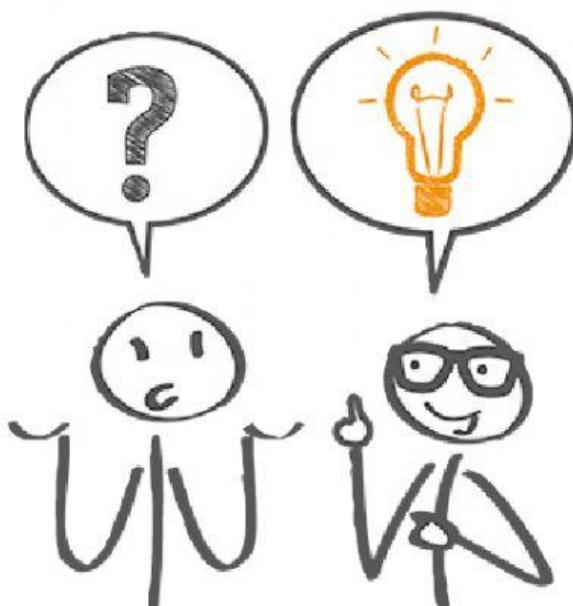


What should I do?

LISTENING

4.9 You're going to listen to a radio phone-in programme about manners. First, listen and make notes about the three people's problems with rude relatives.

1 Belinda's problem with her mother-in-law	
2 Damien's problem with his brother	
3 Miranda's problem with her nephew	



4.10 Listen and complete some extracts from the advice that Sarah gives.

Advice for Belinda

1 I think you ought to be the one _____.

2 You shouldn't _____, because she won't change her opinion.

Advice for Damien

3 I think you should politely but directly _____.

4 To be honest, you don't really have to _____.

Advice for Miranda

5 You must _____ before their next visit.

6 Explain that he has to _____ a bit when he's visiting.

7 'You mustn't _____.'

4.11 Now listen to the whole programme. Do you agree with Sarah's advice? Is there anything else you would suggest?

Script

- P Good afternoon to all. In today's modern manners programme, the subject is family, and what to do with rude relatives. Our etiquette expert Sarah is here to take your calls, so if you have a family member who behaves badly and you don't know what to do about it, just call us here on oh two oh seven nine four six oh six seven one.
- B And our first caller is Belinda from Salisbury. Hi, Belinda. Tell us about your rude relatives.
- B Well, I hate to say it because it's such a cliché, but it's my mother-in-law. She's a nice woman, don't get me wrong, and on the whole, we get on well, but one thing she does which I think is really rude is that whenever she comes for a meal, she criticizes my cooking. I'm not a professional, obviously, but I think I'm a pretty good cook, and it really annoys me, especially after I've spent hours making something really nice.
- P OK, so Sarah, over to you. How should Belinda deal with her mother-in-law?
- S Hi, Belinda. I know this won't be easy, but when she does this, I think you ought to be the one who behaves well. Stay calm, thank her as politely as possible for her advice, and change the subject. You shouldn't argue with her, because she won't change her opinion – and it won't make you feel better, either. Instead, encourage your husband or another relative to say how great your cooking is in front of your mother-in-law. When she sees that her criticisms aren't having any effect, and that everybody else loves your food, she'll either stop criticizing or she'll start paying compliments herself.

P Thanks very much for that, Sarah. And our next caller is Damien, from Sheffield. Hi, Damien. I think you're going to tell us about a problem with your brother – is that right?

D Yes, that's right.

P So what's the issue?

D Well, he lives in London and he likes coming up to stay from time to time, which is great. But he's just phoned me saying he's coming next month and he's bringing his new dog. I know he's just got this dog and he's very keen on it, and doesn't like leaving it alone, but it's still a puppy, and my girlfriend and I aren't very into dogs. Also, we've just redecorated our house, and we've done a lot of work on the garden, and I'm pretty sure the dog's going to destroy them both.

P Sarah, what do you think Damien should do with his brother and his dog? Do you think it's rude to arrive at someone's house with a dog?

S Yes, I have to say I do. It's bad manners for a guest to bring an uninvited pet, even to a relative's home. This is true even if you have one of your own and your house is already animal-friendly. I think you should politely but directly say how you feel. You can add a reason like, as you say, you've just redecorated, but to be honest, you don't really have to give a reason.

P Well, that's very clear advice. Thanks, Sarah. And finally, Miranda from Stirling. Hi, Miranda. Tell us about your problem.

M Hi there. My problem's with my nephew, my sister's son. He's eight years old and his parents don't give him any rules. So he's really wild, and whenever they come to our house, he just shouts all the time, jumps on the furniture, makes a mess in the kitchen. He even writes on the walls! It's really exhausting, but my sister's very sensitive about me criticizing her son, so generally I don't say anything. But I've reached the point where I'd almost prefer it if they didn't come round.

P Sarah, what should Miranda do with her nightmare nephew?

S You must speak to his parents before their next visit, or at least to your sister. But instead of being critical, say how great it is that their son has so much energy, and how much you love him, but then explain that he has to calm down a bit when he's visiting. And at the beginning of his next visit, welcome him, but give him some rules for your house. Say, 'Hi. It's great to see you again! But just a couple of house rules: no jumping on the furniture, and if you want to draw, please use a piece of paper – you mustn't write on the walls.' He won't mind, and in the long run, your sister will be grateful.