

cosmo for your guy

BY JENNIFER BENJAMIN



Just shut up and let her eat, buddy.

SHOW THIS TO YOUR MAN

WHAT YOU DO TO BUM HER OUT

■ Sometimes you can piss off your girl without even knowing it. To prevent any future "What'd I do?" moments, steer clear of these slightly insensitive (at least to her) moves.

Forgetting Stuff

We know it's hard to focus when your girlfriend yammers on, but when she mentions that her great-aunt is sick, she thinks you're listening. So later, when she says, "Want to come with me to visit Aunt Sue in the hospital?" and you say, "What?! Aunt Sue is in the hospital?" expect her to be angry. "When you don't remember things she talks about, she feels like you don't care about her," says relationship therapist Carolyn Bushong.

author of *Bring Back the Man You Fell in Love With*. Need help with your man-nesia? The second she mentions big news, ask about it—repeating the issue aloud helps you retain the info.

Commenting on Her Eating Habits

Maybe it is a big plate of fries she has there, but so what? She doesn't need your commentary on how hungry she must be. "A lot of women are concerned about their weight and feel self-conscious about what they're eating in front of a guy," says Bushong. So unless you want her to start ordering rabbit food, don't turn the fact that she swiped a few bites of your sundae into a punch line.

Tuning Her Out

Granted, after a long day, you need 20 minutes or so to unwind. Still, if you're meeting for a drink or going over to her place for dinner, she's going to want some enthusiasm.

"Even though it's not about her, when you shut her out, she takes it personally," says psychologist Robert Phillips, PhD, director of the Center for Coping. "She may be excited to see you and interpret your silence as an indication that you're not so happy to be there." To solve the problem without having to fake a Mr. Sunshine attitude, tell her you need a few minutes to decompress. Once you've relaxed, you'll be able to give her your undivided attention.

Declining to Hang With Her

Of course she understands that you need time to yourself and with friends, but if she mentions going to a movie and you decide to watch a baseball game instead, she's going to be miffed. "Although you may feel like you see her all the time, opting to do your own thing rather than spend an evening with her sends the message that she's low on your list of priorities," says Phillips. Relax, you don't have to give up every wings-and-beer extravaganza. Just tell her you'll make quality time for her tomorrow night. ■

Myth of the Month

Sometimes she likes the driver's seat.

She'd always prefer you to initiate sex.

"There are many times when I actually want to be the aggressor. Nothing makes me feel sexier than taking control and showing my man how it's supposed to be done."

—Laura, 23

"My guy's been so stressed these days that if I waited for him to make a move, we'd never have sex. When I take the lead though, I can get him to rise to the occasion."

—Taylor, 26

"In bed, I'm always the initiator, and I like it that way. I say when, I say where, and I'm always satisfied. Maybe that makes me a control freak, but he doesn't seem to mind."

—Mina, 28