

## Behaviors of a Gentleman

In the 1999 Brendan Fraser film “Blast From The Past,” his character describes a gentleman as “someone who always tries to make sure the people around him are as comfortable as possible.”

Manners aren’t something which should feel forced or ostentatious. Rather, they should make the people around you feel better about being around you.

### **A gentleman opens doors for a lady.**

As far as a gentleman is concerned, all women and girls should be treated as ladies. Opening a door is not a gesture of condescension, but rather courtesy and deference. As far as revolving doors go, modern manners dictate that a gentleman allow the woman to enter first. Car doors are no exception, regardless of who is driving. If a third party is driving, open the curbside door and ensure that she is safely in before closing it.

### **A gentleman walks closest to the curb.**

The idea being, of course, to protect her from traffic, debris, puddles and other urban calamities.

### **A gentleman makes reservations.**

Doing something as simple as making a reservation not only shows initiative and planning—and therefore concern for her—it also guarantees that you won’t be sitting around drinking watered-down margaritas waiting for a giant pager to go off.

### **A gentleman gives her his jacket.**

Especially when it’s freezing. Especially when it’s snowing. Especially in the rain. If she looks cold, she’s cold. Just take your jacket off.

### **A gentleman is punctual.**

If you’re not early, you’re late. Plan for traffic and other little disasters. Make sure that you have gas in your car. There is no excuse for being late. Respect her time. And if she is late, don’t draw attention to it. The correct answer to the question “how long have you been waiting?” is “Not long.” Never keep a woman waiting.

### **A gentleman rises when she enters the room.**

Again, a sign of respect and acknowledgement. You should also rise when she exits. At a meal, you stand when she excuses herself and again when she returns. Even a partial rising shows gentle manners, but it’s best to fully stand if possible.

### **A gentleman gives compliments sincerely and often.**

The first words out of your mouth when you meet a woman on a date should be along the lines of “you look stunning.” If you’re in a relationship, don’t fall into the trap of taking her for granted: compliment her as if you were courting her all over again.

### **A gentleman helps her to be seated.**

1. Pull the chair out for her.
2. As her knees bend to sit, gently push the chair in with both hands on the back-rest.

### **A gentleman gives up his seat.**

Yes, on the subway. Yes, on the bus. Yes, in the waiting room at the DMV. It doesn’t hurt. It costs you nothing. And if a pregnant woman or elderly lady steps into your subway car, your first instinct should be to immediately stand and offer your seat.

### **A gentleman helps a lady with her coat.**

Ask, “May I?” Position yourself behind her and gently grasp her coat near the collar and shoulder and allow her to slip free. Either drape the coat over your arm or hang it up. To help her put the garment back on, hold the coat in the same way and allow her to slip her arms in, then straighten the collar as she adjusts.

### **A gentleman says “please” and “thank you.”**

Far too often overlooked, a simple “please” and “thank you” can go a very long way.

### **A gentleman minds his table manners.**

Even if you’ve never mastered the continental style of using utensils (left hand, fork; right hand, knife), it doesn’t take any training to not talk with your mouth full or chew with your mouth open.

### **A gentleman is never rude to servers, bartenders, or anyone else for that matter.**

There is nothing more offensive than someone who talks down to someone and treats them as if they were inferiors. That kind of snobbery has no place anywhere; it’s ill-mannered, awful for everyone around you, and it makes you look like an ass. Treat people as you would like to be treated.

### **A gentleman pays.**

Put away the calculator. The term “going Dutch” was invented by the English as an insult: they regarded the Dutch as cheap. Just pay—and don’t think that paying means that you’ve bought anything more than dinner or drinks. There should be no expectations attached.

Under no circumstances should she see the check or have any idea how much it is. A tight-lipped smile is your friend here, as always.

### **A gentleman gets her safely to her door.**

Her safety, comfort, and well-being are your first and foremost priority. After a date, meeting, dinner, whatever, make certain that she gets home safely and thank her for the pleasure of her company.

### **A gentleman listens.**

If you want to get to know a person, ask them questions and listen to their responses. Listening does not mean “waiting for your chance to talk.” It means being attentive, learning to read responses, understand reactions, and navigate someone’s emotional landscape.

### **A gentleman keeps his word and a secret.**

Don’t commit yourself to any obligation which you are not willing to brave fire, famine, and flood to fulfill. Likewise, when you are entrusted with a secret, guard it as closely as you would your own. There is no breakup, no fight, no argument, no falling out which absolves you from this responsibility. Live and die with the secrets entrusted to you locked away in your heart.

### **A gentleman never hits a woman, ever.**

No matter what, you never hit a woman. There is no excuse. There is no possible argument to the contrary. There is no “what if?” and there is no qualifier. Gentlemen do not hit women, ever.

### **A gentleman shows initiative.**

If you’re asked which dress, which pair of jeans, or which pair of shoes looks better, have an actual opinion. “They both look the same” or “whatever you like” are not actual opinions. Likewise, if you’re asking someone on a date, have a destination in mind. Have a plan.

### **A gentleman pays attention to details.**

Take mental notes. Her likes. Her dislikes. Her shoe size. Her ring size (please note that nearly all jewelry stores display a default ring size of 6 for women). Her favorite color. This information will prove useful and when it does—when you show up with a bundle of lavender because you know it reminds her of her grandmother—it shows you care.

### **A gentleman asks for her family’s blessing before proposing.**

This modern departure from asking her father for permission acknowledges the importance of her whole family: mom, dad, brothers, sisters, grandparents. It shows respect for her family. You are, after all, asking to join them.

### **A gentleman is a jack of all trades.**

Science fiction author Robert A. Heinlein once wrote:

“A human being should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, conn a ship, design a building, write a sonnet, balance accounts, build a wall, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, cooperate, act alone, solve equations, analyze a new problem, pitch manure, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight efficiently, die gallantly.”

A gentleman knows how to do things. He’s the guy people look to in an emergency, whether it’s a natural disaster or a social one. A gentleman is prepared to answer questions and if he doesn’t know the answer, he knows where to find it. He is confident and socially adroit, able to handle any situation that life throws at him.

### **A gentleman goes out of his way to let her know he cares. Every. Single. Day.**

Flowers. Affectionate post-it notes. Spa days. Simple compliments. All of those things add up. So show your affection every day.