

An Unofficial Guide to



(with limited spoilers)

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Feel free to re-distribute, but do not edit out my name.

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Part 1: Welcome to a Deserted Island!](#)

[Part 2: Your Neighbors](#)

[Part 3: DIY Recipes and Crafting](#)

[Part 4: Island Resources](#)

[Part 5: Island Visitors](#)

[Part 6: Blathers and the Critterpedia](#)

[Part 7: Holidays](#)

[Part 8: Internet Features](#)

[Part 9: Mystery Islands](#)

[Part 10: Food](#)

[Part 11: Bells](#)

[Part 12: Island Ratings](#)

[Part 13: Happy Home Paradise DLC](#)

Introduction

There are lots of in-depth guides to Animal Crossing: New Horizons. Most of them, as you might imagine, are full of spoilers, which can ruin the fun for a lot of people. I made this guide for people who are brand-new to Animal Crossing games and want a little help, but don't want spoilers. While most of the game's mechanics are explained, I made sure to leave a lot of big events and features a surprise for you to discover.

This isn't a guide for people who want to max out all their stats or make a million Bells overnight. There are already guides for you all over the Internet. This is a guide for absolute newbies, and for people considering buying the game, so you can see if you would like it.

If you want to make new friends on Animal Crossing and have a Reddit account, I've found that the following subreddits are a good place to start:

[r/acnh](https://www.reddit.com/r/acnh)

[r/AnimalCrossing](https://www.reddit.com/r/AnimalCrossing)

[r/BuddyCrossing](https://www.reddit.com/r/BuddyCrossing)

(Please be courteous and follow the rules of each subreddit.)

Animal Crossing: New Horizons has been out for a while now, and all of its scheduled updates have long been released. But that doesn't mean you can't still have fun with it! Go catch some bees, chop some trees, and enjoy the island experience!

Part 1: Welcome to a Deserted Island!

Timmy and Tommy Nook will guide you through the opening sequence, but here are some things you may want to know.



You will be able to change your character's skin tone, eye color, hairstyle, and even gender whenever you want. However, **once you name your character, it is permanent.** So choose wisely. Remember, your character doesn't have to be you—it can be whatever person you want it to be.

You will have a choice of islands. Since you can't climb cliffs or cross rivers at the start of the game, you'll want an island that doesn't block too much of the playable area with these features. **The name of your island cannot be changed,** and neither can the locations of river-mouths, beaches, docks, and shore rocks, so make sure you're happy with your choice. Then, relax and enjoy your flight to your new island home.

Once you land on your deserted island, you and your neighbors will want to find places for your tents and get branches to start a campfire.



Branches and weeds are useful for crafting, so gather up as many as you can! You can also gather your island's native fruit by walking up to a tree with fruit on it and pressing the A button.

We'll talk about crafting in a moment. First, let's meet your new neighbors!

Part 2: Your Neighbors

You start the game with two animal neighbors, but later you'll be able to get up to ten of them. Talking to them and doing nice things for them will help you to make friends, just like in real life. You can talk to your neighbors by walking up to them and pressing A. (Just make sure you don't have a tool in your hand, or you might hit them with it by mistake.)



When a neighbor is at home, you can visit them by walking up to their front door and pressing A. They love having visitors.

As time goes on, your neighbors will have birthdays, play games, and do other fun things with you. If you make close enough friends with an animal neighbor, they might even give you a photo to decorate your home with!

Part 3: DIY Recipes and Crafting



There are hundreds of crafting recipes available to you in the game. All you need are the ingredients, a DIY recipe, and a DIY workbench, and you can make a whole new item!

Go to Tom Nook at the Island Services tent. He'll teach you how to craft items and give you a few DIY recipes to start with. You can get more recipes by:

- Looking for a message in a bottle on the beach
- Shooting down some balloons
- Buying some from Nook's Cranny
- Visiting your neighbors while they're crafting something

See how many recipes you can find!

(At one point in the game, you'll be able to unlock cooking as well. After that, you can get cooking recipes the same ways you get DIY recipes.)

Part 4: Island Resources

There are several different kinds of resources that you can use to make DIY items.

- Shake trees to get more branches. Be careful though—sometimes shaking a tree will release angry wasps!
- Hit trees with an axe to get pieces of wood, hardwood, or softwood. You can get up to 3 from each tree per day.
- Hit rocks with an axe or shovel to get stones, iron nuggets, clay, or gold nuggets. If you're quick enough, you can get up to 8 resources from the same stone.
- Grow flowers from seeds and pick them. Picked flowers will re-grow in a few days.
- Plant fruits and pick them from the trees that grow. Picked fruits take 3 days to re-grow.
- Some balloons will contain resources when you shoot them down.
- Wish on a falling star, and the next morning there will be star pieces on the beach for you.
- There are even seasonal resources that you can catch using your bug net!

Some DIY items require you to craft other DIY items to use as an ingredient. This means you'll need the recipe for that other item before you can make the first one. Fortunately, there aren't very many of these.

Part 5: Island Visitors

As your island home grows from a deserted place into a lively small town, different people will visit your island. Here are a few.



- Kicks the skunk sells shoes, socks, and bags.
- Celeste the owl loves to watch shooting stars and gives you DIY recipes for items you can make with star pieces.
- Label the hedgehog is a fashion designer. Show her your looks and she may give you something nice!
- C. J. the beaver loves to fish. If you can complete his seaports challenges, you'll be able to get a model of any fish that you own three or more of.
- Flick the lizard loves bugs. Show him any bug you have three or more of, and he'll make a model of it.

If you use the tape deck at the plaza to start stretching exercises, the visiting animal will stretch with you, giving you an easy way to find out who's there. See what other visitors come to your island!

Part 6: Blathers and the Critterpedia

If you give Tom Nook five bugs or fish, he'll invite Blathers the owl to set up a museum on the island. From then on, any bugs, fish, or undersea creatures you catch can be donated to Blathers to show up in his museum!



Blathers also appraises fossils for display, and if you get artwork from a certain character, he'll show it off in an art gallery—but beware of forgeries!

To help encourage you to find and catch as many specimens as you can for Blathers, there are lists of bugs, fish, and sea creatures called the Critterpedia. You can access them on your in-game NookPhone.

To make things simpler, the game calls everything you catch with your net a “bug,” everything you catch with your fishing rod a “fish,” and everything you dive for under the sea a “sea creature,” even if that isn't quite how it works scientifically. So snails are treated as bugs, and frogs as fish—even though that's not what they are in real life.

Because fish, bugs, and sea creatures change with the seasons, it'll take you a year or more to fill your Critterpedia. Are you up for the challenge?



Part 7: Holidays

Because time in Animal Crossing follows time in the real world, there are lots of real-life holidays you can celebrate in the game. There are special events and DIYs for each one.



And don't forget to log in on your birthday! Your neighbors will throw you a party and give you special items for your special day.

Part 8: Internet Features

Animal Crossing has some features that you can only access if you have Nintendo Switch Online membership:

1. Visit other players' islands, or invite them to visit your own, at the airport.
2. Upload and receive new custom designs at the Design Kiosk.



The airport allows you to visit your friends in two ways. You can either search for people who are your Nintendo Switch friends on your profile, or you can input a Dodo Code. Your friends must open their island to visitors before you can use either of these methods.



The Design Kiosk allows you to search for custom designs by maker ID or by keyword. There are thousands of great ideas waiting for you. You can also upload your own design, but make sure it's family-friendly. This is an E-rated game, after all!



Part 9: Mystery Islands

Even if you don't have Internet access on your Switch, the airport allows you to visit mystery islands. Each one is randomly generated from a set of pre-designed islands. All you need is a Nook Miles Ticket for each mystery island visit.

Mystery islands are a good source of coconuts, so you can grow palm trees on your home island's beaches. You can also get extra weeds, cut down as many trees as you want, and occasionally get a second fruit that isn't found on your home island.

Just remember:



Mystery islands are not saved after you visit! You'll get to keep anything you took from the island, but the next time it's generated, it will be pristine, as if you'd never been there.

After your island earns 3-star status, Kapp'n will also show up at your island's dock. He can take you to his own mystery islands for 1,000 Nook Miles.



Kapp'n has his own set of mystery islands that are different from the ones you can visit by airport. As an added bonus, some islands will have different seasons from your home island, allowing you to get certain seasonal items you may have missed. Some of Kapp'n's mystery islands also have vegetables you can dig up to grow back on your home island, and there's a very special person and item you can find too. ;)

Part 10: Food

You don't need to eat in Animal Crossing, but food can give you special benefits!



You can eat any of the following foods:

- Fruit
- Vegetables grown on the island
- Bamboo shoots
- Turnips
- Cooked meals
- Food purchased from Nook's Cranny or Nook Shopping

Eating food allows you to dig up trees with your shovel, or to break rocks. Broken rocks will re-spawn elsewhere on the island the next day. Dug up trees can be re-planted in a new spot.

If you don't want to use your food energy, just sit on a toilet and it will reset to zero.



(Yes, that's right. Your character can go to the bathroom in Animal Crossing.)

Part 11: Bells

If you want to upgrade your home or buy items, you need Bells, the currency of Animal Crossing.



There are a few different ways to get Bells. Try selling items to Timmy and Tommy, and see which items get you the most Bells.

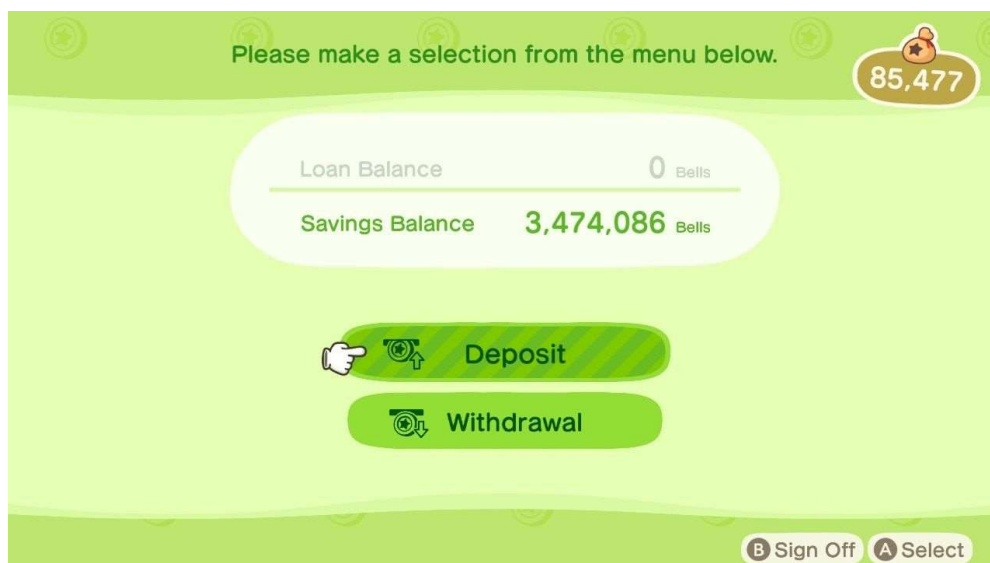


If you see a present with a balloon, hitting it with your slingshot will grant you either Bells, a DIY recipe, or an item.



Sometimes, a tree will give you 100 Bells if you shake it. And if you see a glowing spot on the ground, be sure to dig it up! Something special can happen.

If you end up with more money than you can fit in your wallet, there is a service called ABD (Automated Bell Deposit) that you can use. Tom Nook will tell you all about this feature when you unlock it.



Part 12: Island Ratings

Once Isabelle arrives at your island, you can ask her about your island's rating.



Your island starts out with a measly one-star rating. To improve the rating, you'll need more animal neighbors. You can also improve the rating by growing flowers and fruit trees, placing items on your island, and putting custom designs on the ground.

Special things happen when your island reaches 3 or 5 stars. Decorate your island to look just the way you want it to. Don't be discouraged just because your island doesn't look like someone else's. Make the island YOU want.

Part 13: Happy Home Paradise DLC

Animal Crossing: New Horizons is a complete experience by itself. However, there is additional content to be found if you purchase the Happy Home Paradise DLC.



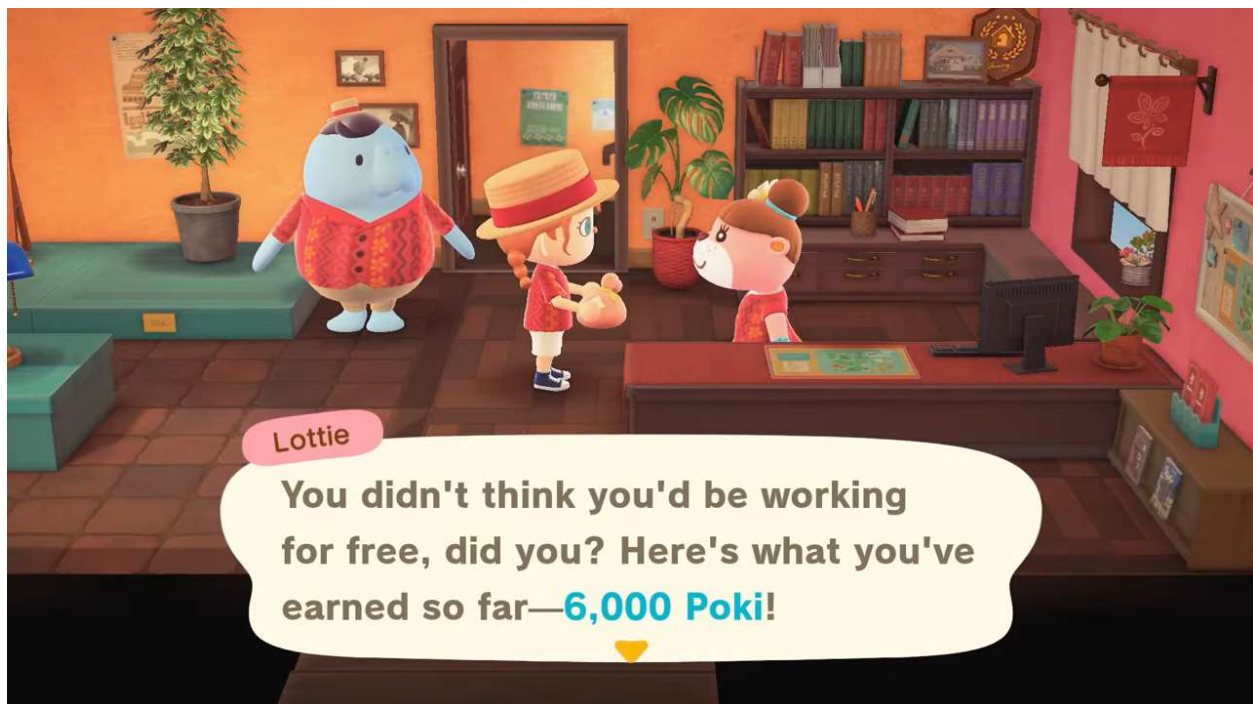
Lottie the otter runs a company called Paradise Planning that makes vacation homes for animals. Any animal villager can visit the island, and each one has a different theme that they want.



Your job is to use furniture items to create the vacation home of that villager's dreams. Use your imagination, but make sure you include the must-have items that the villager says they want.



As you design more and more vacation homes, you'll improve the island's amenities, earn a new currency called Poki, and unlock new items and features that you can use to decorate your own home back on your island.





There's a store in the Paradise Planning office where you can buy items with your Poki. If you buy souvenir chocolates, you can take them back to your island and give them to your neighbors. This allows you to design vacation homes for them, too. Work hard to become an interior-design superstar!