

Differences Between Men and Women

Understanding and validating the differences between men and women will give you a better appreciation for your spouse and reduce the areas of conflict.

- Our differences may cause us to **process and respond to a situation differently**. If not understood, this can lead to conflict.
- By recognizing that your spouse's actions, words, or emotional response are the result of the differences between you, this can help you respond rather than react to a situation with your spouse.
- Our differences are not meant to bring any fear, guilt, shame, or discouragement about how you will relate to each other.
- Don't allow ungodly beliefs and lies to convince you that you cannot live in peace and accept your differences.
- There can also be other reasons for your reaction to each other that may have originated from previous experiences, hurts, wounds, judgements, or relationship issues with parents, siblings, or other people.

Three Ways to Respond To Your Differences

- 1) Think they're weird or wrong and reject their differences
- 2) Roll your eyes and just tolerate their differences ("Can't live with them; can't live without them!")
- 3) Celebrate, validate, and accept your differences – Talk about your differences and become a team

Typically **when we are dating, we are looking for someone who has strengths that we don't have. Our spouse is meant to complete us in areas of beliefs, values, and character.**

- When covenants were made, they were usually entered into so that one person's strengths would compensate for the other person's weakness and vice versus.
- Often you marry someone who is just the opposite of you in areas such as conversation, outgoing nature, stability, or other character values.
- What you liked while dating often quickly wears off after marriage. For example, "I liked him being the strong silent type, but now that we are married, he seldom talks to me." What once attracted you to the other person may become a major source of irritation and conflict.

It will be important for you to **recognize, honor, value, understand, and delight in your mate's differences. We are to see our spouse as a gift from God!**

- Some of these characteristic differences may be stronger than others depending upon the individual person and their background. It's not meant to stereotype either men or women.
- Some of the differences between men and women below may not become a source of irritation for several years into the marriage!
- Even though these differences are real, God intended for them to complement each other. Together God can make a perfect union of two hearts into one. This requires effort from both of you to allow Father to work in each of your hearts and lives until you truly become "one flesh."

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Women

1. She is more interested in love and relationships and has the capacity to know what it takes to have a healthy intimate relationship.
2. Her greatest need is to **feel loved** and connected to her husband's heart and life.
3. She has a greater need to talk than a man – she speaks 25,000 words/day and a man speaks about 12,500 words.
4. She has a need for the **man to listen** – She often solves her own problems and deals with her emotions by simply talking and sharing.
5. Her identity can be found in her relationships and her home, yet in today's world she is pulled to feel her identity should be from a career outside the home or how much she earns.
6. She has a **great need to feel safe and secure**.
7. A woman is typically modest with her physical body and often does not feel comfortable being naked. She may not feel secure that she is everything her husband wants.
8. She needs her husband to **recognize her worth as a woman**, not just an object of affection, piece of property, or a servant to meet his needs.
9. A woman enjoys going **shoppppiinnnggg!** That means she gets in touch with being feminine by checking out items in a variety of stores, trying several items on, and comparing different articles of clothing before she makes a selection. Or she may do all that but still come home without purchasing anything as it is about the experience and pleasure she finds in looking!
10. ***She needs to get in touch with her feminine side*** by being in an environment that does not require logic and goals. She needs to express her feelings and get in touch with herself. That often means some “down time” where she can read, relax, and be refreshed. These activities nurture and feed her soul. She is helped to get in touch with her femininity by someone who will listen and show her sympathy or empathy.
11. She needs to first connect emotionally before she will have a strong desire for sex. – She is more like a “crock pot” that takes time to cook. ***If a man moves too fast, she feels used, not loved.***
12. **Conversation and communication allows her to connect relationally through words.** Words allow her to feel connected to her husband's world and also to his heart.
13. She has a keen sensitivity to other people's feelings –She is constantly looking at others facial expressions, body language, or tone of voice.
14. **She thrives and needs 8-10 non-sexual touches a day** – Those touches can “keep the marriage counselor away!”

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15. She can process more than one thing at a time as she can feel, talk, and think all at the same time.
16. When she is hurt, she can become more emotional. A woman is usually more in touch with her emotions and expresses them openly.
17. A woman can see the big picture. She thinks long term and can see what the result will be from the actions and attitudes of others.
18. A woman is quick to ask questions – reads instructions first, not last – asks for directions.
19. She can visualize more easily as her right and left brain are more connected than a man's.
20. **She is intuitive and is often led by her inward “gut” feelings and not logic.**
21. Women seek relationships often desire to meet the needs of more people around her. Women discuss a whole topic or share more details than men. They discover the point that they want to make by talking first.

Men

1. Men can be extremely focused and *seem insensitive to what is going on around them*. They come across as being unable to feel or be sensitive to relationships.
2. **Men's greatest need is to feel respected and appreciated.**
3. **Men speak fewer words than a woman.** They speak 12,500 words per day.
4. *Men solve problems through logical thinking.* They focus on the facts and information, mull things over and come up with a solution or plan of action - silent problem solving.
5. Men find their identity through their job and accomplishments.
6. Men are goal oriented. They need to conquer.– ex. Marriage – Once a man has won the prize and marries the woman of his dreams, he stops pursuing her and moves on to other projects and territory to conquer. Travel – a man has to press on until they reach their destination. He hates stopping for restroom breaks because he sees all the cars he just passed driving by!
7. Men are emotionally modest. They can be easily embarrassed and tend to hold their emotions in check.
8. **Men feel their value and worth through their accomplishments.**
9. Men go shopping with a goal! They do not like to go to a lot of stores and try on clothes. They go in, get what they want, and leave.

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10. Men need to be in touch with their masculine side. They need companionship, admired for something they did well, and to know that their advice is valuable.
11. **Men are visually stimulated for sex.** They have a strong need for sex. They tend to be quick like a “microwave” or a fountain (under pressure and always ready!) Making love helps a man get in touch with his emotions and feelings.
12. Men connect better through word pictures and stories. Men communicate more than women with non-verbal noises and body language (grunts, whistles, "high-fives," pat on the back, etc.)
13. **Men want to solve the problem and get frustrated if they cannot.** They want the bottom line and not a lot of extra talking. Men want the facts and not a bunch of unnecessary details.
14. Men need touches and affection too. **They have a fragile ego** that can be easily damaged through words and actions.
15. Men must think about their feelings before they can talk about them.
16. When hurt in their heart, they shut down their emotions and withdraw.
17. Men think short-term. *They have a difficult time seeing the big picture.*
18. Men try to do it without instructions. They don't like to ask questions and admit that they might not know something. They try to figure it out themselves.
19. Men tend to be connected more to the left side of their brain than women. **They tend to be more factual, logical, intellectual and linear with their thinking than women.**
20. Men are more competitive than women.
21. Men are more inward focused, self-absorbed and self-centered. Men think things over and want to get to the point.

We need to celebrate and appreciate the differences between men and women and not get frustrated about each other. You don't need another you! Allow the differences to complement each other and help you fulfill your role in the marriage!

Men and Women's Needs Are Different

Men Need

- 1) Sex
- 2) Domestic Support to their wife
- 3) Honor
- 4) Respect and Appreciation

Women Need

- 1) Security
- 2) Leadership in Home
- 3) Open and Honest Communication
- 4) Non-sexual touch

Worksheet Handout for Differences Between Men and Women

Differences between men and women can be related to physical and psychological development but can also be influenced by the culture, social, and family environments that we were exposed to growing up. A lot of how we interact, develop relationships, and respond to life are set in place by the time we become teenagers. The further apart your backgrounds were growing up can create a variety of differences that may lead to conflicts if not acknowledged and dealt with before or during the first several years of marriage.

Before the next time we meet, discuss together the following areas and look for differences between the two of you and how you might lovingly respond to those differences. Feel free to explore other areas too! ***Be sure to validate each other's emotions and feelings and express your appreciation for their strengths that you may not have.*** Be thankful how your heavenly Father is completing you through the one you're going to marry.

1. Are you interested in the big picture, principles, goals, or do you need the details, the nitty-gritty? Do you ask a lot of questions or very few about something?
2. Do you pick up on the emotions, feelings, expressions, body language, compassion or do you just hear the facts and information? Do you feel personally involved or impersonally involved in what's going on around you?
3. Do you think things through silently processing all the information or do you like to talk things through and get to the solution or make a decision?
4. Do you get emotional, upset, or cry over situations, or are you separated, isolated, numb, distancing yourself from the situation?
5. Are you impulsive, quick to get involved, take charge, or do you evaluate, think things through, stand back?
6. Do you feel comfortable being alone, having just a few friends, connecting at a distance and not allow people to get too close, or do you like to be engaged, have lots of friends, be social at events interacting with lots of people?
7. Do you read the directions before you start, ask for directions when your lost, or are you open to others suggestions and thoughts? Or do you dive in to a project, drive around until you see something familiar, work independently, not open to other's input?
8. Are you a leader or a follower? Can you submit to authority or be a servant, or do you have to be in charge and have others serve you?
9. Go through the list of differences between men and women in the lesson and discuss with each other about how you strongly you agree or disagree with each one. How do you see yourself fitting into each of the characteristics for your sex.
10. Be observant of each other and see how the other person responds to situations and how you would respond to them. Talk about the differences.