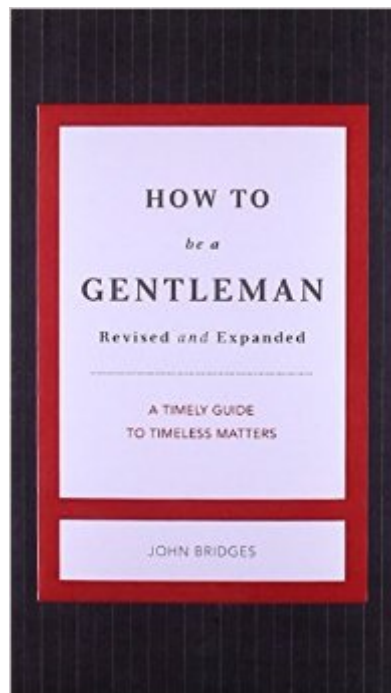


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# How To Be A Gentleman Revised And Updated: A Contemporary Guide To Common Courtesy (Gentlemanners)



## Synopsis

Being a gentleman isn't just being a nice guy, or a considerate guy, or the type of guy someone might take home to meet their mother. A gentleman realizes that he has the unique opportunity to distinguish himself from the rest of the crowd. He knows when an email is appropriate, and when nothing less than a handwritten note will do. He knows how to dress on the golf course, in church, and at a party. He knows how to breeze through an airport without the slightest fumble of his carry-on or boarding pass. And those conversational icebreakers "Where do I know you from?" A gentleman knows better. Gentlemanliness is all in the details, and John Bridges is reclaiming the idea that men can be extraordinary in every facet of their lives.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book has some real pros and some real cons. The \*majority\* of the advice given is practical, no nonsense etiquette. For this reason I would heartily recommend this publication to a gentleman looking to improve upon such areas in his life. There are other books however that he should supplement his learning, in my opinion. Now, having said that, there are some glaring problems w/ this book. 1.) The suggestion that a man should NEVER turn down an invitation is nuts. The author gave the reader the out in the event of illness or death in the family. Come on, there are times, for whatever reason, that you have to respectfully decline. 2.) Drink beer from a CAN!?! How did that slip in there? First, at a truly formal occasion you simply don't suck down the suds. At any other occasion it is more than acceptable, but how hard is it to put it in a glass? Drinking beer from a can

in your living room by yourself (or w/ your wife) after a long hard week, sure that's fine, but elsewhere drink from a glass.<sup>3</sup>) There is one point that states simply, "If a gentleman can afford to do so, he should have someone else clean his home." Why? There is a fine line between snobbery and etiquette and this crossed it. If it said if the man and his wife are too busy to keep a house clean, then that would make a lot of practical sense. Otherwise, it's a waste.<sup>4</sup>) The other gives the reader full liberty to not wear socks in many occasions, but says w/o question he must wear an undershirt. Though I live in the North and always wear the two aforementioned articles, I could see why a gentleman from Dixie would not want to wear an undershirt during the summer. Socks are a must, IMHO.<sup>5</sup>) The quib about always bringing condoms was both out of place and inappropriate in my opinion. Such sexual matters are both personal and vary depending on a gentleman's religious background. It didn't belong in this book. Good day.

This easy to read book makes manners a matter of preference. The educated man can make a decision to accept the authors guideline or not. I personally do not have much occasion to entertain large parties in my home - so I feel no need to have every piece of silverware known to man, but if I needed to help host a large party, I would be prepared. I like the chapter breakdown and the way subjects intertwine, allowing for fast referencing should the need occur. I consider myself a man pretty in tune with etiquette but this was a good shot in the arm. This book is great for those who might not know the basics or for one who might be very well mannered. This Christmas all my Brothers-in-Law and nephews are getting this book plus a stack of Thank you notes.

This is the sort of book interesting only to those people serious about self-perfection. The book offers easy and handy tips for how to behave as a gentleman -- and far from the typical GQ/Maxim/Men's Health ideal of manhood, this book aims to help the reader achieve refinement and dignity. "A gentleman," as the author puts it, "is someone who makes others feel comfortable." "His goal is to make life easier, not just for himself but for his friends, his acquaintances, and the world at large." Nothing in here about how to flatten your abs in three weeks, succumb to the latest fashion trend or technological fad, or get 'her' into bed. But neither is this book simply moralistic. Rather than ethics, it is concerned with manners and maintaining a decent, honest, and caring public persona. I think it's unfortunate statement on our contemporary society that such a book needs to be read; but it is encouraging that people may read it.

There is much in this book that is useful and entirely correct. Unfortunately, the good is drowned by

the instances in which the author is just plain wrong and the instances in which the author mistakes his own personal preferences for requirements of gentlemanly behavior. What follows are some of the more egregious examples, but the list is by no means exhaustive:1) Bridges claims that a gentleman always wears an undershirt. Although I always do, I understand that this is a matter of personal preference, not a question of etiquette.2) Bridges claims (repeatedly) that a gentleman never declines an indication and always accepts the first invitation that is presented to him. This is the biggest bunch of baloney that I have ever heard of. While there are some invitations that one cannot turn down (to your brother's wedding, for example), one does not have to allow any person at any time to allocate one's time in order to be a gentleman. Miss Manners would not approve.3) Bridges claims that a gentleman would not wear brown shoes to a wedding or a funeral, when, in fact, the correct pair of brown shoes is every bit as solemn and appropriate as black shoes. Alan Flusser would not approve.4) Bridges believes that one must have every piece of stemware known to man in order to be a gentleman, but he does not believe that it is necessary to drink beer from anything but a can. Again, Miss Manners would not approve. I really could go on and on, but the point is clear: Bridges simply doesn't know nearly as much as he thinks he does.

This small volume is packed with wisdom and insight. With humor and intelligence, Mr. Bridges gently instructs his readers in what is becoming a lost art. Other reviewers have commented that Mr. Bridges' book is not always correct. However, if it is not 100% on target, it is certainly above 95%, which represents an excellent effort. One reviewer has provided a laundry list of things he considers to be personal preferences presented as rules. Unfortunately, this reviewer is, um, misinformed. For example, tradition holds that gentlemen should wear undershirts (they prevent the see-through syndrome and smooth the appearance of dress shirts), gentlemen do not hold off responding to an invitation in case something better turns up (which is what the author meant), and black is traditionally more formal than brown (always has been). I, too, could go on and on, but the curious reader can easily confirm Mr. Bridges' facts in other places if he is in doubt. And, to the reader who would relegate this book and its author to the 19th century, I say "Good Day". There is no need to debate with those who do not, cannot, and will not ever "see daylight", so to speak. All in all, well worth whatever price one must pay. Highly recommended!

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