

THE 4-H CAT PROJECT

Chapter 1: WHAT CAN I EXPECT?

I. LEARN ABOUT CAT HEALTH

- Cat Anatomy
- Cat Diseases & Parasites
- Keeping Your Cat Healthy

II. LEARN ABOUT CAT CARE

- Feeding
- Grooming
- Housing
- Entertaining

III. LEARN ABOUT CAT BREEDS

IV. LEARN HOW TO SHOW YOUR CAT

A. Fitting & Showing

- A systematic way to show off your cat.
- Demonstrate your ability to control the cat.
- Show the health & grooming of your cat.
- Show your knowledge of cats by answering questions.

B. Type Class

- Judged on:
 - Conformation.
 - Grooming.
 - Personality.

C. Open Shows

- How to Enter
- What to Expect

D. Cage Decoration Class

- What are the requirements?
- What is safe?
- How creative can I be?

E. Costume Class

- What are the rules?
- What will my cat tolerate?
- How creative can I be?

F. Cat Judging Class

- Build decision making skills
- Learn to organize your thoughts

G. Cat Bowl Class

- Test your knowledge of cats
- Have fun with friends

V. TEACH OTHERS ABOUT CATS

- Public Presentations
- Posters
- Community Service

VI. HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED

- Harness
- Lead
- Carrier
- Cat!

Chapter 2: GET YOUR CAT READY TO BE A 4-H CAT

I. CHOOSE THE RIGHT CAT

- Younger cats cope better with new experiences.
- Genetics & early experience are important.
- Adult experiences are influential, too.
- The best 4-H prospects are:
 - Younger cats.
 - House cats.
 - Long-haired cats.
 - Altered cats.

II. START HARNESSING EARLY

- Wear the harness around the house.
- Wear the harness & drag the leash.

III. START SMALL

- Cats cope better with new things if exposures are gradual & brief.
- Take baby steps when taking your cat away from home.
- There are 3 parts to being a well-adjusted 4-H cat:
 - 1 –Being away from home
 - 2 –Being handled by strangers
 - 3 –Being around strange cat

IV. KEEP IT FUN

- New experiences should be as pleasant as possible
- Associate 4-H with treats, play & petting.
- Cats should not be forced to experience things that frighten them.
- Reward the cat frequently
 - Treats
 - Play time
 - Quiet time

V. GET OUT & ABOUT

- The more experiences the cat has, the better it can cope with change.
- Going out? Take the cat!

VI. KEEP THINGS FAMILIAR

- Maintain the cat's routine as much as possible when he is in new surroundings.
- Try to include familiar items when you take your cat out.
 - Regular food & feeding schedule
 - Blanket or pillow
 - Favorite toy
 - Normal cat litter

VII. A FEW DON'TS

- Don't put 2 cats together.
- Don't groom away from home.
- Don't use mood altering supplements (including cat nip)

Chapter 3: CAGE DECORATION GUIDELINES

I. CAGE BASICS

- Old cage dimensions are: 48" long, 23" deep, 25" high
- New cages are smaller
- Cage has 2 doors, no bottom & the top is not latched

II. BASIC REQUIREMENTS

- Top, sides & back must be covered
- Floor must be added
- Top must be secured
- Litter box must be provided.
- Water dish must be provided.

III. OPTIONAL DECORATING

- Exhibitors may enter decorated cage class

IV. DECORATING GUIDELINES

- Inside & outside should match.
- Must have a theme.
- Must have a displayed title.
- Litter box should be screened from public.
- Should have a resting place
- Litter box, food & water dishes should be part of theme.

V. DECORATING TIPS

- Most of your decorations should be made by you.
- Make sure everything is cat-safe.
- Put some things on top of your cage that match the theme.
- Don't use copyrighted figures (Garfield, Mickey Mouse, etc.)

VI. DECORATING MATERIALS

- For inside walls:
 - Cardboard
 - Thin plywood
 - Fabric
 - Art board
- For outside walls: Fabric
- For Floor: Pegboard
- To Connect Things: Zip ties

VII. FINAL THOUGHTS

- Your finished cage should be like a window into another place.

VIII. CAGE JUDGING SCORESHEET

A. Design allows easy viewing of cat10 Points

- Cage has minimal decorations over the front so public easily views cat and interior of cage

B. Comfort/Safety.....25 points

- Water & food dish with easy access & large enough for size of cat
- Litter box with easy access & of proper size for cat. Should be screened, but still visible.

- Bed large enough for cat to use.
 - Bed, dishes, litter box part of theme.
 - Tops, sides, back & floor covered.
 - Cage allows for cat to move around.
- C. Work Done by Member.....25 points
- Most of the work done by the member.
 - Age is taken into consideration.
- D. First Impression.....20 points
- Cage has a unique, pleasing & organized look when first seen.
 - Clever use of materials.
- E. Bonus Points.....20 points
- Design theme is easy to understand
 - Design has been well thought out.
 - Cage title is displayed.
 - Food & water dishes part of the theme.
 - No sharp corners or hard material.
 - No harmful, chewable materials.
 - Nothing to entangle cat.
 - No electrical cords.
 - Off the shelf items are okay as long as not everything is off the shelf.
 - Cage has an interest that makes you want to stop to look at it.
 - Top decorated & part of theme.
 - Inside walls (sides & back) covered & part of theme.

Chapter 4: CAT CLASSES

I. FITTING & SHOWING

- **Fitting:** Show the health & grooming of your cat.
 - **Showing:** Demonstrate your ability to display & control the cat.
 - Show your knowledge of cats by answering questions.
- A. Your cat is judged on:
- Clean teeth, nose, eyes & ears
 - Clean, well groomed coat
 - Trimmed toenails
 - Properly fitted harness & leash
- B. You are judged on:
- Appearance
 - Attention
 - Courtesy
 - You are also judged on your ability to control your cat:
 - Keep the leash on your wrist
 - Use the safety carry
 - Keep the cat on the table
 - Stay calm & quiet no matter what!
- C. Fitting & Showing: Showing
- Start by introducing yourself
 - Show your cat's conformation:
 - Head shape
 - Body type
 - Tail
 - Show your cat's grooming:
 - Teeth
 - Eyes
 - Toenails
 - Nose
 - Ears
 - Cleanliness
- D. Fitting & Showing: Question Categories
- Care/ health
 - Anatomy
 - Breeds/showing
 - General knowledge
 - 4-H

II. TYPE CLASS

- The cat is judged against other cats in the same class.
- Most 4-H competitions have five classes:
 - Shorthaired household pet
 - Longhaired household pet
 - Purebred
 - Kitten (4 to 8 months)
 - senior (10 years & older)
- Purebred:
 - Judged according to a breed standard.
 - Also judged on their cleanliness & grooming.
- Household Pet: (cats of no particular pedigree or breed)
 - judged on cleanliness, appearance, & personality.
- To Show in the Type Class:
 - The cat is placed in the show cage & the exhibitor leaves the show ring.
 - The cat is removed from the cage by the judge & evaluated.
 - The cat is placed back in the cage & a ribbon is awarded.
 - The exhibitor takes the cat from the show area.
 - After all cats in the class have been evaluated, the judge will call back his/her top picks for further evaluation.

III. COSTUME CLASS

- Members dress their cat up in a costume.
- The member may also dress in a related costume.
- Each exhibitor will have a few minutes to describe the costume for the judge & audience.
- Judged on costume quality and creativity.
- Criteria for Judging Costumes
 - Judged on originality.
 - Must be created by 4-H member, not parent.
 - Parts of the costume can be purchased or put together from things you have on hand.
 - Costume must be suited to fit the cat;
 - Cat must be part of costume.
 - Cat should be visible in costume:
 - Costume must be safe for cat.
 - Harness and leash must be on cat.

IV. JUDGING CONTEST

- Judging is a class in which 4-H members show the depth of their cat knowledge.
- 4-H members are asked to identify:
 - cat breeds from pictures of cats,
 - cat bones and/or parts,
- They also judge between several sets of items to decide which is best.

V. CAT BOWL

- Cat Bowl is a quiz competition held at county and state fair.
- Competition is divided by age group
- Teams face off two at a time in a double elimination competition.

VI. 4-H CAT SHOWS IN PIERCE COUNTY

- Fun Raiser Show: April
- Pierce County Fair: August
- Lacamas Fair: August
- State 4-H Fair: September

Chapter 5: FITTING & SHOWING

I. THE MEMBER

A. Appearance

- You must look neat, clean, and tidy!!
- Professional, business attire suitable for an interview is advised.
- Your attire should NOT interfere with or distract from the showing of the cat.
- Long sleeves must be worn. This is a safety issue.
- Shoes should be closed toe & flat heeled.
- No large pictures or words on shirts.
- No jewelry that dangles or that might injure you or the cat. Appearance
- Hair should not hang in such a way as to block the judge's view.
- Nail polish is fine as long as it is fresh and not chipped.
- NO chewing gum!

B. Attentive

- Stand quietly in front of your cat's cage, paying attention to what is happening in the show ring.
- You should NOT be socializing, talking, or playing with your cat.

C. Courteous

- Introduce yourself. Give your: Exhibitor number, First name, Cat's name, How long you've been in the cat project.
- Be polite to those around you and to the judge.
- Remain prepared to be called back to the show ring until the class is finished and awards have been presented.

II. SHOWING EQUIPMENT

- The harness & leash are to be clean.
- The harness should not be able to slip off, but not so tight as to be uncomfortable for the cat.
- The leash should be 2½ to 3½ feet long & light weight.
- Heavy or cumbersome (braided) leashes are not recommended.
- The leash should not be wrapped around the hand or wrist.

III. SHOWMANSHIP BASICS

- You should always show calm, quiet control of the cat regardless of what the cat is doing.
- The leash must be secured on the wrist & kept safely out of the way.
- When the judge signals you or calls your number, hold your cat in a safety carry & approach the judge's table.

IV. THE SAFETY CARRY

- The cat's forelegs are grasped between the thumb & fingers with 1 or 2 fingers between the cat's forelegs.
- The cat's chest is supported in the palm of the hand.
- The cat's rump & rear legs are either tucked under the elbow against your body or riding on the hip with your opposite hand grasping the nape of the cat's neck.
- You may also hold the cat's rear legs in the same manner as the forelegs.

V. AT THE JUDGE'S TABLE

- Pose your cat on the judging table in a sitting or standing position facing the judge.
- This is a good time to do your introduction.
- Show your cat's conformation. You should pause & catch the judge's eye after each step.

A. Showing Conformation

- The cat's conformation is shown in this order:
 - Head shape (long face or round face);
 - Body type (long, moderate, or cobby);
 - Coat texture;
 - Tail (or lack of tail).
 - Next, show your cat's condition. Again, pause & catch the judge's eye after each step.

B. Showing Condition

- Place your cat in front of you, facing the judge.
- The cat is to remain in this position until the cleanliness of the coat is shown.
- Step 1: Teeth & Gums
 - Lift the lips to show first the front, then the molars on one side & finally the molars on the other side.
 - There should be no tartar on the molars & the gums should look healthy.
- Step 2: Nose
 - Put a finger (or your thumbs) on either side of the nose & point it towards the judge.
 - The nose should be clean & free of discharge.
- Step 3: Eyes
 - Use two fingers to open wide one eye & then the other.
 - The eyes should be clear with no discharge.
- Step 4: Ears
 - Use your fingers to make the ear canal visible. You may need to turn the head slightly. Show both ears.
 - The ears should be clean with no dark discharge or redness.
- Step 5: Claws (Toenails)
 - Slide your hand down over the shoulder & leg, grasp the paw & gently squeeze it to show the claws.
 - Show every claw on all four paws unless the judge requests otherwise.
 - The claws must be clipped, declawed, or capped.
 - The cat may be turned sideways at this time.
- Step 6: Coat
 - For the last step, hold the cat on its rump with its belly facing the judge.
 - Ruffle the coat to show the coat is clean, well-groomed, & free of flea dirt.
 - At the Judge's Table
- Put your cat back into the neutral pose you started with & wait for the judge's directions.

VI. QUESTIONS

- The judge may give you the choice of returning the cat to its show cage. If your cat is not absolutely calm, you should do this.
- If you put your cat away, return to stand in front of the judge.

- If you kept your cat out, keep him still on the table & focus your attention on the judge.
- You will be asked questions according to your age & what year in the 4-H cat project you are in.
- Answer to the best of your ability in a complete sentence that includes both the question & the answer.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, make an educated guess.
- If you draw an absolute blank, say "I'm sorry I don't know the answer, but I will look it up."
- You may ask for a question to be repeated or ask for a further explanation, if necessary.
- When you are dismissed by the judge, pick up the cat in the safety carry & return it to the show or benching cage, whichever one the judge indicates.

VII. FINAL AWARDS

- Remember to remain prepared to be called back until the class is finished & final awards have been distributed.
- You should remain in the benching area & wear appropriate attire.

Chapter 6: PIERCE COUNTY FAIR INFORMATION

I. WELL BEFORE THE FAIR

- Be enrolled in the cat project & have control of your project cat by June 1st.
- Complete your fair entry by the entry deadline. You must enter Fitting & Showing and Type.
- Plan & prepare your cage decorations.
- Get your cat vaccinated:
 - Distemper, feline Viral Rhinotracheitis & Calici Virus (FVRCP),
 - Rabies.
 - A 4-H Vaccination Form is required
- Make sure your cat is healthy:
 - No ear mites or fleas
 - No internal or external disorders.
 - No visibly pregnant or lactating cats
 - No cats under 4 months old

II. PRE-FAIR WEEKEND

- Help with barn set up
- Decorate your cage

III. AT THE FAIR

- Arrive on time. Cats must be benched by 10:00 AM
- Stick Around. Cats must stay in place until 10:00 PM (6:00 on Sunday)
- Participate in herdsmanship.
- Cat Care
 - Exhibitors are responsible for preparing their own animal.
 - A parent or junior leader must not do this for the exhibitor.
 - Holding an animal for grooming is permissible.
 - Cats must be removed from building each night.
 - Exhibitors are responsible for providing their own cat food & litter.

IV. CLASSES OFFERED

- Fitting & Showing
- Type
- Cat Equipment
 - Cat Photography
 - Cat Science
- Costume
- Decorated Cage
 - Cat Judging Contest
 - Cat Bowl

V. STATE FAIR QUALIFICATION

- Your Fitting & Showing and Type scores are used to qualify you.
- You must have at least 1 blue & no whites
- Only one cat may be shown at State Fair.
-