# Building Your 4-H Club Website

**Overview**

Youth can strengthen their club's communication (internal & external) and gain valuable life skills by building a club website under the guidance of an experienced adult 4-H Volunteer. This document provides the Missouri 4-H guidelines for developing 4-H club websites.  These guidelines are subject to the official policies of the University of Missouri.

**Suggested Content**

4-H Club webmasters may wish to consider including…
- The club's name, story and history
- The city or town where the club is based
- A list of club leaders
- A list of club officers (first names only)
- Club meeting minutes (edited to exclude last names of youth)
- Photos and updates of club activities
- An email address to contact the adult 4-H volunteer club leader

**Requirements**

All 4-H club websites *must*…
- Include the 4-H clover, using the official 4-H name and emblem appropriately.
- Involve youth in the design and building process.
- Uphold the values, dignity and character of Missouri 4-H.
- Include a link to the county's University of Missouri Extension Center website.
- Avoid linking to for-profit or commercial websites.
- Post the name, email and phone number for the county's Youth Specialist or Youth Program Assistant in an easy-to-see location.
- Use only content that is not copyrighted – this includes music, images, video, etc.
- Identify 4-H'ers by first names only or not at all.  Protect privacy as much as possible.
- Never post personal information of anyone under 19 (i.e., address, phone, email, etc).
- Be reviewed and approved by the county 4-H Youth Specialist periodically.
    - They are the county's authorizing authority for using the 4-H name and emblem.
- Include the date of the last update at the bottom of the page, and take down web pages that are no longer current.

## Characteristics of a Successful Website

1) Loads Fast – *Don't make them wait, especially if they don't know it's worth it.*
2) Interesting – *If they yawn, they're gone!*
3) Informative – *There's a reason they came to your website.*
4) Straightforward – *Keep it from being intimidating, frustrating, nauseating or too complicated.*
5) Easy to Navigate – *Anyone who can't get where they want to go easily will look elsewhere.*
6) Has Continuity – *Viewers should feel they're on the same site as they move from page to page.*
7) It's Current – *Who wants yesterday's news?*

### Resources

- Guidelines for appropriate use of the 4-H clover
    - http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/4-Hguidelines-v4-26-04.pdf
- Downloading the 4-H clover graphic
    - http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/emblem/4h_emblems.htm

### Links to Consider

- Missouri State 4-H Web Page
    - http://4h.missouri.edu
- National 4-H Web Page
    - http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov
- County 4-H University Extension office website
    - http://outreach.missouri.edu/(county name)

**Web Page Building Resource**

One useful resource can be found on the Web, at http://www.clubspaces.com. This site provides online tools to build your club's web page, in a way that is accessible for younger 4-H'ers as well. Special software and knowledge of html are not required. Please note that Missouri 4-H is not affiliated or partnered with clubspaces.com, does not endorse or oversee the content of 4-H clubs with a presence on this site, and cannot provide technical assistance.

## Top 12 Ways to Mess Up a Website

1) Annoying Animation – *Cute for about 5 seconds, then becomes distracting and irritating.*
2) Large Graphics – *Can make the page take a long time to load for those with slower connections.*
3) The Page That Never Ends – *Increases load time, which means fewer viewers.*
4) Music – *Can be cute for about 3 seconds, and then tends to get on a viewer's nerves.*
5) Bleeding-Edge Technology – *No one wants to download new programs just to view your site.*
6) Complex URL's – *Your page address should make sense, be short, and not have special characters. Avoid putting spaces in your web page address, as spaces get replaced with "%" signs.*
7) Adrift Pages – *Often people will bookmark a page on your site. When they return to it, they need to know what site it belongs to and how to get to the rest of the page.*
8) Outdated Information – *Expired web pages are just as inviting as expired milk, and equally valued.*
9) Ransom Note Text – *Is this annoying to You?*
10) "Under Construction" Signs – *A good website is always under construction.*
11) "This Site Best Viewed With…" – *No one wants to change browsers just to view your site.*
12) Bad Color Choices – *Can others view your site if they are color blind, or just have good taste?*