

# A Nonhuman Guide to the Holidays: Thanksgiving

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It's the time of the year where holidays are abound, the final months around the sun that are overflowing with celebrated days religious, secular, and capitalist alike. From Black Friday to Yule, this is a time of year that's fit to bursting with all the holiday goodness your small, animal body can handle, and then some more just for good measure. For this piece, we'll be tackling the forgotten, in-the-cupboards-under-the-stairs stepchild of the winter holidays: Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving, for those unaware, is a holiday that, in its modern iteration, is based almost entirely around 1) stuffing as much food into your body as physically possible, usually while staunchly ignoring your racist and conservative uncle who's spouting conspiracy theories about Canadian Catholic anarchists across the table, and 2) "giving thanks" for the stuff you appreciate in life or the universe or whatever.

For those of us nonhumans who may be roped into human celebrations this year, this holiday can be tricky to navigate in multi-species settings if you don't have much prior experience with it—but fear not! This Thanksgiving, avoid any paws-ible issues and miscommunications by follow this handy lists of DOs and DON'Ts.



## **DO: Always bring something for the Thanksgiving feast!**

Maybe your father insists that he has everything handled, or perhaps you friend is already encouraging everyone to collectively potluck this year—but either way, let's be real here: your hosts are only human, and humans can't hunt worth shit. Consider packing a dead mouse to put lovingly on the doorstep to showcase that you view them as families and value their contributions to your life. Or, if you're feeling particularly zesty, release a horde of crickets into their home for everyone to participate in hunting and tracking to eat: it's fun for the whole family!

### **DO: Always offer to help!**

Humans have weak eyesight and only two arms. They can also really only use store-bought flames to cook their food, rather than going au naturale! Why not offer to help give their thanksgiving turkey a nice post-oven draconic sear? Or, alternatively, use magic, multiple arms/tentacles, or a sturdy quadruped back to help cart dishes to the table once the meal is ready. You can also tastefully decorate the table with twigs, colorful plastics, and feathers while waiting for the food to finish cooking, or help set the mood by bringing in dozens of candles and treating them to a little dragonbreath. The options are limitless!

### **DO: Dress nicely!**

Thanksgiving is about showing you care and an easy way to demonstrate that is by putting effort into how you look. Rolling around in the smelliest, nastiest mud you can imagine and caking it in your fur is a classic option, but for a more sophisticated look this year, consider taking some blood and iron-rich clay to your feathers for that truly cultured appearance. For the domesticated sort, collars and vests are also a lovely option: just make sure you're chipped or have a tag in case of any out-of-the-house post-Thanksgiving shenanigans your family drags you into.

### **DO: Eat enthusiastically!**

Show your host that you love the food by not curbing your enthusiasm whatsoever! Delve snout-first into that turkey (or substitute) and rip it apart, making sure to fling bits onto other guests to encourage them to get in on the food frenzy too. Throw yourself onto the table and roll in that delicious pie, shovel the edible decorations into your mouth, go wild! Just don't make sure to eat so enthusiastically that you mistake non-food for food: dragons, your mother's wedding ring is not on the menu.

### **DON'T: Get roaring drunk.**

Alcohol is practically a guarantee at Thanksgiving gatherings, but it's important to remember your limits. Drinking to the point of roaring unintelligibly at other guests is considered quite rude in most cultures, human and nonhuman alike, so make sure to manage your alcohol intake. Drink glasses of water in-between glasses of wine or liquor, and be aware of your species' alcohol tolerance (or lack thereof).

### **DON'T: Talk politics.**

While I know most of us nonhumans have been excitedly talking about Jeff Bezos's recent sacrifice of several major Amazon shareholders to the antlered king of the forest, He Who Treads The Shaded And Liminal Pathways Of In-Between, in an effort by Bezos to pacify nonhuman efforts to unionize, this and similar isn't a good topic to bring to the table for discussion—especially if you're dining with human family members. Come to dinner equipped with "safe" topics to talk about. Example options include your favorite way to photosynthesize, the latest celebrity Bigfoot sightings, and how the SCP foundation has decided to classify you as an anomaly and/or terminate you.

### **DON'T: Confuse toasting with toasting.**

When it's time to toast to all the good things in life, it's important to keep in mind that this is in reference not to roasting with some toasty flames with fire breath, magic, or your handy-dandy lighter: it's meant to reference holding a glass in the air and clinking it against other glasses, usually while alcohol is involved. For those of us who lack "thumbs" and "hands," consider hitting your glass against other glasses by knocking it over with a tail, horn, nose, wings, or pair of pincers. Lap up any spilled alcohol or water as needed.

With this list of DOs and DON'Ts, you're sure to have a fun and safe time celebrating Thanksgiving this year! And finally, **DO** mail us any stories you have about Thanksgiving plans you have, or how this list helped you integrate and bond with the humans in your life over shared turkey (or shard turkey substitute). Happy Thanksgiving!

