



Monday » January  
14 » 2008

## Rain rules of engagement

Is there such thing as umbrella etiquette in the city?

**Randy Shore**

Vancouver Sun

*Monday, January 14, 2008*

Umbrella jerks. You know who you are.

Polling conducted along one block of West Pender Street reveals there are two types of people in the city: Umbrella jerks and the rest of us, who are abused by umbrella jerks.

They jab us with their tips on buses and in elevators. They guide the runoff from their closed umbrellas into our shoes as we ride the bus. They rake our eyes with the dangerously pointed metal tips arrayed like a dozen dangerous eye-poking things around the perimeter of their tent-sized brollies. And most irritating of all they walk under the awnings ... WITH THEIR UMBRELLAS OPEN.

Who are these people? What are the rules?

A clerk at The Umbrella Store hadn't given much thought to the proper use of her products, but she did recommend that anyone who didn't already have an umbrella come to her store and buy one. It was not a learning experience.

I turned to the Internet for guidance. Vancouver bloggers mine a deep sense of outrage on this topic.

The blog Common Sense Rules of Vancouver explains the mindset of the eye-raker thusly: "When using an umbrella, there is always a tendency towards solipsism. Just like your months spent in the womb, you are safe, warm, and you don't give a damn about anyone outside of your little bubble of happiness and safety." (Meaning: My mind is the only thing that I know exists. I must protect it with a large military-grade anti-rain device.)

Common Sense Rules of Vancouver issues the following commandment for awning hogs: "Thou shalt not, whilst holding an umbrella in an open and upright position, taketh the selfish and ignorant path and stay close to the building or overhang."

On The Rant Trap, Mr. Crankypants offers this advice for his tormenters: "The thing I hate most about the Vancouver mist and rain is poor umbrella etiquette.

"First off, you're an idiot. You're [sic] umbrella is useless, it does not keep you dry. You are in a cloud bank; the water is not falling much, it's pretty much just there. Carrying an umbrella in Vancouver mist is akin to taking a knife to a gunfight. Leave the umbrella at home."

Miss 604 is similarly incredulous that people actually use umbrellas on the Wet Coast: "If you're a true Vancouverite, your skin and everything you wear is made of Gore-Tex and you don't even need to use an umbie."

If you are going to carry an umbrella it is your duty to learn the rules. We at The Sun have compiled them for you.

rshore@png.canwest.com

© The Vancouver Sun 2008

CLOSE WINDOW

---

Copyright © 2008 CanWest Interactive, a division of CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.. All rights reserved.