

Munch Much?



Meeting Your Local BDSM Community

Prepared for you by



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In BDSM groups across the country, the most common forum established for first letting new people get acquainted with the community, and for keeping folks in contact over time, is the *munch*. A munch is designed to be comfortable, low-key, and fun for all involved.

Munches are generally held in well-known local restaurants or cafes, making them easy to find and attend. There really are no special guidelines for attending a munch once you know where and when it will be held, but don't hesitate to ask questions of the host group. If you haven't yet made contact with a group, your best resource these days is a quick internet search. Getting info on the closest munch is then usually as easy as writing a polite email or two.

Politeness, in fact, is the one rule you need to observe before, during, and after the munch. Be cordial with everyone, including the waitstaff, and the rest will take care of itself. Be sure to let someone in the group know you're coming, too, if at all possible. Not only will this help them reserve enough seats, but they may have a group officer whose job is to welcome you personally. Keep in mind also that although the group hosts the munch, attendees take care of their own meals.

Dress for munches is casual. These meetings are for people new to the scene, and also for folks who want to socialize regularly without being "outed." You won't see whips and chains – but you may meet people wearing *discreet collars* (neckwear made to resemble common fashion accessories like necklaces and chokers). If you have a discreet collar you'd like to wear, check with the group to make sure their munch rules allow them. No matter how anyone else at the munch is dressed, however, be careful to not make any assumptions about their role or relationship status.

Questions about relationship roles, or anything else you want to understand better, are generally welcome and encouraged. Just remember that you and your new friends are in a public place; the family sitting alone on the other side of the restaurant may hear better than you think.

Munches are for general socializing in a safe space, and for helping BDSM participants and "outsiders" alike remember that we're all just everyday, okay people. Keep that in mind and you'll get along great.

Welcome to the community – have fun!