

Skateboarding

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Ever wonder where skateboarding got its start? Do you consider skateboarding a sport or a hobby? Have you been skateboarding for years, or is this your first time jumping on the board? Regardless of your skateboarding experience, safety is essential in preventing injuries and advancing your skill.

What Is a Skateboard?

When you look at a skateboard, what does it remind you of? Maybe a surfboard with four wheels. While waves help guide a surfboard, the rider's feet help propel the skateboard. You can travel short distances on them, but most skateboards are used to perform stunts.

Let's take a closer look at the skateboard. Every skateboard consists of three parts: the deck, the truck and the wheels. The deck is the actual board you ride on. It is about 32 inches long, 8 inches wide and less than one-half inch thick. The deck has a defined nose and tail with a concave middle. The metal truck holds the deck to the wheels. Skateboard wheels are about 1½ to 1½ inches in diameter and made of polyurethane.

So, What Is Skateboarding?

Do you think skateboarding is a sport, a hobby, a job, an art form, or a mode of transportation? It can be all of these! Many skateboarders have helped shape and influence skateboarding.

The movie "Back to the Future" featured Michael J. Fox taking a fruit crate scooter on wheels and kicking the crate off to skateboard down the streets. This apparatus is commonly accepted as the predecessor to the skateboard and was created in the 1930s.



See "4-H Skateboarding Permission, Disclosure and Release of Claims" Form on page 7.

PLAN YOUR PROJECT

Use this idea starter AND publication 4-H 365 *Self-Determined Project Guide* as the starting place for your 4-H self-determined project. The *Self-Determined Project Guide* is available from your county OSU Extension office or on the Web at ohio4h.org/selfdetermined. You may choose to do a little or a lot depending on your level of interest. Be sure to register your project with your county OSU Extension office.

Early skateboards were made with scraps of wood. Four metal wheels were taken from a scooter or roller skate and attached to the bottom. Recognizable skateboards were first manufactured in the late 1950s.

California surfers were the first to pick up skateboarding. They could practice on skateboards when the ocean waves were too rough and soon were called “sidewalk surfers.” The first wave of skateboard popularity ended in 1967 mainly because riders were not respected. Many cities began to ban skateboarding.

Skateboarding popularity re-emerged in 1973. The introduction of polyurethane wheels made boards easier to control and more stunts possible. Skate parks, which provide places to practice and perform, were first built about this time.

Planning to Skate as Part of Your 4-H Skateboarding Self-Determined Project?

Contact your local OSU Extension 4-H Youth Development Extension Professional to discuss the following:

- Liability issues—ask about “Informed Consent and Permission to Participate” forms.
- Insurance—the American Income Life Policy is available for 4-H clubs and events.
- Competitions or educational programs.
- Project requirements.
- Contact your local Parks and Recreation District or YMCA to:
- Inquire about skate parks or areas where you are permitted to safely ride a skateboard.
- Ask about professional/amateur skateboarders, potential instructors, or related classes.

Skate parks provided obstacle courses, pools, and pipes to challenge skateboard riders. Soon competitions, recognition, and rider sponsorships followed. Skateboarders began decorating the bottoms of their boards with logos of their sponsors.

During the late 1970s, skateboarding again was viewed as controversial and antisocial. Due to the number and severity of skateboarder injuries, owners feared lawsuits, and closed their skate parks. The art of skateboarding once again faded.

Skateboarding popularity surfaced again in the mid-1980s due to skateboarding videos featuring extremely difficult and dangerous stunts using ramps, stairs, and handrails. Skateboard art emerged at the same time. Decks were now elaborately decorated with logos and other designs. The negative perceptions of skateboarders continued, and popularity waned in the late 1980s.

In the mid-1990s, ESPN and MTV’s X-Games competitions helped skateboarding gain popularity again. Televised “extreme sports” showed the best of skateboarding, regarded as the first extreme sport.

Types of Skateboarding

Street: skateboard rider overcomes obstacles on paved surfaces such as streets

Ramp: skateboarding that incorporates ramps such as half-pipes or mini-ramps that are typically less than 6 feet high

Vert: skateboarder rides on a vertical ramp—typically 10 feet in height—that is a larger version of a half-pipe

Riding Styles

Regular: skateboarder stands with the left foot in front while skateboarding

Goofy: skateboarder stands with the right foot in front while skateboarding

Mongo: skateboarder uses front foot for pushing

Helmet

ALWAYS wear a properly fitting helmet to protect your head from injury! It does not matter what age you are, how much experience you have, or where you are skateboarding: Use a high-quality bicycle or multi-sport helmet. Make sure the helmet you use meets or exceeds safety standards of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). You may need to try on several sizes and models to find a helmet that fits your head correctly and securely.

Your helmet should:

- Be worn flat on your head with the bottom edge parallel to the ground.
- Sit low on your forehead.
- Have side straps that form a “V” shape around each ear.
- Have a buckle that fastens tightly (there should be room to put only two fingers between the strap and your chin).
- Have pads inside that you install or remove so the helmet fits snugly.
- Not move in any direction when you shake your head.
- Not interfere with your movement, vision, or hearing.
- Be replaced when it is damaged or outgrown.

Wrist Guards and Knee and Elbow Pads

- Wrist guards support the wrist and reduce the chances of breaking a bone if you fall.
- Knee and elbow pads reduce the severity of cuts and scrapes, and prevent gravel burns.

Shoes

- Wear closed-toe, slip-resistant shoes.
- Never wear flipflops or sandals.

A 2002 report by American Sports Data found that there were 12.5 million skateboarders in the world. Eighty-five percent of skateboarders polled were under the age of 18, and 74 percent were male.

AREAS OF INTEREST AND THINGS TO DO

Every self-determined 4-H project can be broken down into areas of interest. These are the specific things members want to address during their project adventures. Using 4-H 365 *Self-Determined Project Guide*, identify at least three areas of interest with at least three activities per area to explore. Take your ideas from the following list or make up your own.

Getting Started: What Type of Skater Are You?

- Find and read a reference book or watch a video on skating.
- Attend a clinic or skate competition.
- Work with a more advanced skater to gain additional skill.
- Play a skate video game; compare the combos to real life.
- Visit a skate park and identify the types of skating and skate tricks being performed.
- Identify the different types and ways to skate.
- Identify and list various street, ramp, and vert tricks.

Safety

- Find and use a helmet that fits properly.
- Compare elbow and knee pads for fit and comfort.
- Give a talk or a safety tip at a club or group meeting.
- Make a list of safe places to skate and share it with your skateboarding friends.
- Look up statistics for national injuries for skaters. What is the most common injury?
- Investigate how clothing affects skating. Should you wear jeans, shorts, jogging pants? What length should your bottoms be? What are appropriate tops and jackets?

Equipment and Clothing

- Explain what grip tape is used for.
- Compare shoe soles to find proper footwear.
- Design matching T-shirts for the group.
- Explain why certain boards cost more than others.
- List appropriate skate attire.
- Practice loosening and tightening trucks. Compare mobility. What gives more control?
- Take the wheels off your board and put them back on using a skate tool.
- Experiment with different sizes and hardness of wheels. Which is better for street versus vert?
- Compare popular skate attire; chart the comparison of appearance versus function.

Skating

- Complete skate activities as identified by your advisor. If working with a group, your group should identify progress levels. If working independently, identify the skate tricks you want to accomplish and list them as your project activities.
- Basic activities: falling, coming to complete stop, pushing a straight line, turning, and showing awareness of other skaters
- Beginner street: ollie on level ground, ride off a launch ramp, kick turn, ride backwards, manual (wheelies)
- Intermediate street: rail slide, 180° ollie, ollie off launch ramp, kick flip/heel flip on level ground, 50/50 grind on box
- Advanced street: ollie over obstacles, double kick flip, 180° off of and grab off-launch ramp, nose slide, etc.
- Beginner ramp: kick turn at coping height, drop in, pump/maintain coping height, backside 50/50 stall, rock-a-fakie
- Intermediate ramp: backside 50/50 grind, rock and roll, nose stall, frontside grind 360°, blunt, etc.
- Advanced ramp: tail grind, blunt tricks, get “air,” inverts, switch tricks, smith grind, switch from various ramps, lazer flip, McTwist, choreographing a street-ramp routine

Deck Art and Board Design

- Customize your board with art, paint, stickers, and markers.
- Give a history of deck art.
- Design a possible deck art on paper.
- Identify the difference between plastic versus metal trucks.
- List the materials needed to construct a deck.
- List hardware attached to a deck to complete a board.
- Explain why certain decks cost more than others.
- Explain board designs best for each type of skating.
- Assemble a skateboard.

Ramp Identification and Design

- Identify the names of different ramps.
- Identify and list the materials needed to make a ramp of your choice.

- Compare wood ramp parks to concrete ramp parks.
- List safety tips before constructing a ramp.
- Construct a ramp and have an adult inspect it for safety.

Business Side of Skateboarding

- Decorate a board with art and sell it to another skater.
- Visit a skate shop and spend a day with the owner.
- Request a donation to a club/local skate competition.
- Identify the different areas to make money in skating.
- List the advertisers you see in skate magazines or on televised skate competitions. Why are those products advertised?
- List possible judges for a local/club skate competition.
- Identify why certain brands are popular with skaters.
- Determine what place safety equipment has in the skate business.
- Create a sign or poster advertising a club event.
- Research professional coaches and skate managers.
- List popular skate movies.



Skateboarding is an extreme sport and is not for everyone!

Health, Action and Positive Reputation

- Determine the amount of calories burned while skating.
- Identify ways to improve the reputation of skaters.
- Name ways safe skating improves your overall health.
- Send a story to a local news station or newspaper about what your club is doing in your community.
- List the labels assigned to skaters and how those impressions can be changed through community education.
- Create a support force to upkeep or create a local skate park.
- Participate in a community service project with your club or individually.
- Take on a leadership role in your club by being an officer, donating refreshments, calling to remind members of meetings or teaching a younger member in the club.
- Research grant opportunities that youth and/or adults can apply for to promote physical activity and/or skate parks.
- Meet with local politicians about how skating can be a positive outlet for youth.

RELATED RESOURCES

American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, orthoinfo.aaos.org

History of Skateboarding, skatedeluxe.com/blog/en/wiki/skateboarding/history-of-skateboarding/

History of Skateboarding, olympics.com/en/sports/skateboarding

Safety

Prevent skateboarding injuries by following these guidelines:

- **Select and use a high-quality skateboard.** Shorter decks are best for beginners because they are easier to balance and handle. Skateboards have various characteristics for all types of riding including slalom, freestyle, and speed. Some are rated for the user's weight.
- **Keep your skateboard in working order.** Inspect your skateboard before every ride. Look for problems that need repair. These can include loose, broken or cracked parts; sharp edges on metal boards; a slippery top surface; wheels with nicks and cracks, etc. Get professional help to repair serious defects.
- **Learn basic skateboarding skills.** Learn slowing and turning techniques, and how to fall safely! If you are losing your balance, crouch down on the skateboard so you will not have as far to fall. Try to land on the fleshy parts of your body rather than on your arms. Relax and roll.
- **Always wear proper protective equipment.** Before getting on your skateboard, empty your pockets of all hard and sharp objects and put on your protective gear: a helmet, wrist guards, knee and elbow pads, and closed-toe, slip-resistant shoes.

More Safety

Skate on smooth pavement away from traffic.

- NEVER hold onto the side or rear of a moving vehicle while riding a skateboard ("skitching"). You could fall or be thrown into oncoming traffic if the vehicle suddenly slows, stops, or turns.
- Do not skate between cars or dart out around cars, especially in parking lots.
- NEVER use your skateboard in wet weather.
- AVOID skateboarding in crowded walkways or in darkness.
- ALWAYS screen the area before you skateboard, inspecting surfaces for rocks and other debris.
- Do not skateboard after dark.

Be careful with tricks and jumps.

- Do not skate by yourself. Have an adult or more experienced skater with you, especially when working on a new skill, trick, or jump.
- Skateboarding skill is not acquired quickly or easily.
- Do not take chances by skateboarding faster than your experience allows or than is safe for conditions or the speed of other skateboarders.

Stay in shape, keep focused and be respectful!

- Prevent skateboarding injuries by keeping in top physical condition. Stretch and do conditioning exercises before and after skateboarding.
- Do not use headphones while skateboarding.
- Never put more than one person on a skateboard.
- Be considerate of fellow skateboarders, especially those who are younger or less skilled.

Know what to do in an emergency.

- Skateboarding accidents happen, so you should always know what to do in an emergency situation.
- Do not panic. Call 911 for medical assistance or an ambulance.

4-H Skateboarding Permission, Disclosure, and Release of Claims Form

Name of County and 4-H Club: _____

I give permission for my child/charge, (participant's name) _____, to participate in the 4-H Self-Determined Skateboarding Project. I am aware of and have discussed the following points with my child/charge:

- Skateboarding is an inherently dangerous sport and the risk of injury is significant, including but not limited to the potential for fractures, internal injury, permanent paralysis and/or death, and while safety equipment, supervision and personal discipline may reduce the risk, the risk of serious injury and damages still exist by the very nature of the sport.
- Enrollment in the 4-H Self-Determined Project is voluntary and we are fully aware of the risks and hazards inherent to skateboarding and voluntarily select skateboarding as the focus for my child's/charge's 4-H Self-Determined Project.
- Skateboarding requires strenuous exercise and various degrees of skill and experience for different skating surfaces and venues. Risks, hazards and dangers of personal injury, death and disability increase when using ramps, curbs, steps, half pipes, inclines, declines, bowls or any other structure or device while skateboarding. These risks, hazards and dangers are further increased when other persons, whether of the same level or experience or skill are using the same skateboarding facilities. I and my child/charge understand and agree that it is our sole judgment as to what skating level and equipment type of maneuver he or she will attempt.
- **Wearing a helmet is mandatory** and must be worn properly while skateboarding during any 4-H club meeting or event. Knee pads, elbow pads and wrist guards are STRONGLY recommended.
- Participants must provide and use their own skateboard, helmet and other personal protective equipment for use during any 4-H club meeting or event.

I have discussed with my child/charge the importance of following safety procedures and use of personal protective equipment while skateboarding. I recognize that by participating in this program, as with any physical activity, my child/charge may risk personal injury. I hereby attest and verify that I have been advised of the potential risks, that I have full knowledge of the risks involved in this 4-H experience and that I assume any expenses that may be incurred in the event of an accident, illness or other incapacity, regardless of whether I have authorized such expenses.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Contact Information for Medical Emergency

Mother's Name: _____ Father's Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Emergency contact number: _____ Emergency contact number: _____

Child/Charge Medical Information

Date of Last Tetanus Immunization: _____

Allergies: _____

Any Special Conditions: _____

Physician's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Dentist's Name: _____ Phone: _____

I understand in case of serious injury, I will be notified. If I cannot be contacted, I give my permission to the attending physician to hospitalize, secure proper treatment and to order injection, anesthesia or surgery for the participant as named above.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Approved for use in April 2010.



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