

6 Ways Husbands THINK They're Helping (But They're Making It Worse)



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You may think you're helping. We assure you: You are not.

Dear [Husband](#):

Here's the deal. I [married](#) you because of all the things you do right. The way you cup the back of my neck and whisper in my ear, "You're so beautiful." Or

the way you plan a dinner date and take care of all the details, including opening the doors for me and ordering the wine.

I fell in [love](#) with you because of how much fun we have together and how silly we can be while hiking sweaty in the mountains. I chose you because of the way you always think of me first, wanting to make me happy.

Remember that next time you think you're helping. It's OK to mean well and not actually get anywhere. You know I'll end up [forgiving](#) you eventually.

It's just, when you try to help, you're really doing the exact opposite.

A few examples:

1. They fall asleep so easily, and you lay there, ruminating over ... everything.

It happens most often late at night when I can't get to sleep because my mind is pinballing all over the worries, to-dos, and deadlines I have in the coming days. You, of course, are dead asleep minutes after I ask you to turn off the TV because I'd fallen asleep next to you while we watched *The Big Bang Theory*.

Off went the neon flash of the boob tube and you turned your back to me, and were instantly asleep when I was wide awake, despite having nodded off just a few minutes earlier.

And when we fight, it's even worse because you snore. Yes, you know you do. Hearing you snore doesn't reassure me in any way. Why are you sleeping when I can't? Why don't you realize that I'm up worrying about what our latest argument means and trying to figure out how to resolve it?

2. They *try* to listen and provide support.

But when I talk to you about these woes during waking hours, you really don't help by trying to fix things. There have been movies made about this pattern — the guy is the fixer, he wants to make everything better, he means well.

But, well, sometimes I don't want you to fix anything — I just want you to listen. And, I want you to know what type of response I want, without asking me, "Do you want me to suggest a solution or do you just want me to listen?"

3. They literally take weeks to finish tasks.

You offer to fix the drain that keeps plugging up, negotiate the contract for the caterer, and organize the hall closet, and it takes weeks for you to even start. You see, when I hear you say, "I'll fix that honey, no problem," I assume you're on it, like NOW, and I won't have to remind, nudge, badger, or yell at you to actually get it done.

4. They brush you off with reassurance.

It doesn't help when you tell me, "Don't worry, it will all work out in the end," that really doesn't help at all; I don't care what happens at some fictitious finish line. I want it done now so I can stop worrying late at night about it never getting done.

Help means taking some of the responsibility off my shoulders. So when you say you'll help me plan the meals and make a grocery list for the coming week so it doesn't all fall on my shoulders again, your silence isn't actual help. You looking to me and saying, "Hamburgers for Monday night?" with that lilt in your voice to make it a question is essentially asking me to plan the meals. No go.

I really do appreciate that you mow the lawn, pull the weeds and plunge the toilets. Really, I do.

5. They're passive-aggressive.

I know you don't see it that way, but when we have a weekend of unscheduled time to do something as a [family](#) and you say, "But I really want to mow the lawn so it's not annoying to you when I have to go out of town for work the next week," this is what I hear: "I have no interest in spending a quiet Saturday afternoon with you and the kids, so I will busy myself with the lawn even though you couldn't care less if it's a few inches taller while I'm gone."

6. They point out your craziness.

And when I'm being petty, b*tchy, snapping at you or otherwise irrational, I kind of already know it, so it doesn't help that you get equally bitchy back at me and point out how crazy I'm being.

Do you think that's the answer to getting me in a better mood? You know it's just turning this whole stupid thing into a big fight that never should've happened because we were both being stupid.