

# Different ways in which we utilize non- human animals



There are many different ways in which we utilize non-human animals. From clothing, to food, bi-products, even friendship, non-human animals are a very integral part of our lives, and as such raise questions of morality in terms to their treatment. I personally did not give much thought to my personal use of non-human animals prior to this, but it turns out that it is in fact very extensive. My main use of non-human animals is for nutritional purposes. My diet consists of a variety of products, but my protein intake is heavy on non-human animal meats. Aside from the uses I give non-human animals as part of my daily diet, non-human animals are also present in my wardrobe.

Whether it is wool pants, a cashmere sweater, or leather shoes, many of the different items I chose to wear have some sort of non-human animal by-product in them, increasing the use I give those non-human animals. Finally, I, like many of us, use products that have been developed through the use of medical research on non-human animals. Furthermore, aside from the use I give non-human animals for dietary or fashion purposes, I also utilize non-human animals for recreational purposes. Having lived in Miami for well over a decade now, I have developed a passion for recreational fishing, where I also make use of non-human animals. While the fishing can be somewhat of a more cruel relationship with non-human animals, I also have very tender relationships with some; in fact, I consider myself to be a huge dog lover. My former employers, who are also close to being family, have two dogs, two cats, and a parrot at their home. Through my time as their employee and friend I developed a friendship with these non-human animals that remains strong today. Whenever my former bosses go out of town, I make sure the animals are fed and taken care of with a lot of pleasure. When looked at in terms of utilitarianism, many aspects of the way I choose to interact with <https://assignbuster.com/different-ways-in-which-we-utilize-non-human-animals/>

non-human animals are valid, and some are not necessarily valid under utilitarianism. The foundation of utilitarian thought lays on the idea that an action is proper depending on the ratio at which it increases happiness and reduces suffering. In terms of non-animal humans in specific, utilitarian though does not differentiate between human and non-human animals, therefore granting animals moral consideration when assessing the ratio between gained happiness and suffering. When looked at in general, whatever treatment we give non-human animals, be it for food, medical research, fashion, or any other use, could be justifiable depending on how the effect of our actions on the animal's well-being compares to the net increase in our own human welfare. With that in mind, I believe that my usage of non-human animals for nutritional and fashion purposes would be seen as permissible under utilitarian thought because they represent a net increase in my wellbeing. For example, the suffering of many chickens, cows, pigs, and other animals that have to die in order for our society to be fed is less than the benefit that we receive from having a well nurtured society. In terms of the fashion use I give some non-human animal by-products, the net gain in wellbeing is more personal, yet I believe that my feeling well when wearing some products that may contain animal by-products is larger than the suffering of that particular non-human animal. However, I believe that in regards to non-human animal testing the utilitarian train of thought might run into some morally problematic grounds. I would like to think that we can all agree that if the cure for cancer required non-human animal testing, the net benefit for society would by far counterbalance the imminent suffering of some non-human animals; yet this is not the case for all types of animal testing. It is my believe that there are cases in which the suffering of the <https://assignbuster.com/different-ways-in-which-we-utilize-non-human-animals/>

animal outweighs the benefits of whatever cosmetic or aesthetic improvement they can bring, and in those cases utilitarianism would find that research to be morally impermissible. Personally I would qualify my philosophy in regards to the treatment of non-human animals as utilitarian in nature. I do not believe humans and non-human animals belong in the same class. In my opinion, we should not grant non-human animals the moral agency we grant ourselves simply because they are not capable of the level of rationalization and cognitive development required to differentiate between moral permissibility, and unlike contractarianism, I do not believe we hold any moral obligations to animals. However, I do believe that some suffering on the part of non-human animals is morally impermissible, and that is where my utilitarianism comes in. If, for example, non-human animals have to suffer in order for a new Botox medication can be developed, I do not believe that the benefit it brings us is even close to making this morally permissible. The reality is that while I believe we do not owe any moral obligation to animals, their suffering moves us away from our goal of maximizing happiness and therefore is not morally justifiable unless it is for the greater good. Unfortunately, as I approached this paper I really had not considered my ethical standing on non-human animal treatment, and therefore now realize some of my actions might have fallen somewhat outside of my own moral standings. In the case of nutritional usage, I will never believe animals are not here to provide us with the protein we need, yet in the case of my accessorizing and some of the other products we might not even consider, I believe I have to now be a little more conscientious of what went into the making of those products.