

LOVE / Relationships



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7 Ways to fight marriage fatigue

6 hours ago



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How to keep your marriage sexy when you're getting sick of each other

I often joke with my husband that our marriage is aging faster than a fine wine. No, we haven't been married for very long – just five years, in fact. However, we both work at home together full time, which means we see each

other about 40 more hours a week than most couples do.

The thing is, I really like my husband. We were best friends in high school, and I was immediately drawn to him, not only physically, but because of how easily he made me laugh. So, we have fun. We've also [had a few kids](#), which means we've settled into the harsh reality of real adult life. We're not cracking jokes in the back of chemistry class anymore. We're working together under the same roof every day, balancing our jobs with wiping toddlers' asses. I love my perfect little family as much as anyone else, but it can really start to wear on you.

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Here's a completely un-sexy little factoid that might surprise you: As detailed in both *Slate* and *The New York Times*, it's women, not men, who are quicker to experience [bedroom boredom](#) in a monogamous relationship. This doesn't necessarily mean that [monotonous monogamy](#) will lead ladies to cheat, but it does mean women are more likely to avoid sex in a relationship when things get predictable. A 2012 Good in Bed survey explored the phenomenon of bedroom boredom even further. Survey results indicated that commonplace [boredom in committed relationships](#) was caused by cohabitating in 15.6 percent of cases, having kids in 32.2 percent of cases and getting older in 38.5 percent of cases.

There's no law that says you have to enter a committed relationship if you don't want to — you can keep sex random and exciting as long as it works for you — but if and when you decide to swim in monogamous waters, you may find yourself in the same boat as so many other couples in the U.S.: bored in bed. There are plenty of ways to approach this dilemma, but one of the quickest and most effective fixes is to challenge the monotony. If you find yourself dreading intimate time with your partner because it's become another chore to check off your list, here are a few proven ways to turn "on" your relationship:

1. Act like a tourist

If the thought of yet another Friday night dinner and a movie makes you want to claw your eyes out, I have just thing to pull you back from the edge. Bring back that element of surprise from the beginning of your relationship by pretending like you're a tourist in your own city, says Robyn D'Angelo, LMFT, "[The Happy Couple Expert](#)" in Southern California. She advises her clients to, "Take selfies at each point of interest. Learn about where you live, daydream about new places you could live or open a restaurant and make memories in your very own backyard. When you get home, put a photo collage together virtually or head on down to your very own 1-hr photo and

actually print out some pics. Do you remember those ancient things — paper photos?"

2. Dig in his closet

Depending on what you're into, cross-dressing can be hot in and of itself, but April Masini of AskApril.com says there's another big benefit to borrowing your spouse's clothes: Men are visual creatures. Even something as subtle as wearing your partner's clothes could translate into a treat for the eyes. Masini explains, "He will love it if you take one of his shirts from his closet and wear it to work — or around the house with blue jeans on the weekend." She adds, "Wear a very sexy bra underneath."

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3. Do your own thing

It may seem counterintuitive to hear that spending *less* time together can actually strengthen a relationship (and especially its sexual chemistry), but you can't discount the fact that absence makes the heart grow fonder. And there's nothing hotter than a woman (or a man) who has their own interests, friends and passions. "Want to have new things to chat about after a long day of work or juggling the kids? Keep your partner interested in you by staying interesting," says D'Angelo. "Go *do* something that you've always wanted to do but just didn't have the courage or make time to on *your own*. Then, talk to your mate about it. Fill them in — I bet they'd be surprised and stoked on you all over again. It's fun when you see your spouse doing new and exciting things that pump them up."

4. Do something competitive

I know this one all too well — once you add milestones like marriage and kids to a relationship, it's easy to become complacent because, well, you're just *tired*. Sarah Hosseini of [Missguided Mama](http://MissguidedMama.com), a married mother of two, can identify with this depressingly familiar outcome. She tells *SheKnows*, "I have found that doing activities [together] that are novelties help spice up a marriage. Competitive sports also help. You can feel closer experiencing something new. And you can talk about it later. Participating in a competitive sport gets you both going — and helps anticipation under the sheets. You should see my husband when I kick a soccer ball. Gets him goin' every time."

5. Plan a surprise

If we're honest with ourselves, we can admit that the one thing missing from our long-term relationship is the

spontaneity of those early dating days. The good news is that love isn't dead. The bad news is that it's going to take more than mouth-to-mouth to revive it. When "stagnant" is the best word to describe your union, in and out of bed, Masini advises, "Throw him a surprise party — even if it's not his birthday. After all, if you really want to surprise him, take him off guard. It can be a surprise party just because it's Saturday night, and you have olives, gin and vermouth! Martinis for everyone!"


6. Play hooky

Let's be real — for most extra-tired parents of young children like myself, date nights past 7 p.m. just aren't going to happen. That's exactly why you need to insert this brand-new, magical word into your parenting vocabulary: *daycation*. A daycation is as lovely as it sounds: Drop the kids off at school, take the day off work, go to brunch and enjoy each other's company, says [Danielle Faust](#), a life and wellness coach for busy women. "Doing day dates and daycations lets couples recharge and enjoy each other without the added stress of needing a sitter or having to get together at the end of a long day when you'll be tired and more inclined to postpone," Faust explains.

7. Take a break

Blame it on Adam and Eve, but that forbidden fruit tastes so much sweeter when you know you can't have it — and so does sex. So just stop doing it and watch how the sexual tension builds after a few days of deprivation. Nicole Bermack, a hot yoga teacher at the 27th Street Studio in New York, often advises clients on how to increase sensuality in the bedroom. Bermack's number one "spice it up" tip is to be honest and explicit about sexual fantasies, combined with keeping your hands off for at least one to two nights. She tells *SheKnows*, "The reason this works so well is because it makes sex feel more forbidden for both parties, especially when they're talking about it with each other, and this leads to a *lot* of excitement. Usually, couples don't make it past the first night."

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