, etc.)



## Questions for Thought

1. What is the purpose of recreation?
2. How can recreation help individuals?
3. How can recreation help the club?
4. How is a new activity taught to a group?
5. What are some special recreational activities which can be included in the program for the club?
6. What resources (written material, equipment, people) are available for help?
7. What are some games which might be used at meetings?
8. Will any special events such as parties, picnics, or hayrides be planned?

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## **Suggestions For 4-H Club Recreation Leaders**

As a 4-H Club Recreation Leader you have the responsibility of planning fun and exciting activities for your club members to participate in at each meeting! The other members of your club believed that you had the enthusiasm and energy to do a good job of leading your club's recreation activities!

Here are some tips to help you as Recreation Leader.

1. Work closely with your local 4-H Club Leader and other club officers as you plan your recreation activities.
2. As you plan your activities, you should consider the time that will be available during the meeting for recreation.
3. Plan your recreation well in advance of the meeting and obtain any necessary supplies.
4. You should have at least one recreation activity planned for each meeting.
5. You may also be asked to plan a "mixer" to use at the beginning of the meeting to get everyone acquainted with each other.
6. Throughout the year, use a wide variety of recreation activities to keep all of the members interested.
7. The recreation activities you plan should involve everyone. Be sure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in the activities.
8. There are a wide variety of sources you can use to look up new recreation ideas. Check with the Extension Office to obtain some of these.

This is a chance for you and your club to have a lot of fun in your meetings! Good luck with your activities throughout the year!

Read and study the pamphlet entitled "Recreational Activities Coordinator's Guide" (4-H 455) for more ideas and suggestions.