



# 4-H TABLETOP GAMING (HOBBIES) PROJECT



Tabletop refers to board games, card games, dice games, and other games played on a flat surface. The Tabletop Gaming 4-H project introduces members to the fundamentals of game theory and game mechanics through experiential playing and reflection on games. The field of tabletop has expanded enormously and the variety of games now utilizes diverse mechanics (including turns, dice, role-playing, worker placement, tile-laying, and other rules or processes)

- Learn about the history of tabletop games, the bread and depth of games available
- Reflect on game mechanic, gameplay type, and identify your preferred play styles
- Design and test your own game based on key game mechanics and victory conditions

## 4-H Thrive!

### Help Youth:

#### Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find what it is about tabletop games that excites them.

#### Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

#### Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

**Goal Selection:** Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.

**Pursue Strategies:** Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.

**Shift Gears:** Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others.

#### Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character or establish connections.

#### Starting Out *Beginner*

- Play and reflect on introductory games, such as adventure, board, card, dice, strategy, and tile-based games
- Play and compare a competitive versus a cooperative game
- Learn about the basic game mechanics in popular games—particularly with regards to the role of chance

#### Learning More *Intermediate*

- After becoming familiar with a few games, start to analyze the game mechanic and develop a play strategy that capitalizes on this
- Compare games based on their gameplay types— asymmetric, cooperative, emergent, and nonlinear
- Reflect on and discuss how you can adapt (or modify) a game to change gameplay

#### Exploring Depth *Advanced*

- Play an advanced strategy game (taking over 5-hours)
- Learn how others have designed, developed, and tested games— from Kickstarter and other sources
- Design your own game, based on an identified game mechanic and victory condition, and test it with the group

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

*Light Your Spark*

*Flex Your Brain*

*Reach Your Goals*

*Light Your Spark*

*Flex Your Brain*

*Reach Your Goals*



# Expand Your Experiences!

## Citizenship

- Host a tabletop game event at a local library or community center to celebrate International Tabletop Day (April annually)
- Learn about the benefits of games for building social capital
- Research and support fellow game designers through crowdfunding websites

## Leadership

- Become a junior or teen leader for the tabletop game project
- Teach someone else how to play one of your favorite games
- Play a game that requires one person to act as the lead role (e.g., Dungeon Master). Invite players to provide feedback on your leadership style after the game

## Science, Engineering, and Technology

- Develop a game that helps players understand a scientific concept or theory
- Investigate games available in both real-world and online formats and identify the benefits and disadvantages (for example, Carcassonne is available in a box and also an App)

## Healthy Living

- Learn how games may enhance socio-emotional learning and psychological well-being
- Learn to navigate conflicts during gameplay and resolve conflicts positively

## Resources

- Game Mechanics  
[https://badgeville.com/wiki/Game\\_Mechanics](https://badgeville.com/wiki/Game_Mechanics)
- BoardGameGeek- Board Game Mechanics  
[www.boardgamegeek.com/browse/boardgamemechanic](http://www.boardgamegeek.com/browse/boardgamemechanic)
- Game Mechanics Explorer  
[gamemechanicexplorer.com/](http://gamemechanicexplorer.com/)

## Suggested Introductions

Cooperative

- Forbidden Island
- Pandemic

Worker-Placement

- Agricola

Strategy

- 7 Wonders
- Settlers of Catan

Tile Placement

- Carcassonne

Story-Telling

- Gloom

Deck-Building

- Dominion

Rule Variation

- Fluxx

The UC ANR 4-H Youth Development Program does not endorse, warrant, or otherwise take responsibility for the contents of unofficial sites or games.



### Connections & Events

**Presentation Days** – Share what you’ve learned with others through a kitten, cupcake, and glitter presentation. (Easy on the glitter)

**Field Days** – During these events, 4-H members may participate in a variety of contests related to their project area.

Contact your county 4-H office to determine additional opportunities available.

### Curriculum

- Entropy– Tabletop Games Curriculum  
<http://entropymag.org/tag/tabletop-games-curriculum/>
- Design a Board Game  
[http://www.mathshell.com/publications/numeracy/boardgame/boardgame\\_teacher.pdf](http://www.mathshell.com/publications/numeracy/boardgame/boardgame_teacher.pdf)
- Book: *Challenges for Game Designers*

### 4-H Record Book

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their personal experiences, learning, and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

To access the 4-H Record Book online, visit [ucanr.edu/orb/](http://ucanr.edu/orb/)