



MONTANA 4-H

SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

EXAMPLE:



TIPS:



Utilize the resources available to you at montana4H.org and 4-H.org. Here you can find graphics, templates, and information regarding best practices and safety.



Reach as many people as possible. Research shows that the best time to post is between 12pm-3pm.



Switch it up! Don't always post the same type of content. Rotate between links, pictures, videos.

The use of social media is a great way to expose 4-H to a large audience. With every piece of content you publish online, you should aim to:

- **EMPOWER.** Help people understand 4-H by using language that informs them and encourages them to support and engage with our organization.
- **EDUCATE.** Tell people what they need to know. Give them the information they need, along with the opportunities to learn more.
- **GUIDE.** Be a tour guide for the readers. Communicate in a friendly, knowledgeable and helpful way.

Always use a casual but respectful tone. Maintain an active voice and utilize positive language written in plain English (no slang or jargon).

As we try to grow the reach of Montana 4-H, it is important to always use the hashtags **#Montana4H**, **#4HGrowsHere** and **#TrueLeaders**. A hashtag is a label for content. It helps others who are interested in a certain topic quickly find content on that same topic. In other words, using the hashtags mentioned above can expose Montana 4-H to a national audience.

We live in a highly visual society, and you can use this to your advantage. Post high quality pictures. It is okay to edit pictures to remove empty space and highlight the subject matter. However, be sure that all youth featured in posted photos have a signed media release form.

Share post from Montana 4-H. This is extremely easy and beneficial. Not only does it help grow our network, it also guides people to useful information that they may not have found otherwise (ex: Volunteer Group).

We want to to put a spotlight on the awesome things your county's 4-H'ers are doing! If you have questions or need help, please contact:

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SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

Social media is also a great way to promote events on both a county and a statewide level. However, it is important to keep a few things in mind when navigating channels:

- **ACCESS.** Volunteers can be very helpful in promoting local club information, group pages, and events. If a person other than an Extension professional is given administrative access to a Montana 4-H related group or page, this person must be a CERTIFIED VOLUNTEER. Furthermore, at least one Extension professional must be an administrator on the aforementioned page in order to ensure that all published content aligns with the 4-H mission and brand. For state event pages and groups (ex: Montana 4-H State Horse Show, RecLab, etc.), at least one staff member from the Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development must be an administrator.
- **SELF PROMOTION.** Social media is an effective way to thank the sponsors of an event. This can be done by tagging them in a post using the '@' before their name to link to their page. Some volunteers might be tempted to use 4-H pages and content to promote their own pages, products, or services. Unless they sponsored the event, this is not acceptable. No 4-H page can be used for the profitable gain of an individual.
- **CONTENT.** In order to engage your audience, keep all content relevant to your county, club, or event. Avoid “random” posts that do not promote the story of Montana 4-H.
- **COMMUNICATION.** All communication that is generated from social media must occur on the county’s page where it can be reviewed by an Extension professional. If additional contact information is provided, it too must be to an extensionprofessional@montana.edu. The use of private email to communicate in the name of Montana 4-H is strictly prohibited.



Using a 4-H page to promote a business for profitable gain. No usage of the appropriate hashtags to connect to Montana 4-H.

Directing audience to communicate via private email address instead of contacting Extension professionals.

Use of language that does not align with the 4-H brand or mission while representing a 4-H event.

Excellent monitoring by an Extension professional that quickly and politely diffused the situation.