

Dear Beagle,

When I say to move, it means to go someplace else, not to switch positions with each other so there are still two of you in the way.

The dishes with the paw print are yours and contain your food. The other dishes are mine and contain my food. Please note, placing a paw print in the middle of my plate and food does not stake a claim for it becoming your food and dish, nor do I find that aesthetically pleasing in the slightest.

The stairway was not designed by NASCAR and is not a racetrack. Beating me to the bottom is not the object. Tripping me doesn't help because I fall faster than you can run.

I cannot buy anything bigger than a king sized bed. I am very sorry about this. Do not think I will be sleeping on the couch to ensure your comfort. Dogs actually curl up in a ball when they sleep. It is not necessary to sleep perpendicular to each other stretched out to the fullest extent possible. I also know that sticking tails straight out and having tongues hanging out the other end to maximize space is nothing but sarcasm.

For the last time, there is not a secret exit from the bathroom. If by some miracle I beat you there and manage to get the door shut, it is not necessary to claw, whine, try to turn the knob or get your paw under the edge and try to pull the door open. I must exit through the same door I entered. Also, I have been using the bathroom for years—canine attendance is not mandatory.

The proper order is kiss me, then go smell the other dog's butt. I cannot stress this enough!

To pacify you, my dear beagles, I have posted the following message on our front door:

RULES FOR NON-PET OWNERS WHO VISIT AND LIKE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT MY PETS:

1. They live here. You don't.
2. If you don't want their hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture. (That's why they call it "fur"niture.)
3. I like my pets a lot better than most people.
4. To you, it's an animal. To me, he/she is an adopted son/daughter who is short, hairy, walks on all fours and doesn't speak clearly. Beagles are better than kids ...they eat less, don't ask for money all the time, are easier to train, usually come when called, never drive your car, don't hang out with drug-using friends, don't smoke or drink, don't worry about having to buy the latest fashions, don't wear your clothes, and don't need a gazillion dollars for college.