

5 Sneaky Ways to Suck Up to Your In-Laws

You want your in-laws to like you — *of course* you do. But the thing is, you just aren't sure that'll happen naturally. So if you need a little boost to take your relationship from cordial to cozy — but don't want to be obvious in your campaign to win their affections — relationship expert April Masini has five sneaky ways to get on your in-laws' good sides.

Be complimentary and kind without being sycophantic.

Keep compliments genuine, and manners ever present. "Would it kill you to tell your mother-in-law that her teal dress is very unique and lovely on her?" asks Masini. "No, it won't, so say it."

Don't win every battle.

"Decide if this is really a mountain you want to die on," Masini advises. In other words, do you want to be right and alone, or swallow your pride to keep the peace? "For instance, if your mother-in-law really wants Thanksgiving at her home, let her have it. Even if you're a cordon bleu chef, let her make Ritz Cracker stuffing for the turkey in her kitchen."

Go out of your way to invite them to things.

"When your in-laws feel left out, they get cranky," says Masini. By inviting them to events where their attendance isn't expected — think a midweek lunch date, or to join you for an afternoon manicure — "they won't feel that they have to second guess you or mistrust you," says Masini. "It doesn't have to be a fancy, planned out invite. It can be casual and last minute. The contact is more important than the event."

Frame photos of your in laws and display them around your home.



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"When they visit, they'll feel flattered and they won't have that anxiety that comes with 'out of sight, out of mind,'" says Masini. It's also a sneaky-but-sweet gesture to hang their cards on your refrigerator, or display gifts they've bought you.

Introduce your in-laws to your friends.

Extend invitations to them to join parties where your friends will be, too. "When your in-laws feel like they're part of your world and are included in your social circles, they'll be able to relax and will think that they're appreciated," Masini explains.

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