

I should like our courtier to be a more than average scholar, at least in those studies which we call the humanities; and he should have a knowledge of Greek as well as Latin ... and also skilled at writing both verse and prose for ... it will enable him to provide constant entertainment for the ladies ... However, I should like our courtier to keep one precept firmly in mind: namely, that ... he should always be diffident and reserved rather than forward, and he should be on his guard against assuming that he knows what he does not know. ... [The courtier] should tend to disclaim [praises] modestly, always giving the impression that arms are, as indeed they should be, his chief profession, and that all his other fine accomplishments serve merely as adornments; and this should especially be his attitude when he is in the company of soldiers, lest he behave like those who in the world of scholarship want to be taken for warriors and among warriors want to seem men of letters. . . .

Gentlemen, I must tell you that I am not satisfied with our courtier unless he is also a musician and unless as well as understanding and being able to read music he can play several instruments. For, when we think of it, during our leisure time we can find nothing more worthy or commendable to help our bodies relax and spirits recuperate, especially at Court where ... many things are done to please the ladies ...

**Source: Baldassare Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*, 1528**