



Spirit Animals

(and other cultural appropriation practices)

All Native American tribal practices are tribe specific, not generic

Spirit animal is a sacred tradition, not an internet quiz

 **SPIRIT ANIMAL** Animal Meanings A-Z Spirit Animal Quizzes ▾

What's My Spirit Animal Quiz

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What's your favorite natural element?

 <input type="checkbox"/> Air	 <input type="checkbox"/> Earth	 <input type="checkbox"/> Fire
 <input type="checkbox"/> Water	 <input type="checkbox"/> Wood	 <input type="checkbox"/> Space

Some alternate Terms

- Totemism : clan totems or personal guides
- Familiars
- Tutelary (or tutelar): a diety or spirit that guards/protects
- Animism
- Patronus



Early anthropologists and ethnologists identified totemism as a shared practice across indigenous groups in unconnected parts of the world, typically reflecting an aspect of human development

Celtic Totem Animals

- the Celtic bull symbolizes of strong will, uncompromising, and even belligerent the bull stands for unbending, stubborn personality traits, also a virile sign for men, and a sign of fertility for women
- the butterfly – in its miraculous way symbolizes transformation and rebirth
- the cat represents the guardian of the Otherworld. Astute, crafty and clever, not only do they make great Otherworld guardians, they are also liaisons to mystic realms.
- the dog symbolizes the strong bond of companionship felt between human and animal, and a harbinger of good health.
- Celtic seafarers held the dolphin in high regard. It became a symbol of friendship, intelligence, and good luck.



Norse Animal totems: “Fylgja”

- Means “to accompany” – spirit
- May also represent “shape shifting”
- Men who were viewed as a leader would oft have fylgja to show their true character. This means that if they had a "tame nature", their fylgja would typically be an ox, goat, or boar. If they had an "untame nature" they would have fylgjur such as a fox, wolf, deer, bear, eagle, falcon, leopard, lion, or a serpent.



Totemic groups in India

In India, totemism is most widely practiced among the tribal groups.



- The **Santhals** are an example of a totemic group which is named after plants and animals.
- The **Kamar** tribes have totemic groups named after Netam (tortoise), Sori (a jungle creeper), Wagh Sori (tiger), Nag Sori (snake) and Kunjam (goat).
- Among the **Todas** of the Nilgiris the buffalo is the totemic animal. The Toda's economy, culture, morality and naturally their religious life revolves around the totemic animal (Rivers 1906).
- In **Maharashtra**, the villages are generally farmed by a biradari or kinship group and even today we can find examples of the clan name usually after a totem like Magar, Landage, Vaji and More



Hindu culture –holy animals

Hinduism acknowledges the importance of animals in the transmigration of souls

Cows symbolizes wealth, compassion, motherliness, righteousness (dharma), motherhood, divinity, sattvic nature, sacrifice, service, purity, and auspiciousness

Snakes personify such positive qualities as obedience, loyalty, duty, divinity, righteousness, courage, and selflessness; they also symbolize sexuality, Kundalini power, fertility, weapons, and destructive power

Elephants symbolize royalty, majesty, strength, divinity, abundance, fertility, intelligence, keenness, destructive power, and grasping power

Tigers are considered advanced beings. Some of them might be humans in their past lives or may assume a human birth in their next lives

Where to go from here?

- Research animals & meanings
- Think about the culture you represent or wish to explore
- Sketch designs
- Use basic shapes to plan your 3D file
- Begin with Tinkercad

