

Tips for an A+ Science Fair Project



Schools across the country are gearing up for their annual Science Fairs- giving young scientists a chance to shine and compete with other students in the Science and Technology fields. Science Fair Sanity is a great resource for students and teachers and offers hints, tips, tricks, and examples that will assist you in developing an award-winning science fair display board. Use these tips to take your science fair project display from good to great!

1. Before standing your backboard on the display table, cover the table with a colored cloth. Choose a color that matches the color scheme of the backboard. This will help to separate your project from other projects displayed on either side.
2. Place all typed material on a colored backing, such as construction paper. Leave a border of about 1/4 to 1/2 inch (0.63 to 1.25cm) around the edges of each piece of typed material. Use a paper cutter so that the edges will be straight.
3. Make the project title stand out by using larger letters for it and smaller letters for the headings.
4. To arrange the letters on the backboard, first lay the letters out on the board without attaching them. Then, use a yardstick (meterstick) and pencil to draw a straight light guideline where the bottom of each letter should line up. This will help you keep the lettering straight. Before adhering everything, ask the opinion of other students, teachers, or family members.
5. If you need electricity for your project, be sure the wiring meets all safety standards.

6. Bring an emergency kit with extra letters, glue, tape, construction paper the color of the backboard, stapler, scissors, pencils, pens, touch-up paint, markers, and so forth. This kit should contain anything that you think you might need to make last-minute repairs to the display.

Science Fair Do's

1. Do use computer-generated graphs.
2. Do display photos representing the procedure and the results.
3. Do use contrasting colors.
4. Do limit the number of colors used.
5. Do display models when applicable. If possible, make the models match the color scheme of the backboard.
6. Do attach charts neatly. If there are many, place them on top of each other so that the top chart can be lifted to reveal the ones below.
7. Do balance the arrangement of materials on the backboard. This means to evenly distribute the materials on the board so that they cover about the same amount of space on each panel.
8. Do use rubber cement or double-sided tape to attach papers. White school blue causes the paper to wrinkle.

Science Fair Don'ts

1. Don't leave large empty spaces on the backboard.
2. Don't leave the table in front of the backboard empty. Display your models (if any), report, copies of your abstract, and your journal here.
3. Don't have electrical equipment on the backboard so that the electric cord runs down the front of the backboard.
4. Don't make the title or headings hard to read by using uneven lettering, words with letters of different color, or disorganized placement of materials.
5. Don't hand-print the letter on the backboard.
6. Don't attach folders that fall open on the backboard.
7. Don't make mistakes in spelling words or writing formulas.

BIG DON'TS: Unacceptable for Display:

1. Live animals
2. Microbial cultures or fungi, living or dead
3. Animal or human parts, except for teeth, hair, nails, and dried animal bones
4. Liquids, including water
5. Chemicals such as caustics, acids, and household cleaners
6. Open or concealed flames
7. Batteries with open-top cells
8. Combustible materials
9. Aerosol cans of household solvents
10. Controlled substances, poisons, or drugs
11. Any equipment or device that would be hazardous to the public
12. Sharp items, such as syringes, knives, and needles
13. Gases