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Dear Miss *Fido Manners*™

The Secrets of High Breeding

By Charlotte Reed



Q How do I live the dog's life of good manners, refinement and travel?

A Hairless Chinese Crested with High Hopes

Dear High and Mighty Dog:

Whether you are an heir to the doghouse-born or a street mutt who was lucky enough to be adopted by a good family, you too can appear to have high breeding by being well-trained, paying attention to your personal appearance and practicing your pet etiquette. *Mon petit chien*, you do not have to be a global, jet-setting canine like *Simple Life*'s Tinkerbelle Hilton or Honey Ritchie to be a Sirius pet star.

To begin, elevate your status by learning the building blocks of dog training. All dogs should learn pet-owner commands like "come," "sit" and "stay." Your veterinarian should be able to suggest a good dog trainer or a dog obedience class nearest you. Also, many local SPCA or humane societies offer low-cost dog training classes. If those options are not available, have your owner contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (www.apdt.com) or the National Association of Dog Obedience Instructors (www.nadoi.com) or read Bruce Vogel's *ASPCA Dog Training Manual*. A seasoned instructor is flexible and uses a variety of methods and techniques to ensure each client's success. Confirm that your teacher uses positive reinforcement coupled with proper corrections and not harsh or abusive methods. A good educator knows that you get more with patience, a treat and a toy. Before your trainer is hired, have your owner ask questions, check references and expect no less than the absolute best and safest training methods.

I cannot emphasize enough that your personal appearance should be up to

snuff – or in your case, up to a sniff. Remember, first impressions are always based on appearance. You can easily attract attention, indeed, if you are a hairless dog, but if you want to make a lasting impression, always be neat, clean and pleasant-smelling. Regular grooming, including bathing once a month and weekly brushing and combing, is the best way to maintain a good personal appearance. In your case, consider a regular skin care regimen to avoid problems and irritation. To keep looking your best, protect your skin with Doggles Pet Sunscreen (\$9.95) with an SPF of 15. Also, a nutritious diet with nutrients like Riboflavin, Vitamin A and Vitamin E helps avoid dry skin. With so little hair, you quite often become cold, so I advise that if you are planning on dressing for success, keep it simple and low-key. Consider the Ralph-Lauren Canine Polo Shirt (\$32.00) with its classic styling in a smart color.

Good manners begin at home and a dog's should too! Be considerate of other dogs, pet owners and other humans who are not fortunate enough to share their lives with a dog. Follow leash, licensing, pooper scooping laws and other rules that pertain to canines. Never show up without an invitation and be prepared for the unexpected. Always act as if you are a pet ambassador for dogs everywhere and you will be welcomed as such.

And for the best canine travel advice, subscribe to *Fido Friendly*. 🐾

Happy Tails,
Miss Fido Manners

