

## POTBUST'S TEN COMMANDMENTS OF CANNABIS

1. ***One law at a time.*** If you're holding or using that's one. Don't break any others. Particularly in your car, all laws must be religiously obeyed. Police are now trained to use every encounter as an excuse to invade your privacy. Signal for every turn, don't speed, make all persons wear seat belts, have all your lights in order, your tabs current, your signage up to date if your vehicle looks commercial, etc. It seems petty, but there is no traffic violation too petty to support a stop. And once you're stopped if the car smells of dope, if the cop sees a pipe, or if you just don't look right, you're going to be searched. If you must carry dope in your car put it in a smell proof container inside a locked briefcase inside a locked trunk or glove box. Hey, dummy, I know it's a lot of trouble, but I'm not kidding. I get dozens of cases every year from folks who broke this one simple rule. Their misfortune was preceded by their decision to think "Oh what the hell, I'll take the silly chance just this once." I love that line. It pays my rent.
2. ***Practice Home Hygiene.*** Sooner or later, someone is going to show up at your door or in your house who might turn you in if s/he sees something dopey, such as a pipe, a joint, a bud, or even a grow room. These things should always be kept where they can't be seen. Period. Don't leave your bongos or your joints or your roaches around the house where they can be seen by someone who comes to the front door or comes in. Smell, of course, is also a problem. No one really has the answer on that one, but I recommend Mason jars or other equally tight packages for your stash (baggies don't cut it). As to the smell in the house, I'm told that good results can be obtained by placing toilet cakes in a box through which all air escaping from the home must pass. Seems like a lot of trouble? Think talk is cheap? Try hiring a lawyer. Save some money; take my advice now.
3. ***Never invite trouble into your home.*** At home, don't do the things that bring the police to your door: loud domestic beefs, fires, bad smells, shady visitors, a pot plant growing outdoors in your yard -- this isn't rocket science. You know what's likely to bring the cops. Just remember, when they come, they use the opportunity to look into your private life. Dope has ruined the police as a public service institution.
4. ***Protect the privacy of your home if you can.*** This is a tough one. The wealthy can build fences, have gates, plant hedges, and do whatever it takes to keep prying eyes out. The rest of us don't have it so easy. At the very least, if you live in a house, rather than an apartment or condo, it's nice if your front door can't be reached without passing a gate and a sign that warns intruders to stay out. Absent that, police can come to your door and knock on it pretty much anytime during "regular hours." Whatever that may mean. The law says an officer has the same license to intrude onto your private property as a "reasonably respectful neighbor." Only signs, gates, and fences give your lawyer a chance to argue that

the cop should not have come to your door (from where s/he smelled pot) without a warrant.

If you live in an apartment or a condo, even if it's a security building, the police are allowed to enter without a warrant. In most states, they can even run a dog through the hall of your condo to see what you're smoking behind that door. Don't like that? Cayenne will protect your privacy.

5. ***Don't think you're safe out in the countryside.*** The urge to protect us from the giggles and the munchies has overcome our government. In fact, marijuana is a drug of such power that it has driven the government crazy. I recently came upon a case where the park rangers hid in the woods using night vision goggles to spy on young campers at their campsite. Guess what? They saw the young ladies toking on a pipe. Busted. I wonder what else the perverts saw? Which brings me to number
6. ***Don't take your pipe out of your house.*** Smoke joints that look like cigarettes in public or semi public places. They don't attract nearly as much attention, and they are much easier to conceal.
7. ***Don't be afraid to blend in if you're on the wrong side of the pot laws.*** This seems to be a problem for heads. Yeah, sure, you have the right to wear dreads, get pierced, wear dope-glorifying clothes, or just generally look like someone that most cops want to mess with. That's your choice. But remember, it's a choice that should be made consciously. If you're ready to take on the extra risk that comes from exercising your right be free while holding or using, that's fine. Just be sure you know that's what you're doing. If what you want is not to be noticed, then camouflage is the key. Blend in. Look like the folks around you who don't smoke dope. Far fetched? I guess so, but if you get busted once while being a knucklehead, I'll bet you don't ignore this advice a second time.
8. ***Don't talk, don't talk, don't talk, no digas nada.*** This rule works everywhere. When you're buying (or selling) dope, don't talk about things that aren't necessary to the deal. Don't call up your connection and ask if s/he/s holding, or anything even remotely like that. Code is even worse. Just ask if you can come over. If you are dealing with a stranger, shame on you. But even so, with strangers or anyone with whom you engage in a "transaction," it's even more important to clam up. If your connection is a he, refer to him as a she. If your connection is coming from the Portland, say she's coming from San Francisco. Better yet, say nothing at all. If you are growing dope, well . . . Come on now, do I have to tell you this? You can't tell anybody. It's as simple as that.
9. ***When confronted by the police, take the advice on the back of my card:***
  1. FIRST, ask to call your lawyer
  2. Be courteous; do not resist

3. Do not consent to search or entry
4. Do not talk about *anything*; do not admit OR DENY anything.
5. As if you are free to go If you are, GO.

I have a variation of this for use when you are approached by an officer who wants to grill you about something, but you aren't caught in the act or even holding. It comes up, for example, when you mail a package that gets intercepted, and you know they will be coming to ask you about it because you weren't smart enough to disguise your identity when you sent it. Just an example. First, you ask, "What's this about?" Then, no matter what the answer, you ask to speak to your lawyer. Period. It's simple and it works. I don't care if they tell you that what this about is searching the moon for the green cheese you left there. Don't tell them you hate green cheese and you've never been to the moon. Tell them you'd like to speak with your lawyer.

If the police persist in bullying you, just show them my card. (You can carry it for free). Don't say "I know my rights." That's sure to piss them off. The best way to demonstrate convincingly that you understand your rights is to EXERCISE THEM!!! Shut the fuck up. If all else fails tell them that you must follow the advice on your card, since I told you "if you don't take my advice, I double the price."

10. ***Don't forget it's against the law.*** Even though everyone you know thinks it's just fine to use cannabis responsibly, 750,000 folks just like you are busted for pot every year. Eighty percent of those are for personal use. Even so, for most of them, it's a disaster. Lost employment, lost career, lost children to a nasty ex or wanna be ex, a year or more of extremely inconvenient and demeaning piss tests . . . and so on. For most folks a simple misdemeanor potbust is a disaster and a tragedy.
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