

Tips for the Thanksgiving Table

BY DEVIN GRAY



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THANKSGIVING IS ABOUT spending time with family and friends. However, for some families (mine included), Thanksgiving can be used as an excuse to have a friendly competition of who can cook the best meal or an excuse to be completely honest with each other. No matter how good the food is, even the most minor detail from how the table is set up, to where people sit, and even table manners can escalate the dinner. To avoid a shift from friendly to belligerent, I will share some minor tips to improve the overall experience of Thanksgiving. While it might not completely fix your experience, it might make the constant arguing over football and politics a bit more tolerable.

First things first, be sanitary. I do not think I should have to say this, but sometimes folks need a few reminders. Be sure to clean the table before and after eating. Make sure to clean the entire house before guests come over. Double-check that the dishes are washed and dried before any cooking commences. The kitchen is the most valuable area, so please cook in a sanitary manner. Don't cut your meats on the same cutting board as your vegetables and thoroughly clean all your produce. The most important sanitary reminder is to wash your hands. We as a society have proven to ourselves that we often don't wash our hands properly and not nearly enough. Soak your hands under warm water with hand soap, and proceed to scrub and rub for twenty seconds minimum. Then, proceed to rinse your hands and dry them using a nearby paper towel. Being sanitary is very important to the overall health of the family and for yourself. Stay clean, stay safe.

Secondly, treat your elders with respect. I hear too many horror stories of people mistreating their grandmothers, great-uncles, moms, dads, and an elder of the like with an extreme level of disrespect; it is not even funny. Once again this should be basic common sense. Not only does disrespecting elders ruin the vibe for everyone else, but it violates the golden rule: treat others the way you wish to be treated. This can lead to unnecessary arguments that could have been easily avoided. If you do not like your aunt's ugly dress, it is probably best to not comment on it.

I highly advise you to stay away from politics for most of the evening. I understand your uncle Greg might have a very "interesting view" on the LGBTQ+ community, but it is not the time nor place to awaken those thoughts from the abyss of his mind. One thing about us Americans is that we have very strong opinions. For some folks, specific topics can create a hostile environment. Arguments of this kind always start small but quickly escalate to the point where people get violently angry, especially if liquor is involved.

All in all, Thanksgiving should be a non-stressful environment. For those who are not cooking, I suggest you hang out with your favorite cousins, watch the Lions lose another Thanksgiving game, and enjoy some turkey with your loved ones.