Must be 9 years of age by January 1st of the current 4-H year. (Age Requirements may vary by state)

Must have at least one (1) year of 4-H shooting sports with range experience in previous equivalent firearms (Basic Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun) educational course administered by a certified 4-H Shooting Sports instructor. 4-H Western Heritage Project can only be taught by a 4-H Certified Western Heritage Project instructor.

Must demonstrate the ability to safely handle firearms throughout the course of the project in the judgment of the certified 4-H instructor and fellow 4-H members and parents.

For more information on training and bringing this project to your state contact:

Larry Harris
Ohio State University Extension 4-H Shooting Sports Program Coordinator
4-H Youth Development

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Visit Us on the Web at:
www.ohio4-h.org/shootingsports
4-H Western Action Shooting is part of a larger and comprehensive study of the Old West known as the 4-H Western Heritage Project. The purpose of this project is to provide an avenue for 4-H members and adult leaders to experience the lifestyles and cultures of the Old West from the period of 1860 - 1900 through a living history approach to learning.

The Western Action Shooting portion of this project is arguably the fastest paced, most exciting, and spectator friendly project in 4-H shooting sports. Shooters dressed in Old West garb compete against the clock by firing at steel or cardboard targets at various distances with period firearms such as single action revolvers, lever action rifles, and double barreled shotguns. Scoring is based on accuracy and the time that lapses between the initial buzzer and last shot. Each missed target is penalized by the addition of five seconds to a competitor's time. During a shoot, 4-Hers travel through a series of stages in a posse (group of shooters) along with an adult range officer. Stages consist of a series of targets set up at distances appropriate for sidearms, rifles, and shotguns. The shooting location of the stage may be as elaborate as a façade of a building, like the front door of the sheriff's office, the window of the church, or just outside the door of the jailhouse, or as simple as engaging targets over a table, campfire, and bedroll.

Goals and Purpose

- The learning and application of the safe firearm handling.
- Place 4-H life-skill development over competition.
- Provide an enjoyable and action-oriented shooting sports activity that will attract and retain 4-H members throughout their teen years.
- Create a safe and inclusive environment for learning for all 4-H participants regardless of race, gender, culture, or socio-economic background.
- Promote a positive image of 4-H Western Action Shooting and 4-H in general to the public at large.
- Teach in a living history style through the use of historically accurate firearms, clothing, and accessories while participating in the 4-H Western Heritage Project.
- Preserve and gain an appreciation for the heritage of the Old West within the time period of 1860-1900.
- Instill in 4-H members an investigative interest in frontier history that will lead to personal research and increased knowledge of the Old West.
- Recognize the accomplishments and importance of both men and women from a diversity of cultures and races that contributed to frontier history.
- Promote 4-H Western Action Shooting and historical study to 4-H programs across the state and country.

Montana 4-H Western Heritage Project - A Resource Book for 4-H Leaders and the public at large:
Myths, legends and Hollywood have shaped our perspective of the American frontier so much so that an accurate picture of the Old West is hard to find. Throughout this book, the history of the American West comes to life through amazing full-color photographs of original artifacts from museums across Montana and the western United States. With a broad overview of firearms, gunleather, cowboy gear and clothing available to settlers of the West, this book is an excellent guide for anyone interested in frontier authenticity -- from teachers to history buffs and reenactors to cowboy shooters. Website: www.4-hwesternheritageproject.org

Youth Activity Guide
Activities and study topics to guide 4-H members on their travels through the history of the American Frontier - Three Levels with over 100 activities from clothing to science to self-directed research.