

Oregon 4-H Clothing Project

Guidelines for Leaders: *Basic, Expanding, and Advanced Skills*

4-H 320-00L • October 2014

The 4-H clothing project is designed to help boys and girls develop as individuals and become responsible adults. By participating in project activities, 4-H members develop their ability to make decisions, express creativity, and gain knowledge and skills in the areas of sewing, clothing, and personal appearance.

These leader guidelines outline four groups of progressive skill levels: Basic Skills—Level 1; Basic Skills—Levels 2 and 3; Expanding Skills—Levels 4, 5, and 6; and Advanced Skills—Levels 7, 8, and 9. Each level includes activities in the five learning areas:



Planning and evaluation



Individual development and outreach



Management, consumership, and wardrobe building



Textiles and science



Construction

For most learning areas, activities from the leader resource materials are listed to give you possible ideas for teaching the topic.

You should choose and adjust activities to meet your members' needs. To meet individual interests and encourage breadth within the program, there are more activities suggested here than can be accomplished during the project year. Individual members, with guidance from their leader and parents, can plan the direction that best suits their personal interests.

Skill levels are not restricted by age. All members, regardless of age, need to start with basic skills and build toward advanced skills. Members with no previous sewing experience or who are younger might advance more slowly. Others who have had some sewing experience might advance more quickly. You can help members determine which skills they need to acquire. However, because of their developmental skills, members in grades 10, 11, and 12 are to stay in the basic skill levels for only one year.



Be sure to request a copy of the *Oregon 4-H Clothing Advancement Guide* (4-H 320-01R). It outlines a series of activities by steps within each skill level. It is a member's tool for planning, gaining skills and knowledge, and recording what they learn. The member activities correlate to the suggested activities in this leader guide. The advancement guide also serves as an assessment tool for leaders to gauge members' progress and readiness to move to another skill level.

Members, along with their leader and parents, choose the activities they wish to complete each year. When a member completes an activity, his or her leader or parent initials the record. After the member completes all activities planned for the year, he or she receives an advancement certificate that shows what skill level they have attained. The advancement program is optional; it is designed to supplement regular 4-H clothing project work and recordkeeping.

4-H clothing project materials for member and leaders are available through your local Extension office. As members' skills expand, you can recommend that they also use commercial resources as a way to stay current with fabrics and appropriate techniques.

Ask your local Extension office what other activities—such as workshops, Fashion Revue, presentation events, or other contests—are scheduled for your area. Your county also may hold project-leader meetings. Attend if you can, as other leaders can be a very helpful resource.

If your members plan to exhibit at the county fair, review the fair premium book, class descriptions, exhibit guidelines, and entry instructions. Ask your local Extension office for more information and assistance.

Oregon 4-H Clothing Project Guidelines for Leaders

Basic Skills—Level 1



Planning and evaluation

Planning

Members plan their project in cooperation with their leader and parents. The advancement guide can help members plan. Members' plans might include skills to learn or supplies and materials to obtain. Younger members will need help making choices within a limited set of possibilities.

Simple, short-term timelines might work better than planning the whole year at once. It may be worthwhile to help members build short-term calendars to guide their plan.

Meetings will likely include work on individual projects and group activities. Certainly, not all items sewn need to be exhibited, but understanding the exhibit categories listed in county or state fair premium books is a helpful guide to planning. Be sure items to be exhibited meet the class description for the skill level in which the member is enrolled.

Resources

- *Oregon 4-H Clothing Advancement Guide* (4-H 320-01R)
- Fair premium books with class descriptions

Keeping records

Help members start the habit of keeping records. They can use their clothing project record and advancement guide to do this.

It might be helpful to spend time at each meeting to keep records up to date. Share with members the value and benefits of recordkeeping, such as recording progress toward goals, tracking expenses, marking achievements, and learning skills to help get a job or manage your money.

An option in the advancement guide suggests that members start a sewing skills notebook or file in which they build a library of samples as a reference for future sewing. Sewing is very much a continual decision-making process that involves matching patterns, fabrics, and a variety of possible techniques. Initial samples could include types of fabric and basic sewing techniques that will help members as they attempt sewing on their own.

Resources

- *Oregon 4-H Clothing Advancement Guide* (4-H 320-01R)
- *Making a Skills Notebook* (4-H 320-16)
- *4-H Clothing Project Record* (320-00R)

Evaluation

Introduce members to how to evaluate their own and others' work. This can be an informal discussion of both individual and group progress and accomplishments. Some questions might include:

- What did I learn?
- Where do I need improvement?
- How do I feel about what I did?
- What shall I plan to do or learn next?

Evaluation also can be in the form of comparison to standards. Introduce members to the format for judging a class of similar items, such as ready-to-wear garments or samples of specific sewing techniques.

Resources

- *Fibers and Fabrics* (4-H 320-17)
- *Measuring Up: Quality Standards for Sewn Items/Projects* (PNW 197)
- *Sewing/Clothing Construction Score Sheet* (320-01)
- *Sewing/Clothing Creative Expression Score Sheet* (320-02)
- Packets from previous clothing judging contests (there is an introductory level specifically for first-year members)
- Tours of fabric stores



Individual development and outreach

Personal appearance

Members can learn about and become responsible for routine personal care (e.g., bathing, shampooing, washing hands and face, caring for nails and teeth). Introduce members to posture and poise. They might use these in basic modeling experiences.

Resources

- Tour or guest speaker (e.g., beautician, nail specialist, dental assistant, or older 4-H member to teach modeling)
- 4-H Fashion Revue information

Contribute to a group

Give members a chance to contribute to the group and assume some responsibility. They can:

- Help prepare for the meeting.
- Put things away.
- Participate in discussions.
- Serve as host.
- Provide a snack.
- Lead a game.

Rotate club officer experience so each member gets a turn in each role. Introduce the basics of an orderly meeting and group decision-making process.

Share what they have learned

Give members opportunities to:

- Show how to do something.
- Give simple presentations.
- Exhibit their projects.

Resources

- County 4-H workshops or training about giving presentations (Check with your local Extension office about upcoming opportunities.)
- Resources or publications on presentations and effective meetings
- Fair premium books with class descriptions

Help others

Find ways for members to help family, friends, and community—individually or as a club. Members could collect usable clothing for donation, do simple mending for others, or make gifts. They can exhibit new items for donation in the “Hands for Larger Service” fair exhibit classes.

Careers and cultures

Introduce the connection between some careers and specialized clothing. Explore connections between clothing and national or heritage costumes worn in some countries or worn in this country for celebrations. Choose an area according to members’ interests.

Resources

- Tours of places where people wear uniforms or specific dress
- Guest speakers from other countries



Management, consumership, and wardrobe building

Clothing care

Discuss why it’s a good idea to fold or hang up clothes after wearing them.

Tools and resources

Members should learn to identify and use basic sewing equipment. Determine which tools they will need for each sewing project. Discuss what to consider when buying tools. Make or find a box or container to keep sewing tools organized and in one place.

Resources

- *Sewing Equipment* (4-H 320-11)

Consumer decisions

Discuss important factors to consider when buying fabrics, such as fiber content, required care, whether the yarns are square with each other in a woven fabric, and whether a design is printed on-grain.

Show what information is given on garment labels and where to find the label in ready-to-wear clothing.

Resources

- *Fibers and Fabrics* (4-H 320-17)

Wardrobe planning

Discuss why people might like or dislike certain clothing.

Introduce terminology related to color. Some terms include color wheel, primary and secondary colors, and warm and cool colors. Terms used to describe colors include hue (name of color), value (lightness or darkness), and intensity (brightness or grayness).



Textiles and science

Fibers

Help members learn the difference between fiber and fabric. Classify fibers as natural and man-made.

Resources

- *Fibers and Fabrics* (4-H 320-17)

Fabrics

Help members learn to tell the difference between the following:

- Woven fabrics—plain, twill, satin, or pile weaves
- Non-woven fabrics—felt and some interfacings
- Knit fabrics—single, double, and warp knits; stable and stretchy knits

Help members learn the following:

- Parts of woven fabrics—lengthwise grain, crosswise grain, bias, selvage
- Information found on the ends of bolts of fabric—fiber content, fabric name, and care instructions
- How and why to prepare fabric before cutting—launder to preshrink and remove excess finish, check grain

Resources

- *Fibers and Fabrics* (4-H 320-17)
- Tours of fabric stores



Construction

Beginning sewers may need considerable guidance. Make it easier for them to be successful through careful selection of fabrics, projects, and patterns. Help them avoid complicated steps and details. Keep it simple.

Choose fabrics that work well for beginning sewers:

- Woven—medium-weight, firmly woven fabrics including cotton, cotton/polyester blends, wool, or wool blends
- Polar fleece—lighter weights with minimal stretch (4 inches of fabric stretches only to 4¾ inches or less)
- Felt

Avoid fabrics that require more advanced knowledge or techniques:

- Plaids, stripes, or directional prints that should be matched in the garment or item
- Stretch woven fabrics (usually contain some spandex)
- Napped fabrics except for flannel
- Slippery or sheer fabrics

Simple patterns with matching shapes and few details are best. If you preselect several items or patterns for members to choose from, it may simplify teaching the initial skills. Members may individualize their project through fabric selection or possible embellishment. Garments with gathers, zippers, and set-in sleeves are more difficult. It's best to reserve them for later projects. Take body measurements, and help members determine correct pattern size. You may need to make simple alterations for fit.

If a member chooses a garment with crotch seam construction, help him or her learn the order of constructing the crotch area, including appropriate seam trimming and reinforcement. Alternate crotch seam constructions usually involve more advanced seaming techniques.

It's a good idea to help members work on several small projects rather than start with a large one. This way, members experience the satisfaction of completing a project quickly and using the item right away. Working on several small projects also allows members to gain expertise by repeating basic skills several times.

The following list is a guide to the range of beginning sewing skills that might be used in beginning projects.

Members should learn to tell the difference between just trying a skill and mastering a skill. Help them evaluate how well they did the skill and whether they need more practice.

During judging, items that use fabrics or skills beyond the recommendations for this level must be done well according to the standards. They will not be given extra consideration for increased difficulty, nor will they be disqualified. It is in members' best interest to stay within the suggested guidelines.

Construction skills—Level 1

Hand-sewing skills

- Threading a needle
- Knotting or securing a thread
- Sewing an even running stitch, blanket stitch, hand-basting stitch, or others
- Sewing on fasteners: buttons, snaps, hooks and eyes

Resource:

- *Hand-Sewing Skills* (4-H 320-13)

Pattern selection and use

- Laying out a pattern
- Cutting smoothly along straight and curved lines
- Transferring pattern markings to the fabric
- Following directions from a pattern instruction sheet

Resource:

- *Pattern Skills* (4-H 320-18)

Sewing plain seam and selecting appropriate seam finish

- Stitching secure and even
- Crossing a seam, corners in a seam
- Choosing seam finish to provide durability, prevent raveling, and be attractive if seen

Resource:

- *Plain Seams and Seam Finishes* (4-H 320-19)

Cutting skills to remove bulk

- Grading an enclosed seam
- Trimming for enclosed corners
- Clipping an inward curve
- Notching an outward curve

Resource:

- *Cutting Skills* (4-H 320-12)

Pressing skills

- Selecting iron temperature
- Pressing seams open
- Pressing a fold an even width for casings or hems

Resource:

- *Pressing Skills* (4-H 320-14)

Sewing by machine

- Identifying major parts of the sewing machine and their function
- Threading the machine
- Starting, stopping, and reversing stitching
- Matching edges or similar shapes for sewing
- Sewing straight seams an even distance from an edge
- Pivoting for square corners
- Sewing curved seams an even distance from an edge
- Sewing along a fold (as in clean finished edges, casings, and some machine-sewn hems)

Resource:

- *Sewing Machines and Sergers* (4-H 320-15)

Spanish-language resources

The following leaflets are available from the Oregon State 4-H Office:

- *La Máquina de Coser* (The Sewing Machine)
- *Métodos de Planchar* (Methods of Pressing)
- *Principios Básicos del Coser a Mano* (Basic Principles of Sewing by Hand)
- *Principios de Corte* (Principles of Cutting)
- *Costuras Sencillas y sus Remates* (Plain Seams and Their Finishes)

Project ideas—Level 1

Cutting skills

- Cut-and-tie fleece blankets
- Pillows, ponchos, or scarves

Hand-sewn

- Pincushion, needle holder, eyeglasses holder, bean bags, and ornaments

Machine-sewn

- Integrating pattern selection and use, cutting techniques, pressing skills, and sewing by machine into the construction of two or three articles
- Straight seams and square corners:
apron, poncho, potholder, pincushion, book cover, tote bag, pillow, pillowcase, simple patchwork, placemats, receiving blankets or lap robes, simple vests
- Curved seams:
simple vests, simple stuffed toy with matching front and back shapes, bean bags, holiday ornaments or decorations
- Casings and/or hems:
pullover top, dress, or jumper with neck facings and arm facings; cut-on or raglan sleeves; pull-on pants, shorts, or skirt; sleepwear; aprons; drawstring bags

Notes

Oregon 4-H Clothing Project Guidelines for Leaders

Basic Skills—Levels 2 and 3

Members typically take one or two years to gain the following knowledge and skills. However, older members (grades 10–12) have more manual dexterity and maturity and are to move on to expanding or advanced levels, depending on their skills.



Planning and evaluation

Planning

Members will have more ideas about what they would like to do. They should still get input from their parents and leader when planning their project work. Help members use the advancement guide to build skills without adding too much complexity at one time. Members' plans might include skills to learn or supplies and materials to obtain.

Simple, short-term timelines might still work better than planning the whole year at once. Help members build short-term calendars to guide their plan.

Meetings might include work on both individual projects and group activities.

Keeping records

Continue to help members work on recordkeeping skills using their clothing project record and advancement guide. Spend time at each meeting to keep records up to date.

An option in the advancement guide suggests that members start or keep up a sewing skills notebook or file in which they build a library of samples as a reference for future sewing. Encourage members to start a notebook or add samples.

Resources

- *Oregon 4-H Clothing Advancement Guide* (4-H 320-01R)
- *Making a Skills Notebook* (4-H 320-16)
- *4-H Clothing Project Record* (320-00R)

Evaluation

Continue building members' ability to evaluate. This can be informal discussion of both individual and group progress and accomplishments. Some questions might include:

- What did I learn?
- Where do I need improvement?
- How do I feel about what I did?
- What shall I plan to do or learn next?

Evaluation also can be in the form of comparison to standards. Members can evaluate ready-to-wear items as well as items they construct.

Encourage members to practice judging techniques as a way to develop decision-making skills. Members should work on providing simple explanations of the reasons for their decisions.

Resources

- *Measuring Up: Quality Standards for Sewn Items/Projects* (PNW 197)
- *Sewing/Clothing Construction Score Sheet* (320-01)
- *Sewing/Clothing Creative Expression Score Sheet* (320-02)
- Packets from previous clothing judging contests



Individual development and outreach

Personal appearance

Members should become aware of the following factors in personal appearance:

- Unchangeable physical traits—height, build, color, features
- Changeable physical traits—weight, hairstyle, length of nails, condition of skin
- Value (lightness or darkness) of hair, skin, and eye coloring
- Wearing appropriate clothes for various occasions
- Wearing clothes that are clean and in good repair

Encourage poise and confidence by preparing members to model something they have made or bought.

Help members become aware of the relationship between health and personal appearance, including the role of good diet, enough sleep and exercise, and posture.

Discuss growth changes (e.g., height, strength, uneven rate of growth, changes in color and texture of hair).

Contribute to a group

Give members a chance to contribute to the group and assume some responsibility. They can:

- Help prepare for the meeting.
- Put things away.
- Participate in discussions.
- Serve as host.
- Provide a snack.
- Lead a game.

Members can learn the duties of each club officer. Members can learn the basics of an orderly meeting and group decision-making process. Encourage increased responsibility as the members are ready to assume it.

Share what they have learned

Give members opportunities to:

- Show how to do something.
- Give simple presentations.
- Exhibit their projects.

Encourage presentations as a way to develop poise and confidence speaking to a group. As members progress, help them organize more formal presentations. Offer the opportunity to speak publicly to other groups or in a county presentation contest.

Resources

- Ask your local Extension office about upcoming workshops or training in giving presentations.
- Fair premium books with class descriptions

Help others

Find ways for members to help family, friends, and community—either individually or as a club. Members could collect usable clothing for donation, do simple mending for others, or make gifts. They can exhibit new items for donation in the “Hands for Larger Service” fair exhibit classes.

Careers and cultures

Explore the connection between the clothes people wear and what they do. Discuss the differences between classic, long-term styles and fads.



Management, consumership, and wardrobe building

Clothing care

Help members learn to sort clothes for laundering. Decide which prewash steps, if any, should be taken. For example, close zippers to reduce snagging and rubbing, turn permanent-press garments inside out to protect finish, use pretreatment products or liquid detergent to loosen heavy soil on collars and underarms.

Help members learn about the heat sensitivity of various fibers. Explore iron temperature settings for fabrics of different fibers. Help members learn pressing techniques for seams, flat areas, gathered areas, and creases.

Discuss and evaluate ways to mend broken seams and replace buttons, snaps, and hooks and eyes.

Resources

- *Pressing Skills* (4-H 320-14)

Tools and resources

Help members learn sewing machine maintenance, including changing needles, oiling, cleaning, and adjusting tension and pressure.

Introduce the serger, including parts, how it operates, and how it differs from a sewing machine. If members do not have a serger to sew with, you can teach these basics through drawings and samples.

Resources

- *Sewing Machines and Sergers* (4-H 320-15)
- Sewing machine owner's manual
- Tour a store that sells sewing machines and/or sergers

Consumer decisions

Review things to consider when buying fabric. Discuss coordination of pattern, fabric, and notions.

Help members evaluate ready-to-wear clothing in terms of cost, quality of material and construction, fit, and appropriateness for the intended use.

Resources

- *Pattern Skills* (4-H 320-18)

Wardrobe planning

Help members learn the following:

- How to describe various fabric textures
- How to recognize design lines in clothing, the optical illusions they might create, and which lines are desirable for various body silhouettes
- Style terminology

Help members learn to see:

- Silhouette lines on patterns and ready-to-wear garments—outline shapes resulting from length and shape or fullness of skirts and pants
- Design lines in patterns and ready-to-wear garments—pockets, yokes, tabs, sleeve shape, and other seam detail



Textiles and science

Fibers

Help members learn the characteristics of natural fibers.

Resources

- *Fibers and Fabrics* (4-H 320-17)

Fabrics

Help members learn the behavior of the following three fabric constructions:

- Wovens—lengthwise yarn, little or no stretch; crosswise yarn, some stretch; bias, most stretch; tendency to ravel; variation in stretch depending on fiber or yarn
- Non-wovens—stretch may vary with individual products
- Knits—wales (vertical rows of knit loops), courses (horizontal rows of loops), stretchiness, ability to run

Members should learn to identify the following characteristics in fabrics. Relate these qualities to decisions about suitable use of a fabric:

- Weight—lightweight wovens and knits, medium-weight wovens and knits, heavyweight wovens and knits
- Hand (the way a fabric feels)—crisp, soft, smooth, bulky, rough, drapability
- Look—shiny, dull, sheer
- Stretchiness—stable wovens and knits, stretchy wovens and knits (Help members learn to measure stretch of knits and some wovens by comparing a section of fabric with a stretch gauge.)
- Colorfastness

Help members learn to distinguish among different types of knits:

- Single knit—examples include sweater knits and jersey fabrics
- Rib knit—an example is banding at edges of sweaters
- Double knit—many dresses, pants, skirts, and jackets
- Tricot—a warp knit used for lingerie, shirts, and blouses
- Warp knit—raschel, a lacy pattern knit that resembles crocheting

Review fabric preparation before cutting:

- Launder to preshrink and remove excess finish.
- Check for straight grain.
- Determine if a printed design is on-grain.

Explore techniques for creating or manipulating fabric.

Resources

- *Fibers and Fabrics* (4-H 320-17)



Construction

Level 2

Help members evaluate their beginning skills and improve skills that need practice. Gradually add new skills. Avoid unexpected difficulties through careful selection of fabrics and simple patterns with uncomplicated sewing techniques.

Choose fabrics that work well for beginning sewers:

- Woven—medium-weight, firmly woven fabrics including cotton, cotton/ polyester blends, wool, or wool blends
- Polar fleece—lighter weights with minimal stretch (4 inches of fabric stretches only to 4¾ inches or less)
- Knits—stable and non-bulky (4 inches of fabric stretches to 4¾ inches or less except for ribbing or binding)

Avoid fabrics that require more advanced knowledge or techniques:

- Plaids, stripes, or directional prints that should be matched in the garment or item
- Knit or woven fabrics with more than minimal stretch (except for ribbing or binding)
- Napped fabrics except for flannel
- Slippery or sheer fabrics

Guide members to choose fairly simple commercial patterns. Members may choose patterns from pictures or drawings of the finished item and probably will need guidance to determine whether the detail of the garment construction is simple or more complicated.

Members should do simple pattern alterations, if needed, with adult assistance.

Members also might be interested in showing their creativity by embellishing ready-to-wear garments or items.

If a member chooses a garment with crotch seam construction, help him or her learn the order of constructing the crotch area, including appropriate seam trimming and reinforcement. These steps may not be included with pattern instructions.

The following list is a guide to the range of beginning sewing skills. Use the advancement guide to help members identify new skills or those they need to practice more.

Members should learn to tell the difference between just trying a skill and mastering a skill. Help them evaluate how well they did the skill and whether they need more practice.

Garments or articles with zippers or set-in sleeves are more difficult. Members might be less frustrated if they reserve these for later skill levels.

Sewing garments with sergers is a choice. Members will be evaluated on their ability to appropriately serge a seam, similar to any other seam construction and seam finish technique they choose.

During judging, items that use fabrics or skills beyond the recommendations for this level must be done well according to the standards. They will not be given extra consideration for increased difficulty, nor will they be disqualified. It is in members' best interest to stay within the suggested guidelines.

Suggested skills—Level 2

Members should continue to practice and improve previously learned construction skills.

Pattern selection and use

- Reading and understanding pattern envelopes, symbols, and construction guides
- Pattern layout, cutting, marking, and use

Resource:

- *Pattern Skills* (4-H 320-18)

Sewing by machine

- Staystitching
- Sewing seam finishes—pinking, straight stitch, zigzag, serge
- Reinforcing seams—crotch seams, some underarm seams

Resources:

- *Sewing Machines and Sergers* (4-H 320-15)
- *Casings and Crotch Seams* (4-H 320-36)

Pressing skills

- Pressing during construction
- Fusing
- Pressing a fold an even width for casings or hems
- Fusing iron-on interfacing, if used

Resource:

- *Pressing Skills* (4-H 320-14)

Cutting skills to remove bulk (review)

- Trimming seam allowances or corners
- Grading an enclosed seam
- Clipping an inward curve
- Notching an outward curve

Resource:

- *Cutting Skills* (4-H 320-12)

Casings

- Even width with stitching close to folded edge
- Insertion of drawstring or elastic

Resource:

- *Casings and Crotch Seams* (4-H 320-36)

Hemming skills

- Grading seam allowances within hem
- Invisible hand-stitching
- Machine hems
- Fusible hems

Resource:

- *Hemming Skills* (4-H 320-32)

Facings

- Interfacing
- Grading, clipping, notching, understitching

Resource:

- *Facings and Enclosed Seams* (4-H 320-33)

Sleeves

- Cut-on, kimono, or raglan sleeves

Patch pockets

- Smoothly turned edges and corners
- Even topstitching

Closures

- Snaps, hooks and eyes
- Hook-and-loop tape
- Zippers in flat items (no neck or waist openings)

Knit techniques

- Attach ribbing or stretch binding
- Seam techniques—seams with stretch, trimming, controlling curl

Project ideas—Level 2

- Aprons: waist apron with casing and ties, chef-style with shaped casing or facing
- Pillow, pillow case, potholder, placemats, baby blanket, lap robe
- Tote bag, drawstring bag, garment bag, sports bag, fabric wallet or purse, hat
- Tops, jumpers, or dresses with cut-on or raglan sleeves and neck facing
- Vests (lined or reversible)
- Tops: sleeveless with facing and necklines with facing
- Bottoms: pull-on with casings (skirts, shorts, pants, pajama bottoms), zippers not recommended
- Simple flat, stuffed toys with matching shapes
- Holiday ornaments

Level 3

Encourage members to begin to work more independently and to find resources for methods and details beyond those that might come with the pattern.

Members can explore different types of fabrics than they have sewn before. Help them evaluate and select quality materials that suit the purpose of their project. If members choose a plaid or print fabric that requires matching, help them learn the techniques and standards for doing those skills well. Recommended fabrics include:

- Stable to moderately stretchy knits (4 inches of fabric stretches to no more than 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches)
- Firmly woven fabrics including rayon blends, denims, and wools
- Woven fabrics with moderate stretch (4 inches of fabric stretches to no more than 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches)
- Fleece with moderate stretch (4 inches of fabric stretches to no more than 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches)

Avoid fabrics that require more advanced knowledge or techniques:

- Slippery fabrics
- Uneven plaids

Recommend that members reserve set-in sleeves until they have more experience with controlling gathers and ease.

Sewing garments with a serger is not necessary, but members should be aware of how it works. A demonstration at a sewing store might provide this experience. Sewing garments with sergers is a choice. Members will be evaluated on their ability to appropriately serge a seam, similar to any other seam construction and seam finish technique they choose.

Suggested skills—Level 3

Members should continue practicing basic skills and trying skills from previous levels that they have not yet completed or mastered.

Use the advancement guide to help members identify new skills or those they need to practice more.

Members should learn to tell the difference between just trying a skill and mastering a skill. Help them evaluate how well they did the skill and whether they need more practice.

During judging, items that use fabrics or skills beyond the recommendations for this level must be done well according to the standards. They will not be given extra consideration for increased difficulty, nor will they be disqualified. It is in members' best interest to stay within the suggested guidelines.

Project ideas—Level 3

- Dress, shirt, blouse, top
- Sweat suit, coordinating separates
- Skirt, pants, or shorts with waistband
- Garment bag, sports bag, backpack, fabric wallet, or purse
- Hat
- Stuffed animal

Notes

Pattern and fabric coordination

- Consider fabric color, stretch, texture (soft, stiff, etc.), and design (plain, print, plaid, etc.) along with the design lines of the pattern

Resource:

- *Pattern Skills* (4-H 320-18)

Controlling and joining uneven lengths

- Gathers
- Easing

Resource:

- *Easing and Gathering* (4-H 320-34)

Waistband application

- Techniques to retain square corners on tab and finishing placket
- Sew on skirt smoothly

Resource:

- *Casings and Crotch Seams* (4-H 320-36)

Closures

- Zippers—lapped, centered, exposed, invisible
- Machine buttonholes—zigzag

Resource:

- *Centered and Lapped Zippers* (4-H 320-35)

Stretch fabric techniques

- Stitching to retain stretch in a seam
- Techniques to retain stability in a seam, including shoulder or zipper areas
- Ribbing or stretch binding application
- “Stitching in a ditch”
- Suitable hems, including double needle

Oregon 4-H Clothing Project Guidelines for Leaders

Expanding Skills—Levels 4, 5, and 6

Members typically take two or three years to gain the following knowledge and skills. They should progress at their own pace.



Planning and evaluation

Planning

Members are making more project decisions on their own but should continue to consult with their leader and parents. The advancement guide is a useful tool to guide the order and timing of possible experiences. Members' plans might include skills to learn or supplies to obtain.

Meetings might include work on both individual projects and group activities. However, members should be building the ability to sew on their own.

Guide members toward sources of sewing information related to a specific fabric, garment, or item. Help members build calendars to guide their plan.

Keeping records

Continue to encourage members to keep records using their clothing project record and advancement guide. Members should need less help in recordkeeping, but it might be helpful to spend a little time at meetings to keep records up to date.

Encourage members to continue adding samples to their skills notebook.

Resources

- *Oregon 4-H Clothing Advancement Guide* (4-H 320-01R)
- *Making a Skills Notebook* (4-H 320-16)
- *4-H Clothing Project Record* (320-00R)

Evaluation

By now, some forms of informal self-evaluation will be almost automatic for members:

- How well did this work?
- Where do I need improvement?
- What shall I plan to do or learn next?

Evaluation also can be in the form of comparison to standards. Members can evaluate ready-to-wear items as well as items they construct.

Members should be developing the ability to explain their decisions in an organized way. One way to practice this is in the format of a judging contest.

Resources

- *Measuring Up: Quality Standards for Sewn Items/Projects* (PNW 197)
- Construction or Fashion Revue judging score sheets
- Packets from previous clothing judging contests



Individual development and outreach

Personal appearance

Help members recognize and accept themselves as they are and make the most of special qualities. Explore ways to make good features more attractive through posture; hair care and styling; skin care; and use of fabric, color, and texture.

Discuss the influence of personal values on decisions about personal appearance. Discuss the relationship of personal values, physical traits, and grooming habits to appearance.

Evaluate clothing silhouettes, design lines, and color as they relate to accentuating or minimizing physical features.

Continue modeling, with expansion into accessories to complete a look.

Resources

- 4-H Fashion Revue information

Contribute to a group

Give members a chance to contribute to the group and assume some responsibility, such as helping prepare for meetings. Encourage increased responsibility. Members may plan, prepare, and carry out a group activity. Such activities could include leading a game, giving a presentation, conducting parts of the meeting, or helping arrange for a field trip.

Help members become aware of opportunities outside their club. Intermediate members are eligible to become Junior Leaders. A club may have several Junior Leaders with different responsibilities.

Resources

- *Oregon 4-H Clothing Advancement Guide* (4-H 320-01R)

Share what they have learned

Give members opportunities to:

- Show how to do something.
- Give presentations.
- Exhibit their projects.

Expand opportunities as the members are ready. One-on-one mentoring of other members or teaching at a county workshop are possibilities. Encourage presentations, at least at the club level, to develop poise and confidence speaking to a group.

As members progress, help them organize more formal presentations. Offer the opportunity to speak publicly to other groups or in a county presentation contest.

Resources

- Ask your local Extension office about upcoming workshops or training in giving presentations.
- Fair premium books with class descriptions

Help others

Find ways for members to help family, friends, and community—either individually or as a club. Members might be ready to take more leadership in suggesting and arranging the details of service projects. They can exhibit new items for donation in the “Hands for Larger Service” fair exhibit classes.

Explore clothing-related problems and possible solutions for people with limited mobility, limited dexterity, or impaired vision.

Careers and cultures

Explore textile techniques of other cultures, clothing history, fashions and fads, history and care of textile heirlooms, and special clothing needs of older adults or people with disabilities.

Resources

- College and university class catalogs
- Fashion magazines



Management, consumership, and wardrobe building

Clothing care

Help members learn:

- Various methods of clothing repair, such as stitched patches and iron-on patches
- Basic clothing care
- Permanent care labels and what the terms or symbols mean
- Basic types of laundry products (pretreatment sprays, water softeners, detergents, bleaches, and fabric softeners) and which to use for various categories of laundry
- Washing machine cycles (normal, permanent press, and delicate) and when to use them
- Methods of drying (tumble drying with various cycles and temperatures, line drying, hanger and flat drying) and when to use each
- Fibers and fabrics requiring special care (such as dry cleaning), and how special care relates to the cost of garments and influences clothing choices
- Spot and stain removal, including which chemicals and procedures to use and when

Resources

- Tour of a commercial laundry or dry cleaner
- Washing machine owner’s manual
- Extension stain removal guides

Tools and resources

Encourage members to become aware of and evaluate additional sewing tools and notions.

As members try more advanced techniques and fabrics, encourage them to seek and evaluate sources of information in addition to the pattern directions. These might include books, websites, videos, and local classes.

Resources

- *Sewing Equipment* (4-H 320-11)

Consumer decisions

Help members learn about consumer rights and responsibilities, and how to make a consumer complaint.

Help members compare the costs of buying similar clothing from several sources.

Wardrobe planning

Explore more design features of clothing and relate them to physical features. Choices might include necklines, skirt fullness, pant styles, sleeve fullness and length, pocket styles, and waistline treatments.

Help members begin to develop a wardrobe plan:

- Inventory clothing and accessories on hand.
- Compare activities with the clothing in their inventory.
- Explore which colors, textures, lines, and styles are most flattering.
- Decide which pieces are needed to fill gaps in the current wardrobe. Make a plan for what to add, when to add it, and the approximate cost.

Help members learn to choose and care for shoes and other accessories. Compare materials, cost, and appropriate use. Have members practice selecting accessories for specific outfits and occasions.



Textiles and science

Fibers

Help members learn about different fibers:

- Read the labels of fabric bolts and ready-to-wear garments to associate fibers with fabric and care.
- Use textile testing techniques to help determine characteristics of the fabrics made from the various fibers.
- Describe the fabrics made from the fibers in terms of the weight, hand (how it feels), drape, and care. Possible fibers include acetate, triacetate, acrylic, modacrylic, polyester, nylon, rayon, cotton, wool, linen, and silk.

Science

Help members explore science as inquiry for the questions and problems they might face in their clothing project.

Resources

- *Oregon 4-H Science Rich Handbook Series: Focus on the 4-H Clothing Project*

Fabrics

Depending on their skill level, encourage members to explore a variety of fabrics and sewing techniques that work well with them:

- Napped fabrics
- Moderately stretchy knits and fleeces
- Woven fabrics that require more care in handling
- Uncoated outdoor fabrics
- Bulky knits or fleeces

Help members learn about different types of interfacing fabrics by identifying examples of some of the following:

- Woven, sew-in interfacings—organdy, batiste, broadcloth, and hair canvas
- Non-woven, sew-in interfacings—regular non-woven, one-directional stretch, and all-bias
- Woven, fusible interfacings—medium-weight and hair canvas
- Knitted, fusible interfacings—tricot and weft insertion
- Non-woven, fusible interfacings—sheer weight, lightweight, medium-weight, suit or tailoring weight, regular, one-directional stretch

Help members learn about types of finishes used on fabrics and how they relate to fabric use and care. Possibilities include permanent press, soil release, stain resistant, antistatic, flame retardant, water repellent, shrinkage control.

Explore the possibilities for creating or manipulating fabric to be used for a garment or item.

Resources

- Tours of fabric stores
- Mail-order fabric catalogs



Construction

Encourage members to make two or more garments or items each year, selecting appropriate skills for each, to gain experience using a variety of fabric textures and weights. Fabrics may include natural or man-made fibers or blends.

Suggested fabrics—Level 4

- Medium-weight woven fabrics with or without nap—gabardine, velour, challis, corduroy, some denims, sueded rayon, brocade, and damask
- Stable to moderately stretchy knits or fleeces
- Plaid, striped, or directional-print fabrics

Avoid fabrics that require more advanced knowledge or techniques:

- Fine, sheer, or slippery fabrics
- Coated outdoor fabrics

Suggested fabrics—Level 5

Additional fabric choices might include:

- Bulky fabrics—chenille, corduroy, terrycloth, and heavy fleece
- Stretchy knits (4 inches of fabric stretches to more than 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches)
- Uncoated outdoor fabrics

Avoid fabrics that require more advanced knowledge or techniques:

- Fine, sheer, or slippery fabrics
- Coated outdoor fabrics

Suggested fabrics—Level 6

As members expand their sewing experiences, additional fabric choices might include:

- Slippery fabrics
- Fine or lightweight sheer fabrics

Suggested skills and project ideas—General

Members should continue practicing basic skills and adapting them to new fabrics. Use the advancement guide to help identify new fabrics, sewing techniques, and knowledge that members have not yet experienced or mastered.

During judging, items that use fabrics or skills beyond the recommendations for this level must be done well according to the standards. They will not be given extra consideration for increased difficulty, nor will they be disqualified. It is in members' best interest to stay within the suggested guidelines.

Suggested skills and project ideas—Level 4

Simple pattern alterations

- Add width or length
- Pivot darts
- Adjust shoulder area or waist–hip area

Design details

- Yokes
- Pockets—in-seam, patch with square corners, patch with round corners
- Cuffs
- Collars
- Set-in sleeves

Structural details

- Closures at top of zippers—hooks and metal or thread eyes
- Topstitching
- Ruffles
- Plackets—neck area, sleeve/cuff area, button fronts on shirts
- Pleats
- Fly front

Matching and directional skills for plaids

Hemming techniques

(not previously learned)

- Hand-stitches
- Machine blind-stitch

Seam construction and finishes

(not previously learned)

- Flat-felled
- French
- Mock French
- Turned and stitched seam finish (clean finish)
- Bound seam finishes—self-bound, bias bound, net bound, Hong Kong

Project ideas

Suggested garments and items using these skills include:

- Non-fitted jackets (without tailoring techniques)
- Slacks, skirt, dress or jumper, shirt or blouse
- Pillow or placemat with ruffles
- Bags, purses, or wallets with pockets; toiletry bags

Suggested skills and project ideas—Levels 5 and 6

Members should continue practicing basic skills and adapting them to new fabrics. New skills and techniques might include:

- Additional fitting and pattern-adjustment techniques
- Tab fronts
- Bias detailing
- Pockets—bound, shaped, pleated, or welt
- Insets
- Simple linings

Project ideas

Suggested garments and items using these fabrics include:

- Party dresses
- Outdoor wear (tights, simple jackets, rain pants)
- Swimsuits, lingerie
- Purses or bags with pockets, linings, bias-covered seams

Notes

Oregon 4-H Clothing Project Guidelines for Leaders

Advanced Skills—Levels 7, 8, and 9

Members typically take three or more years to gain the following knowledge and skills. They should progress at their own pace and determine their own areas of emphasis. They should try to experience as many of the suggestions listed below as they can.

Because members are maturing both physically and mentally, they can repeat many of the activities suggested for the Expanding Skills levels as is or with slight modification for the Advanced Skills levels.



Planning and evaluation

Planning

Leaders and parents serve as advisors and sounding boards as members become more skilled at planning. Members should continue to use the advancement guide to help them plan. Members' plans might include skills to learn as well as supplies, materials, and instructional resources needed.

Members should be gaining the ability to direct their own learning, find outside resources to meet their needs, and manage their time. Meetings still might include work on both individual projects and group activities. However, members should be gaining the ability to do much of their sewing on their own.

Keeping records

Members should become able to maintain records mostly on their own using their clothing project record and advancement guide. It might be helpful to reserve time at some meetings to check that records are up to date.

Encourage members to continue adding samples to their skills notebook. This “library” can be a very helpful tool to evaluate and choose which techniques to use.

Evaluation

Encourage members to continue different kinds of evaluation. This can be informal discussion of both individual and group progress and accomplishments that leads to future planning. It also can be comparison to standards. Members can evaluate ready-to-wear items as well as items they construct.

Encourage members to participate in judging experiences and develop the ability to justify their decisions. Expand to more organized or formal written and oral reasons.



Individual development and outreach

Personal appearance

Members might explore appropriate dress and grooming for interviews, work, and other activities.

Re-evaluate clothing silhouettes and design lines as they relate to personal features. Continue modeling, with work on appropriate accessories and undergarments for a variety of clothing.

Contribute to a group

Give members a chance to contribute to the group and take more leadership responsibility. At this level, most members are old enough to participate and perhaps act as leaders in county- and state-level activities. These might be related directly to the clothing project, or they could be more general in nature. Ask your local Extension office what opportunities are available.

Intermediates and Seniors may be Junior Leaders; Seniors may be Teen Leaders. Junior Leadership and Teen Leadership differ in the amount of responsibility that the member assumes. Junior Leaders *assist* adult volunteers with managing club details and educational activities. Teen leaders *lead or co-lead* the club, and adult volunteers now assist them with managing club details and educational activities.

Share what they have learned

Give members opportunities to:

- Teach others how to do something.
- Give formal and informal talks and presentations.
- Exhibit their projects.

Encourage presentations, at least at the club level, to develop poise and confidence speaking to a group. As members progress, help them organize more formal presentations. Offer the opportunity to speak publicly to other groups or in a county presentation contest.

Help others

Encourage members to find ways to help family, friends, and community—either individually or as a club. At this level, members should take more responsibility for suggesting and organizing service activities. Members can exhibit new items made for donation in the “Hands for Larger Service” fair exhibit classes.

Careers and cultures

Members might be interested in exploring a variety of careers that are connected in some way to clothing, textiles, and personal appearance. Each member can share his or her choice with the club for the benefit of all. Some possibilities might include:

- Education
- Merchandising
- Journalism, communications
- Art and design
- Museum curation, textile preservation and restoration
- Sewing machine repair
- Cosmetology, hairstyling

Members might explore the following special interests:

- Clothing history
- Pattern design
- How clothing affects behavior
- Fashion analysis
- Economics and marketing of clothing
- Clothing of different cultures



Management, consumership, and wardrobe building

Clothing care

Members could do comparison studies of clothing care products on the market. Compare features and cost. Some possibilities include:

- Washing machines, dryers
- Detergents and soaps
- Laundry additives—water softener, fabric softener, bleaches

Tools and resources

Members might evaluate a broader array of tools on the market. Help them learn to evaluate tools in terms of costs, quality, and ease of use.

Consumer decisions

Help members learn more about agencies for consumers, whom they help, what they do, and how consumers use them. Examples include the Better Business Bureau, a credit bureau, and a consumer protection agency.

Wardrobe planning

Explore the use of mix-and-match separates to expand a wardrobe.

Continue exploration of clothing design features and enhancement of personal physical features.

Members might plan a complete wardrobe for:

- Someone with specific needs—infant, young child, person with limited mobility
- A working person with a limited income
- A college student



Textiles and science

Fibers

Continue exploring new fibers.

Explore dyeing fabrics made from different fibers.

Fabrics

Describe fabrics in terms of weight, hand, drape, and care.

Help members learn about:

- Supporting fabrics—underlinings, interfacings, linings
- Fusibles—webs and interfacings
- Water-resistant, water-repellent, and waterproof fabrics

Explore methods to create or manipulate fabric.

Science

Test new fabrics for fiber content, strength, abrasion resistance, stretch, or stability.

Conduct other science inquiries, seeking possible answers to different questions and problems.



Construction

Members are now exploring a wide variety of fabrics and making choices and adaptations of techniques to match the fabric characteristics. Garments or items might be more challenging in terms of:

- Detail or needed techniques
- Modifying the design
- Designing original patterns or combining patterns
- Fitting for self or others, including advanced techniques—boning, advanced darts
- Using more extensive fabric embellishment or manipulation techniques

Members might be sewing for personal satisfaction or to fulfill a need.

Additional skills to explore

Encourage members to identify skills or fabrics they have not yet experienced or mastered:

- Tailoring—garments with collars and lapels shaped by custom pad stitching, machine pad stitching, or fusible interfacing
- Swimwear or lingerie—garments made from soft or stretchy knits
- Outdoor wear—garments or items from outdoor fabrics including coated fabrics and techniques to retain water resistance
- Special occasion clothing—garments using silk, lace, metallic, and other specialty fabrics
- Recycling or restyling techniques
- Embellishment techniques

Notes

By Pamela Rose, 4-H Youth Development specialist, family and consumer science and expressive arts, Oregon State University.

This publication is based on and replaces OSU Extension publications 4-H 9210L, *4-H Sewing/Clothing Project Guidelines for Leaders*, by Ardis W. Koester, Extension textiles and clothing specialist emeritus; and Barbara J. Sawyer, Extension specialist emeritus, 4-H Youth Development; both of Oregon State University.

Icons made by *Freepik* from *Flaticon.com*.

© 2014 Oregon State University.

Extension work is a cooperative program of Oregon State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Oregon counties. Oregon State University Extension Service offers educational programs, activities, and materials without discrimination based on age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran's status. Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Published October 2014.
