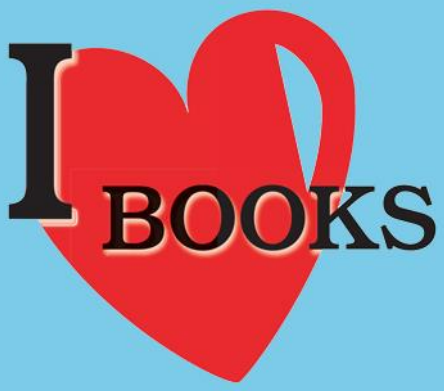


Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

How to Look After Your Human

Written by

Kim Sears

Illustrated by

Helen Hancocks

Published by

Frances Lincoln Children's Books

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

HUMANS: A BASIC INTRODUCTION

Humans and dogs have shared each other's lives and homes for thousands of years, and each partnership has the potential to be of the most rewarding and fulfilling variety. It is important that you fully understand that each human is different, and the choice of whom you spend your life with will have implications on the direction your time together will take.

I have compiled a brief list of easily identifiable dog-friendly people. This is by no means comprehensive and indeed humans are complex creatures – it is impossible to categorise and label them so simply. Yet I hope the following may help you to make an informed decision when it comes to choosing your human(s).

THE FAMILY

Possibly the most common humans you will encounter. Homo sapiens are sociable creatures that like company and as a result enjoy spending time with high numbers of their own kind, as well as other species (hence the reason that they make suitable companions for dogs in the first place). The family traditionally combines large numbers (two or more) of humans spanning both genders and multiple generations.

The positives to this are endless; expect a busy, bustling home filled with warmth and laughter. Frequent family meals ensure that you are guaranteed regular table scraps. The higher the number of humans in your household, the higher the cuddle ratio. Often, a large, 'family-style' car is included in the package which means frequent trips en-masse to exciting places like the beach and the park.





· Important Note ·

AVOID the family if you are not of a sociable disposition, are averse to lots of noise, and struggle to tolerate small humans under the 4ft variety. A word of warning: as previously mentioned, a family of humans will frequently come with extra members of different species: cats, fish, horses, gerbils or even reptiles. If you are not prepared to share your home with any of the above then the family is not for you and you must look elsewhere.

NUTRITION

The average human will usually eat three meals a day, supplemented by a range of snacks where necessary. I know this seems a bit excessive, but you must remember that they have large bodies to feed.



Also, once you've read this chapter I think you'll realise that having so much food in the house actually works out in our favour. But before I go any further remember the golden rule when it comes to eating in your home: all food is to be shared. As soon as your human understands this, you've unlocked the key to both peaceful coexistence and permanently full bellies.



· Handy Tip ·

A quick word on dog food: you might not think it looks particularly appetising compared to human food, but what if I told you a very clever dog intended it to be that way? Humans find our food revolting, so we get to eat an entire, uninterrupted meal that is full of all the nutrients and vitamins we need to keep being fabulous. Then we get to share our human's food too. Genius!

· Important Note ·

When supervising your human's mealtime, it's essential that you have one eye on what you want them to eat, and the other on what you want to eat yourself. Any successful relationship is about compromise, and knowing what you can pick up where your human left off is the key to good ownership.

HAiR

Now whilst pretty much all dogs, whether they are male or female, are covered in hair (except the Chinese Crested, of course), most humans have more hair on their heads and faces than the rest of their bodies.

Some humans have long hair on the top of their head that takes a lot of washing, brushing and drying. I've tried my best to brush it with my claws in the past but I've learnt that they prefer to take care of this themselves – some of them get quite sensitive if you try to touch it.



. Top Tip .

When my long-haired human has to dry her hair, She uses a magical piece of equipment that blows hot air out of a nozzle. I snuggle into her lap and close my eyes, and all of a sudden I feel like I'm on a beach in the Caribbean and the warm air is tickling my eyebrows. I suggest you try it, it's blissful.



Bearded humans

Some humans may have no hair on the top of their head, but coarse, bristly beards on their jaws and necks. I have a personal affinity for these humans as I've had a beard since I was a few days old. Grooming-wise, beards are quite high maintenance, as you will need to burrow for any leftover food on a daily basis. Scraps can get lodged in there after every meal, making your human become very smelly.



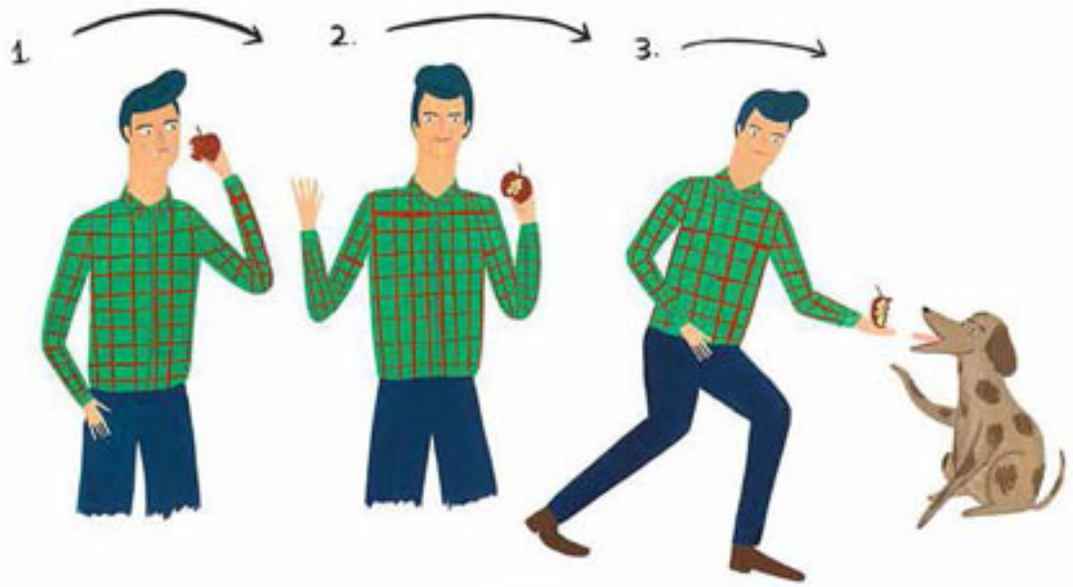


. Important Note .

There is such a huge variety when it comes to dog hair and there are so many styles of coat that differ from breed to breed. Don't be alarmed, therefore, if your human starts to copy your style. Embrace it! Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, after all



From a well-trained human you should expect the rule of thirds; after two mouthfuls you should be given the third, and so on. Make sure you swallow without chewing to give yourself enough time to be ready for the next bite.



. Remember .

You both need to pull your weight in order to coexist happily, so dogs should always offer to clean the dishes. I personally really enjoy this part of mealtime and have been known to spend a good twenty minutes licking the plates after a Sunday roast.



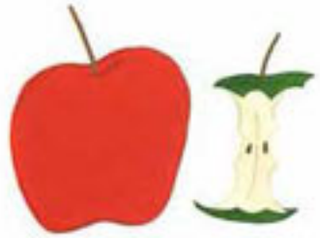
. Important Note .

Some human foods are utterly revolting and/or poisonous to dogs: chocolate (totally overrated anyway, but great to use as a reward in human obedience training), grapes, raisins, onions and macadamia nuts, to name a few.

There are some delicious human foods that we should insist on sharing:

Apple

Not only are apples delicious and crunchy but, they also freshen your breath. Let the human dispose of the core, mind.





Carrot

Carrots also clean teeth and freshen breath. Don't eat too much though or they will turn your poo orange!

Yoghurt

Super delicious and filled with healthy bacteria. Make sure your human invests in a variety that has a pot large enough for you to fit your snout all the way in.





Hot drinks

I'm partial to a slurp or two of tea (milk, no sugar). However, you have to be incredibly careful – my brother Rusty was far too enthusiastic once and burnt his tongue on a hot cuppa. He had to lick a marble floor for an hour in order to cool it down.



DOG CLOTHES



Here, I need to draw your attention to a very serious, worrying trend that has been growing in popularity recently. Dog clothing. I'm not sure who is responsible for starting this, but a lot of humans have begun to enjoy putting clothes on us. This behaviour seems to manifest itself at novelty times of the year, on holidays such as Christmas, Halloween and Valentine's Day.

It is fine if you enjoy dressing up, but be aware that behaviour can escalate, and whilst you may have only intended to be wearing a Father Christmas outfit in December, you suddenly find yourself unable to leave the house without being trussed up in a miniature aviator jacket or two pairs of wellington booties. My advice is that you need to have a firm opinion on how you feel about clothing and commit to your decision.

I will not stand for clothes and made it abundantly clear the first time my human tried to put a doggy kimono on me. If, like me, clothes aren't your cup of tea then my best advice is to stand stock still, head lowered but eyes glaring up at the ceiling, and simply refuse to move until the offending item has been removed, at which point you should make a show of leaping around like a jolly spring lamb in order to show how relieved you are.



· Important Note ·

This is all personal preference and I wouldn't judge you for a second if you tolerate this behaviour – I've seen many a dog happily pounding the pavements in a designer mackintosh that matches their human's. Clothes may even bring you closer together, but they aren't something that I am prepared to accept.