



Miss Fido Manners Question and Answer Sheet

- 1. In your new book, *The Miss Fido Manners Complete Book of Etiquette*, you discuss pet etiquette. How does pet etiquette compare to dog training?**

Dog training is about controlling your dog by using equipment, hand signals and oral commands. Pet etiquette is about understanding that good behavior has to be practiced at both ends of the leash. The book teaches that dog owners can combine their dog training skills with common sense and basic good manners (consideration for others, good table manners and gift-giving skills) to be better customers, considerate co-workers, exceptional hosts, good neighbors and welcome guests. Most importantly, the book demonstrates that by practicing pet etiquette, pet owners can spend more time with their dogs in a variety of settings.

- 2. As a dog owner, you are confronted with family and friends who want to come for a visit. How do you prepare family or friends, and your dog, for the upcoming visit?**

In order to make the visit as stress-free as possible, tell guests you have a dog and ask them if they suffer from allergies. If they suffer from allergies, they might need to discuss increasing their allergy medication with their doctor, and you might need to give your home a thorough cleaning to reduce the allergens in the environment. In addition, consider grooming your dog and treating him with an allergen-free product. Moreover, you also need to discuss your dog's personality and behavior with your guests, and tell them that it is important to maintain your dog's routine. If you dog have a fearful dog, speak to your veterinarian about prescribing medication or discussing other alternatives that can reduce his stress. Before the big visit, you may also help your dog overcome fear of strangers by inviting neighbors and friends to your home, having them stay for a few minutes and gradually increasing the length of their visits. Once your guests do arrive, encourage them to exercise extreme caution when opening and closing doors and windows so that your dog will not leave your home without supervision. Lastly, explain to visiting children to leave the dog alone and ask their parents to help you enforce your policy.

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- 3. According to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, there are 73.9 million dogs living in 43.5 million households. With statistics like these, there is a chance that a neighbor will have a dog. What is your advice as to how to deal with an inconsiderate neighbor who allows his dog to bark at all hours, to scavenge through neighborhood garbage cans, to poop on community lawns or roam loose throughout the neighborhood?**

When dealing with a neighbor's dog whose bad behavior is inconveniencing you, communicate with your neighbor based on the type of relationship that you have with her. If you have a friendship with your neighbor, call her on the phone. If you are not friendly, write her a short note. In your communication, sound as neutral as possible – not judgmental or accusatory. Simply and clearly explain the problem. If you can provide her with a solution, such as the name of a local animal behavior counselor, professional pooper scooper, pet store or a company that installs dog fencing, give it to her. If you want to avoid confrontation, anonymously report her to the area community regulatory board.

- 4. According to the Center for National Injury Prevention, dog bite injuries are highest for children between the ages of five and nine years of age, and injury rates for boys are significantly higher than for girls. How should adults promote positive interaction between children and dogs without harm coming to either of them?**

When children and dogs are spending time together, adults should always monitor their interaction. If you can, it is always best to socialize your dog at an early age with children. When your dog is around children, rely on your dog training skills. He can “sit” to meet children, “come” to you for safety sake and “leave it” to avoid confrontation. Explain to children that dogs cannot be treated like stuffed animals, and that in their dealings with dogs they must learn to read canine body language to have a positive relationship with them. Teach them not to disturb, confront or tease a dog that is sleeping, eating, playing with a toy or wandering loose in the neighborhood.

- 5. Whether you plan it yourself or hire a wedding consultant, planning a wedding is a major undertaking, Why would any bride or groom want to add the additional chore of including their dog in the wedding festivities?**

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Tradition dictates that you celebrate nuptials with as many members of your family as possible. If you consider your dog a family member or treat him like your baby, why wouldn't you want your dog to be present at the nuptials? Celebrities like Kevin Costner with his yellow Labrador, Adam Sandler with his English bull dog, and Gwen Stefani with her fiancé, Gavin Rosedale's Puli, incorporated their dogs into their weddings. If you are planning to include your dog in your wedding, get permission from the venue, give him a crash course in manners, introduce him to the venue prior to the wedding, groom and treat him with an allergy-relief product and hire an escort to take care of his needs on your special day.

6. Although there are strict health codes that limit canine admittance to certain business establishments, how is it that pets are enjoying fine dining experiences with their owners?

Health codes strictly contribute to how a restaurant is run. Generally, dogs are allowed in an outdoor dining area, unless they have to enter restaurants to access this area. Some restaurants allow dogs and their owners to be placed throughout the outdoor area, and others will confine you and your dog to a specific area of the patio. Then, there are those restaurants that will not agree to your dog accompanying you on the terrace, but they will consent to you tying her to the rail, as long as she remains on the outside of the dining establishment on the sidewalk. If you do bring your dog to a restaurant, have them eliminate prior to entry; make sure they are well-mannered; keep your dog in the carrier or on Sit-Stay on the floor; refrain from having her eat off your plate or annoying other patrons; and be prepared to leave the eating establishment, if she causes a disturbance.

7. Your book discusses the present trend of dog owners spending time with their pets by participating in a variety of activities together, like going to Major League Baseball games. Other than baseball games, what kinds of activities can you participate in with your dog, and how can you prepare your dog for these types of events?

Today, other than major and minor league baseball games, dogs are invited to Yappy Hours, parties, fashion shows and art auctions. If you have a friendly dog that can enjoy the companionship of other dogs, then you should accept an invitation or plan to attend a doggy soiree. Depending on the event, dress your dog

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appropriately. For baseball games, dogs can sport team jackets or jerseys and wear team leashes and collars. For Yappy Hour, they can look their best with hip t-shirts, boas and other mod accessories. For Fashion Shows, dress dogs in designer clothing. But at an event, a lot of dogs come in close contact with each other, so as a health measure bring your own water bowl to limit the spread of communicable diseases, such as Kennel Cough or Giardia. To avoid fecal parasites, use monthly heartworm medication; to prevent fleas and ticks, apply a topical a few days before the event.

- 8. In the last ten years, pets have been treated like family members; specifically, like children. As with children, dogs have parents that separate and divorce, forcing pet parents to deal with pet custody issues. What thoughtful measures can pet parents take to avoid costly legal fees when fighting over their dog?**

According to the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers Association, dogs are the most common animal caught in the middle of a divorce dispute. Before getting a dog, a couple should decide in a contract or a prenuptial agreement if they separate or divorce who will keep the dog. Historically, courts have treated pets as chattel or property. A person that brings a dog into a relationship usually leaves the relationship with the dog. Today, courts also take into consider which pet parent has the better relationship with the dog or which pet parent takes care of the dog. If you are having problems deciding who will get custody of the dog, hire a professional with experience. An experienced lawyer can draft a doggy custody agreement that outlines visitation and how to divide pet care expenses.

- 9. Besides the Pet Sitters International holiday, “Take Your Dog to Work Day”, in the last two years we have read in the news that more employers are allowing their employees to bring their pets to work. Is it a good idea or a bad idea to bring pets into the workplace.**

Many employers are looking for innovative ways to keep employees content in the workplace. Allowing employees to bring their dogs to the office is a great idea if you have permission from the owner of the building and can professionally manage the positive interaction between dogs and employees. Some problems that can occur: 1) if an incident occurs on the premises, such as a dog bite, a plaintiff can look for deep pockets to sue; and 2) there is a measure or protection for allergy sufferers or those employees afraid of dogs. If your

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dog is housebroken, friendly with strangers, can remain calm in a foreign environment and can walk nicely on a leash, then bring him to the office. When you take your dog to work, bring a puppy gate or crate to confine him, toys to keep him busy and a water bowl. Also, remember that your dog is your responsibility and not that of your junior associate or secretary. Refrain from bringing your dog into common areas, like bathrooms or a kitchen. And if he causes a disturbance, take him home immediately.

10. How does Miss Fido Manners recommend being polite or considerate of the environment?

A lot of dog owners do not realize why it is important to scoop the poop and abide by other rules and regulations. Many of these doggy laws help protect the environment. For example, canine waste laws are in place because if left to accumulate, dog waste attracts disease-carrying pests and pollutes underground water sources. At the beach, dog waste contains disease-carrying bacteria that can make adults and children ill. In some cases, waste has polluted the ocean, resulting in closing of beaches and banning of bathers in the water. Poop is not the only way that a pooch can harm the beach environment. Wandering dogs can destroy plant life that grows on coastal shores and can disturb nests. Also, while hiking in the mountains, it is important to engage in minimal impact hiking, which means inflicting minimum harm on the flora and fauna. Hikers should keep their dogs quiet so as not to upset animals, and keep them in control at all times to prevent destruction to wildlife. By observing doggy rules and regulations, a dog owner can be kind too.

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