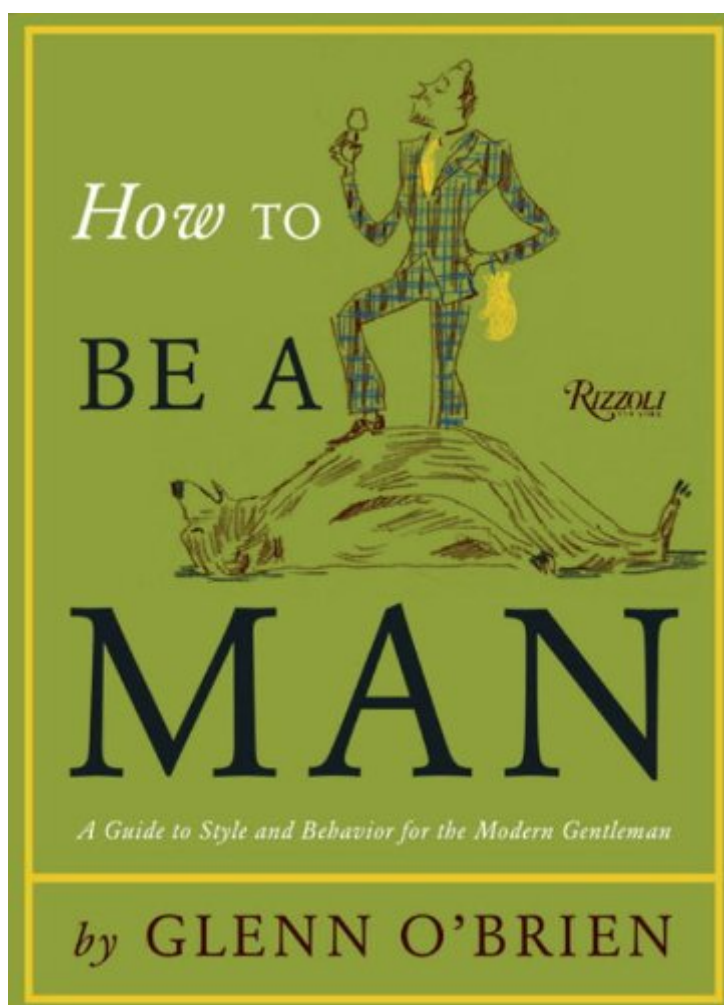


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How To Be A Man: A Guide To Style And Behavior For The Modern Gentleman



Synopsis

The ultimate sartorial and etiquette guide, from the ultimate life and style guru. By turns witty, sardonic, and always insightful, Glenn O'Brien's advice column has been a must-read for several generations of men (and their spouses and girlfriends). Having cut his teeth as a contributor at Andy Warhol's Interview in its heyday, O'Brien sharpened them as the creative director of advertising at the hip department store Barneys New York for ten years before starting his advice column at Details magazine in 1996. Eventually his column, "The Style Guy," migrated to its permanent home at GQ magazine, where O'Brien dispenses well-honed knowledge on matters ranging from how to throw a cocktail party (a diverse guest list is a must), putting together a wardrobe for a trip to Bermuda (pack more clothes for less dressing), or when it is appropriate to wear flip-flops in public (never). How To Be a Man is the culmination of O'Brien's thirty years of accumulated style and etiquette wisdom, distilled through his gimlet eye and droll prose. With over forty chapters on style and fashion (and the difference), on dandies and dudes, grooming and decorating, on how to dress age-appropriately and how to age gracefully, this guide is the new essential read for men of all ages. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

I've been a big fan of Glenn O'Brien's tone and perspective for a long time. As GQ's style guy and a further contributor to the magazine and its now-defunct podcast, it would be easy and perhaps predictable for him to take a dismissive or snobby stance while dealing out the dos and don'ts of taste, the way that other style and advice tsars seem to traffic in snarkiness while resenting their readers (thinking of Esquire's sex columnist here). But O'Brien the writer is always unfailingly polite, empathetic and seems generally concerned with being of service in his column, in an almost Buddhist sense. I was a little bit worried about the book after GQ published a teaser for it which distilled some of O'Brien's tips on social politics into a single, awkward article that, stripped of the context of the book, came across as a bit bitchy and shallow. I bought the book anyway and my worries were unfounded. Most of this book should be canonized. As someone discovering for the first time O'Brien's writing beyond the pages of GQ, I was surprised at what a powerful prose stylist he is. Some of the passages are more effusive than others and when he really gets going there's a huge, poetic lift. This is not a superficial book. He really lays out a clear philosophy of living that, at the risk of oversimplifying it, treats manners as a form of deference to the beauty of life - by paying attention to details and expressing ourselves in a thoughtful manner, we are telling the world and its people that we love it enough to take it seriously. If I had a gripe it would be the numerous redundancies - for instance the fifth time O'Brien tells us who Beau Brummell is, or the seventh time he makes the point that casual dress codes in the workplace have served to blur social status. I couldn't tell if these were editing errors or just O'Brien having a senior moment but as an attentive reader it did feel a bit like having my intelligence insulted to be re-told the same things so many times, sometimes even on the same page. [Edit: Some have said this book is a compilation of previously existing articles. I'm not sure if that's the case but it still seems like those redundancies should be addressed in this compilation for readability.] Some of the chapters, such as the ones on dealing with air travel and doctors, are marred by a grouchiness that, as a man in my early 30s, I just couldn't relate to. But then again, this is O'Brien at his most explicit and not his most polite. And the candor is exhilarating elsewhere, like in the rants on drug use, taste as a matter of survival and a particularly inspired chapter on the vital powers of old age vs. the emptiness of youth worship. I could have used a chapter on fatherhood and it seems that a section called How to Compete would have been a no-brainer for a book on manhood. But maybe they'll tack that on to future editions - I

definitely had the sense when reading this that I was encountering the first edition of something that would last (and regretted spilling so much food on its pages). Buy this book. For my sake. I need compatriots.

This book is a rarity. If you're looking for a picture book, forget about this. This is a book for people who love to read, enjoy humor and want to dress for the part. Some parts of the book are hilarious, but mostly it's the vast information that makes this a fantastic book. Not just on when and how to wear suits, ties, tuxedos, etc. But also why they were created, who design them and the whole history behind them. One of the many chapters that I've found interesting was "On the snob". Which enlightened me with the revelation that the word snob is in fact an abbreviation of *Sine Nobilitate* or Without Nobility. Other chapters include "How to drink", "How to be individual", "How to be an animal", "How to fight like a man", etc. It's a fascinating book, one that I'm sure you won't get tired of reading over and over.

This is a good read. The author's sense of irony and humor bleeds through every page. Although some style advice can be found here, this book is about much more than that. It's about life and how to live every aspect of it in style. I've always enjoyed the author's writing style and it's on full display here.

I got this book because I felt that I was lacking a bit (or a lot) in style and have come to feel that manhood is more than six pack abs and a love of beer. This book seemed like it would be a great book to help edify my beliefs in an evolved state of manhood and may even give me an idea or two about how to be a more polished sophisticated gentleman. The book is divided into 5 different sections each dealing with a different aspect of life/manhood. Each of these different sections is then filled with chapters that deal with a specific subject. Examples might be Socks, Swimwear, How to Ail, etc. (sorry I don't have my Kindle handy as a reference for the exact names of the titles). For the most part the author seems to espouse his belief system on the subjects. At times he is a little long winded, but for the most part his writing style is intellectual and fresh, with some good humor sprinkled in. The book is good at dealing with general ideals for each chapter, but I would have preferred some less abstract advice. Yes I know a man's swim suit should be classic and stylish, but what are some good brands to shop for? Even though the book lacks actual advice, it is a great read and I am glad I have purchased it and will undoubtedly skim through it again.

For all the men... and the people that love them- this is the must have manual of "manhood issues", written by one of the finest graduates of the New York "Downtown" scene. O'Brien, a resplendent post-punk bon vivant and former host of NY public access T.V. Party show (Google that kids...) shows you how to take your nominal human existence and become not "The Man", but "A MAN". This should be required reading for all approaching adulthood, and the legions of today's dude douche-bags who are experiencing difficulty in attaining needed life skills.

It is really a good book. The writing style of Mr. O'Brien made it an easy-to-read book. I am not a good (frequent or avid) reader, but the way the author exposes his ideas, the humor he puts in, and the current relevance of the subjects treated in the book made me read it in about a week, which is a record for me. The book is an excellent reference and guide for those, like me, in pursuit of a little bit of style, a lost art in these days. It is autobiographic, but not boring; Mr. O'Brien tries to be clear that he doesn't believe his truth is THE truth, nor tries to impose his point of view, just expose it, with humor and anecdotes. Why not the fifth star? Because the author tends to extend in some subjects not related to 'how to be a man' (IMO). So I was tempted, any other time, to skip a section, but curiosity won every time.

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