

# Maintenance Sex Might Sound Boring—but It Could Save Your Relationship

*Your calendar could be the key to spicing things up in the bedroom.*

By Hannah Harper

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Anyone who's been in a relationship knows that when life gets in the way, it's easy to feel too busy to get busy. While your love life is expected to simmer down after those initial hot and heavy months of a new relationship, sexual intimacy (or lack thereof) can play a large part in feeling connected to your significant other. If you or your partner feel unsatisfied in your sex life, you may want to consider maintenance sex.

So what is maintenance sex? Essentially, it's sex that you are consciously incorporating into your relationship to maintain a certain frequency of romps between the sheets. Depending on the couple, this could mean planning sex in advance or simply making the decision to have sex even when you're both tired and not super in the mood.

"Our sexual desire waxes and wanes throughout our lives, and sometimes we have to make a conscious effort to be physically intimate with our partner," explains Rachel Needle, PsyD, co-director of Modern Sex Therapy Institutes.

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Maintenance sex isn't necessarily the *only* sex you're having, but it serves as a good reminder to check in with your partner during those weeks (or months) that feel overwhelmingly busy. "There is a myth that sex should be spontaneous," Needle says. "Life can get busy and things can get in the way of being physically intimate with your partner. Planning ahead can build anticipation and excitement." She suggests saving the date (in pen!) in your planner or making a mental note to initiate sex at a specific time, like Saturday morning.

If you want to ease into it, try planning a date night with the idea that you'll have sex afterwards. Needle suggests building on the anticipation factor "by leaving them notes or sending sexy texts" leading up to the date. (She does recommend leaving your face out of any revealing photos you may send over text.)

If you really want to make it fun, write down new positions you want to try with your partner and fold them up in a jar. "Pull one out the morning of (or night before) your scheduled sex date and you can spend time preparing and building excitement," Needle says. Maintenance sex is all about choosing what is best for your relationship, so personalize your plan with your partner and see what works for you.

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However you choose to schedule it, designated time for sex can make both partners feel like their sex life is valued, and that satisfaction will contribute to the overall satisfaction of your relationship and quality of life, Needle says. "Couples often say that while they were not necessarily in the mood and might have been hesitant at first, that once they got started, they became aroused, had a positive experience, and were glad they did it."

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