

MALE / FEMALE DIFFERENCES The Way We're Wired

The information entitled "Male/Female Differences – The Way We're Wired," and the accompanying chart are from the following sources: Russ Crosson, *Money & Your Marriage*, 1989, pages 39-40, 43-49, and David McLaughlin, *The Role of the Man*.

The following information is included to help us better understand and appreciate the complementary nature of male-female roles.

Not only did God give us distinct roles, but he also wired us uniquely to be able to fulfill our roles. He made us with certain abilities and characteristics both physically and emotionally to equip us to do our jobs. He created us male and female - equal in value, but uniquely designed. If we better understand our uniqueness, it helps us to more realistically deal with the conflict in our marriages and be content in our God-given roles because we can see how these roles are complimentary and how these characteristics are necessary for a marriage to function well. Then we won't resent our role or try to be more like men or try to get our husband to be more like us. The world is trying to create a *unisex* society by telling us that men and women are not really that different and that these differences are cultural rather than innate. This is sad, because we are operating just the way God designed us, and yet we often don't understand each other or even like each other. Instead of a weaving, there is often a bashing.

In looking at the following chart "Male/Female Differences (The Way We're Wired)," it is important to note that these columns are generalities and we all have some of each of these characteristics, but as a male or female you will tend toward the characteristics listed as more unique to your sex. It may be that you have more or less of these characteristics as a result of your background or how society has influenced you, etc. You can add characteristics to each side; for example, a woman can be more logical and a man more sensitive.

Some women may feel like they want or need to become stronger and tougher, but be careful you don't become tough and hardened. If you are in the work force, you should bring the strengths that only your female qualities can bring.

Remember that all these characteristics in the following chart and articles are necessary for a marriage to function well. Also, we need to remember the great freedom we have within our role. Knowledge of the following information is also useful in application with our kids.

MALE / FEMALE DIFFERENCES (THE WAY WE'RE WIRED)

Man (Provider)

Identity Placement

Husband puts his identity in his job because of his provision drive.

Women (Helpmate)

Wife tends to put her identity in her husband. She derives status and worth from who her husband is and how he treats her.

The Way they Show Love

Men, for the most part, show love by what they do. As they work hard to provide, they feel they are showing love for their family. For a man, romantic experiences with his wife are warm and enjoyable - but not necessary.

Physically Stronger

To be provider, men need to dig, chop, carry. (described as Hunter-Gatherers)

Logical Verses Intuitive

Think differently. Men think logically, like facts. Analyzes everything step by step to come to conclusion.

Long-Term Versus Short-Term Thinking

Because of his Provider/Leadership responsibility, men tend to have a longer time horizon than women. They tend to see the big picture and look down the road.

Bottom Line Versus Detail Minded

Men tend to focus on the essence of the matter. They tend to get to the heart of a situation without showing a lot of concern over how they get there.
Tend to be objective, focus on what is.
Tend to be task-oriented.

Women, on the other hand, interpret love by affection. These romantic experiences are her life-blood. Her confidence, sexual response and zest for living are often deeply related to those tender moments when she feels deeply loved and appreciated by her man.

Weaker physically. Gentle, tender (Need this to be a nurturer).

Women think emotionally with heart. Have emotional insight (Need this to be good companion.) Wife often comes to conclusion without really knowing how she reached it. She seems to just "sense" the situation.

Women tend to focus on the here and now. This perspective is necessary because she has responsibility for nurturing. She has to deal with short-term needs for children and her husband. She is thinking groceries and shoes for kids.

Women on the other hand, tend to focus on details of the situation.

Tend to be subjective, focus on how people feel about what is.
Tend to be a relationship-oriented.

Note: This willingness to risk and gain more and the woman's concern to keep what one has are both valid impulses. No family or people will endure without these drives functioning in harmony.

Sensitivity Level

Male more insensitive. He needs this for role of provider and to be able to protect family. He is designed to absorb blows. It's his job. He can't be refined and overly sensitive. This also ties into his leadership role. "Give me the facts and I'll make the hard decisions." He may have to make decisions that hurt people, but that's what

More sensitive to the feelings of others. Needs this for nurturing others, knowing how kids are feeling, being a companion and creating.

leaders are supposed to do.

Male is more defensive, suspicious of new people, has a resistance to spending (provider instinct). (A good example of this difference is a salesman at the door. Who is he praying will open the door - the man or the woman?)

Tend to be more nature focused. Man was made from nature (dust of the ground) with a focus on nature. Was made from earth and brought to cultivate it.

Ego Needs

Since men have the responsibility to provide and must take risks to do so, they need to be encouraged. Their greatest ego need is to have a continued vote of confidence, to be esteemed, respected, and admired.

Women more trusting, believes in people (Need this for nurturing.) She sometimes trusts people she shouldn't and gets hurt. (You can't be trusting without sometimes being hurt.)

Tends to be people focused. .Woman is from a person and for people. Was made through a 2-step process - dirt made into human flesh, then human flesh made into a feminine body.

The woman needs to be supported and promoted in her role, to feel important and needed. She needs to know that her husband values her input. Her intuitive ability not only provides good counsel, but gives her a sense of importance when she is asked. Child-rearing is such a long-term job, she needs to be encouraged to hang in there.

Men and Women are Physically Different

From the article: "*Are Women Really Different?*" Dr. Paul Popenoe, Family Life, February 1971

Is There A Superior Sex?" Jo-Durden-Smith and Diane De Simone, Readers Digest November 1982

1. Men and women differ in every cell of their bodies. This difference in the chromosome combination is the basic cause of development into the maleness or femaleness as the case may be. (Men have XY chromosome and women XX.)
2. Women have greater constitutional vitality, perhaps because of this chromosome difference. Normally they outlive men by three or four years, in the U.S.
3. The sexes differ in their basal metabolism – that of a woman being normally lower than that of a man.
4. They differ in skeletal structure, women having a shorter head, broader face, chin less protruding, shorter legs, and longer trunk. The first finger of a

woman's hand is usually longer than the third; with men the reverse is true. Boys' teeth last longer than do those of girls.

5. A woman has a larger stomach, kidneys, liver, and appendix, and has smaller lungs.
6. In functions, woman have several very important ones totally lacking in men – menstruation, pregnancy, lactation. All of these influence behavior and feelings. They have more different hormones than do men. The same gland behaves differently in the two sexes – thus women's thyroid is larger and more active; it enlarges during pregnancy but also during menstruation; it makes her more prone to goiter, provides resistance to cold and is associated with a smooth skin, a relatively hairless body, and a thin layer of subcutaneous fat which are important elements in the concept of personal beauty. It also contributes to emotional instability – she laughs and cries more easily.
7. Women's blood contains more water (20% fewer red cells). Since these supply oxygen to the body cells, she tires more easily and is more prone to faint. Her constitutional viability is therefore strictly a long-range matter. When the working day in British factories, under wartime conditions, was increased from 10 to 12 hours, accidents of women increased 150%, of men not at all.
8. In brute strength, men are 50% above women.
9. A women's heart beats more rapidly (80, vs. 72 for men); blood pressure (10 points lower than man) varies from minute to minute; but she has much less tendency to high blood pressure – at least until after the menopause.
10. Her vital capacity or breathing power is lower in the 7:10 ratio.
11. She stands high temperature better than does man; metabolism slows down less. The woman's immunization system is more complex. She produces more immunoglobulin M. Her estrogen protects her from heart disease. Males have a greater infant mortality rate.
 - More males are spontaneously aborted and born dead
 - 30% more males die within the first month
 - 33% more males have birth defects
 - 5 times as many males have language disability and stutter
 - Females mature faster than males
 - Females are chemically and biologically adapted to child bearing and raising.
 - Males are more chemically and biologically adapted to hunting and providing

Men and Women are Different Mentally and Psychologically

Data gathered by Dr. Richard Restak, Neurologist at Georgetown University School of Medicine.

1. "Verbal and spatial abilities in boys tend to be 'packaged' into different hemispheres: the right hemisphere for non-verbal tasks, the left for verbal tasks. But in girls non-verbal and verbal skills are likely to be found on both sides of the brain." This affects their actions and reactions.
2. "...From shortly after birth, females are more sensitive to certain types of sounds, particularly to a mother's voice," but also to loud noises.
3. Girls have "...more skin sensitivity, particularly in the fingertips, and are more proficient at fine motor performance."
4. Girls are more attentive to social contexts - faces, speech patterns, and subtle vocal cues.
5. Girls speak sooner, have larger vocabularies, rarely demonstrate speech defects, exceed boys in language abilities, and learn foreign languages more easily.
6. Boys show early visual superiority.
7. Boys have better total body coordination but are poorer at detailed hand activity; e.g., stringing beads.
8. Boys have different "attentional mechanisms" and react as quickly to inanimate objects as to a person.
9. Boys are more curious about exploring their environment.
10. Boys are better at manipulating three-dimensional space. They can mentally rotate or fold an object better.
11. Of eleven subtests for psychological measurements in "...the most widely used general intelligence test, only two (digit span and picture arrangement) reveal similar mean scores for males and females. There are six differences so consistent that the standard battery of this intelligence test now contains masculinity-femininity index to offset sex-related proficiencies and deficiencies."

12. Girls who are “assertive and active” and can control events have greater intellectual development while these factors are not as significant in male intellectual development.
13. More boys are hyperactive (“...more than 90% of hyperactive are male.”)
14. Because the male brain is “primarily visual” and learns by manipulating its environment, listening instruction for boys in early elementary grades is more stressful for them. Girls therefore tend to exceed them.
15. Girls do less well on scholarship tests that are more geared for male performance at higher grades.

Other Mental and Psychological Differences

From the article: “Is there a superior Sex?” Jo Durden-Smith and Diane DeSimone, Readers Digest, November 1982.

In women the left hemisphere of the brain is better developed.
Therefore:

- She has better verbal and communication skills
- She is more sensitive and context-oriented
- She is two times more susceptible to phobias and is more prone to depression because she has less control from the right hemisphere of the brain.

In the man, the right hemisphere of the brain is better developed.
Therefore:

- He is better at visual, spatial, mathematics, and abstract manipulations
- He is a tinkerer and explorer
- He is more sex oriented and tends to establish “turf”
- He commits almost all violent crime and more men are sex deviants and psychopaths because they have less control from the left hemisphere of his brain

Women have greater individual mood fluctuation. One in four women are seriously affected in premenstruation. Also at this time, women are inclined toward more illness, more tension, and show more inclination to crime.

There are more males at both ends of the intellectual spectrum – more retardates as well as more geniuses.