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Read This Before You Date a Younger Guy

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by [Jené Luciani for SHAPE.com](#)



Should you date a younger man?

You meet a guy and there's an instant connection—you're both into Orange Is the New Black, his dry sense of humor kills you, and dang those eyes! And then you learn that the same year you graduated college, he was wrapping up his freshman year-of high school.

Dating someone younger—whether you're two or three years his senior or are talking cougar territory—certainly can work (look at Eva Longoria and her 4-years younger beau), but being an "older woman" in a [relationship](#) does tend to come with certain perks and downfalls. If you want to make things work, be sure you can handle the following.

1. Pro: the sex: You can't argue with biology. Men reach their sexual prime in their twenties due to a spike in testosterone, while women typically reach theirs in their 30s and 40s. Add the fact that younger guys have more stamina, and you just may have a match made in orgasm heaven.

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"A younger man has more energy and is more willing to try things," says Lindsay Slosberg, dating expert for the app Let's Date. "In turn, doing new things increases dopamine in the brain, triggering a desire to spend more time together and assisting in lighting your sexual fire."

An even bigger bedroom bonus? A longer span of time before he's reaching for the Viagra.

2. Pro: He's fun to date: Sure, you'll have dinner dates, but also be ready for, say, a 10-mile hike one weekend followed by an indie rock concert the next. [Younger men](#) are as adventurous outside of the bedroom as they are inside it, and they'll bring out a more youthful, vibrant side of you, says Lori Bizzoco, founder and executive editor of CupidsPulse.com.

"He will see you as smarter and worldlier, so he'll want to please you, not just physically but emotionally and intellectually," she says. "He'll come up with creative date ideas that bring back romance and youth, and make you feel empowered and appreciated."

3. Pro: less baggage: When you enter into a new [relationship](#), it's no secret you're bringing former boyfriends along with you. But a younger guy likely is packing less. "Men can have preconceived notions about women and relationships based on past experiences," says [Samantha Daniels](#), a professional matchmaker and president of Samantha's Table Matchmaking. "The younger and less experienced he is, the more open he'll be in his relationship with you."

Be forewarned, though: Less baggage can also mean a lack of relationship skills, such as communicating and resolving problems and conflicts, says Melanie Matcek, a matchmaker and relationship coach in San Antonio, TX. Be selective about your battles and learn to compromise on things that aren't vital to your relationship, she recommends.

4. Con: lifestyle differences: If a lot of your guy's friends are like him—young and single—going out to bars until 4 a.m. drinking, flirting with women, and behaving like a frat boy may be the norm. So don't be surprised if he chooses hanging with his bros over coming over to your place more often than you'd hope he would. "Many [younger men](#) are more connected with their peers than they are with the idea of being a couple," explains Naples, FL-

based author and relationship columnist April Masini. "They don't want to miss out on being part of their group, with whom they glean their identity."

5. Con: He's scared of commitment: Although you may be ready to walk down the aisle, it can be hard to get a younger man to put a ring on it. "In some cases, a younger guy is developmentally in a different place," says psychotherapist Robi Ludwig. "He's not ready for all of the pressures and responsibilities that go along with a committed relationship because his emotional maturity is not fully developed yet." He's either scared of love or loves you but feels like marriage means giving up his freedom, she adds-and that means you could be looking at girlfriend status for the long term.

6. Con: biology: Your biological clock is ticking away, meanwhile his might not even be turned on. Women in their mid-20s to early 30s are prime for baby-making, but "younger men don't have the 'dad' gene in them until they get to be more established and mature," says New York City-based matchmaker Janis Spindel. So if you want kids, it could be several years until your youthful partner is ready to face the reality of raising one.

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7. Con: the "mommy complex:" The chemistry is there and you're on the same page about many things, but often your careers will be at different stages, which could lead to resentment, says Amber Soletti, founder of OnSpeedDating.com and SingleandtheCity.com. "Being older, you're more successful and established, while he's still climbing the corporate ladder or even getting a career going," she says. "This can de-masculinize a man and make him feel like he's unable to provide for and protect you."

Even worse, women in this situation may end up being a sugar mamma rather than an equal partner. "A man can sometimes make his girlfriend feel like more of a mommy-figure than a peer," Ludwig says. In some cases, the guy is just drawn to a woman who takes care of him, but beware that some men may be true gold diggers looking for a free ride or to be taken care of financially, she adds. Being the breadwinner may not matter to you if, say, he makes an amazing dinner every night so you don't have to worry about cooking or he's a great handyman and has updated your entire apartment, but only you can decide that.

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