

# Basic Rules for Dogs Who Have a House to Run

## 1. **CHAIRS AND RUGS:**

Cultivate a favourite chair, preferably one with a backrest, so that you can lie on your back safely and comfortably in the chair. In this way, by looking cute, you can solicit belly-rubs. Rugs are OK to lie on, except on a hot day when the rug is on a tiled floor. Then you want to lie on the tiles with all four legs spread out, and said belly pressed against the cool floor.

## 2. **DOORS:**

Do not allow closed doors in any room. You might miss some action (or your human) on the other side. To get a door opened, scratch on door with forepaws and whine. Once door is opened, lie on threshold and (1) watch human or (2) go back to sleep.

After you have convinced your loving buddy to open an outside door, run outside and pee on your favourite shrub (if male) or on the lawn (if female). Or tree a squirrel (exciting!) or bark at the postman or dustman.

## 3. **GUESTS:**

Ingratiate yourself with guests by approaching same with head lowered, soft expression in eyes, pink tongue showing in a panting grin, and tail wagging. Place chin on guest's knee or in his (or her) extended hand. If a large breed, whack guest with tail. If guest is standing, lean on same.

For sitting on laps or rubbing against clothing, pick the moulting (shedding) season for best effect.

Perform a useful service for a house-guest in the morning by ensuring that said guest does not miss breakfast. This involves pushing open guest-room door with nose, jumping on guest's bed and barking loudly in his/her ear. If door is latched, refer to **2.** (above).

**Garden Party Etiquette:** For the guest who claims, "I love doggies," go out in rain (if available), jump in swimming-pool or pond, or dance around lawn sprinklers. The objective is to get sopping wet. This applies particularly to big long-haired breeds such as Alsatians, Collies, Golden Retrievers and Newfoundlands. Then bound up to guest, lean on same, and shake vigorously. Do not forget to take in shocked expression on guest's face. This is the apotheosis of canine black humour.

When lying on your human's bed or on the children's bed, be prepared to look surprised and hurt when scolded. The idea is to convey, "But you always allow me on the bed when company isn't here."

Always accompany guests to the loo. It gives them a heightened sense of security when they see you lying in the doorway, guarding them.

#### 4. **WORK:**

If one of your humans is sewing or writing and another is idle, stay with the busy one. This is called helping, otherwise known as hampering. Following are the rules for hampering:

- A. When supervising cooking, sit with your head within reach of the counter (but be careful around the stove). You thus stand a better chance of getting a delicious morsel, or at least some attention.
- B. For book readers, lie curled up at (or on top of) their feet. In this way, they will not move away, because they will be reluctant to disturb you.
- C. When humans are watching television, position yourself in front of the TV set. In this way, they will have to look at you if they want to watch TV.
- D. For home repair projects, try to get in the middle of things, and above all, be sure to ingratiate yourself with the hard-working human by showing affection. Example: Dad is on his knees, working on the plumbing underneath the kitchen sink. Use the opportunity to show your deep love for him and your concern for his cleanliness, by giving him a thorough ear-wash.
- E. **Car Ride Etiquette:** Welcome an offer of a Car Ride by going into transports of joy and turning handsprings (pawsprings for your species), accompanied by howls and high-pitched barks. Whilst in vehicle, administer frequent ear-washes (or neck-washes) to driver and/or passengers, but try to be wary of sudden stops or changes of direction.

Ensnore yourself on back seat (it is an excellent place to sleep); but if driver is alone, commuting frequently between back seat and front passenger seat is fun. Driver will enjoy having his Best Friend curled up in front seat (particularly a large Labrador in a little Ford Escort). It is easy to bludge pat and ear-rubs when occupying front passenger seat - to say nothing of looking out of window or putting nose to air-conditioner vent.

#### 5. **PLAY:**

It is important. Get enough sleep in the day time so you are fresh for playing ball, Frisbee, kill-my-stuffed-animal-toy or tea-towel tug-o'-war when your human comes home from work tired and in a filthy mood. If you do it right, you will lift your human's spirits and induce him (or her) to forget the horrors of the work-day. This stress-relief will have a very positive effect on his (or her) health too.

If you want to surprise your human, chew your tennis-ball thoroughly, ensure that it is totally slobbered up, then drop it down the back of your human's shirt whilst he is reading his newspaper or watching TV. (If you are enjoying a Car Ride, try to avoid doing this to the driver; it could cause a nasty accident.)

**MOST IMPORTANT:** Begin people-training early. You will then have a smooth-running household. Humans need to know basic rules. They can be taught if you start early and are consistent. And never be harsh. Positive reinforcement works just as well for humans as for dogs.