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## The Newlywed's Guide to Splitting the Holidays

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Tuesday, November 25, 2014



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In perfect world, you'd never have to spend a holiday without your family, and no one would have to make a choice between who will visit whom this Thanksgiving, who'll get to see you unwrap Christmas presents in person and who will serve you ham on Easter break the fast with you after Yom Kippur. But the reality is, once you're married, you and your husband may have to choose — his family or yours.

Typically, couples wait to make this choice until they're prompted by relatives with an invitation to join a holiday celebration. "Your company will be vied for at best and fought for at worst," warns relationship expert April Masini. So, instead, "make a pre-emptive strike by discussing your holiday plans months before the holidays. This gives you the time and privacy to discuss the options you have in a series of talks with time to consider in between."

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Scan the calendar and mark the dates that you would like to celebrate, from holidays to anniversaries, housewarming parties and that Sr. Patrick's Day shindig you've been dying to throw. "Before you know it, you'll have plenty of holidays to share with your families," Masini says, which means each family member will individually feel less left out.

You can also create a website (or Google Doc), where you can post the events you'd like to share with family. "It will keep everyone in communication," Masini says. "You'll find that the fighting comes from fear of not seeing you, and this extended family calendar allows everyone to make plans together, which alleviates a lot of anxiety and family fighting over holidays."

And if you find you and your spouse can't agree on whom to invite or where to go on a particular holiday or celebration, consider this advice: "Don't be rigid. Don't think short term. And don't be stingy," Masini says. "And if you still can't agree, the nuclear option is that the two of you go away together and reconvene with family next year, giving you an entire 365 days to figure out what to do next time the holidays are on your plate."

*How are you and your guy splitting the holidays this year? Tweet us your plans @BRIDES!*

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