

Treat them mean, keep them keen: Playing hard to get really is the secret for winning a partner, scientists say

By Daily Mail Reporter

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- Men and women play hard to get to test their loved one's commitment
- Report from researchers at the University of Western Sydney and Singapore Management University found 59 different ways both genders manipulate their partners
- Sarcasm, withholding sex and flirting with others among top tactics used



Treat 'em mean: Researchers say there are evolutionary reasons why we are standoffish to loved ones

For generations, suitors have suspected that playing hard to get is a feminine wile dreamt up solely to try their patience.

It seems, however, that there are sound evolutionary reasons why treating a man mean is the best way to keep him keen.

According to psychologists who examined a host of much-used strategies, women blow hot and cold with a possible partner to test his commitment and quality.

Researchers analysed 58 infuriating strategies used by women playing hard to get. They ranged from flirting with others and being 'snooty' to letting a suitor's call divert to voicemail.

The study, reported in the European Journal of Personality, asked more than 1,500 men and women which tactics worked best.

The most successful feminine wiles included appearing highly self-confident, talking to other people, withholding sex, sarcasm, sounding busy, teasing, flirting with others and turning down the first few dates.

Overall, women were more likely than men to play hard to get, the researchers from the University of Western Sydney and Singapore Management University discovered. The researchers suggested that was because women are trying to ensure a potential mate will stand by them once they have a child.

Phillip Hodson, a fellow of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and author of *Men, An Investigation into the Emotional Male*, told *The Independent*: 'This study blends traditional thinking with some modern.

'To get her man in the 1950s movie *The Pajama Game*, professional virgin Doris Day withholds sex until her underlying contractual demands are met.

'But psychologists and therapists would call this strategy outdated on the grounds that she'd most likely attract an incompatible mate who would tire of her once the challenge had vanished.'



Playing hard to get: Ignoring your loved one is just one of the power play tactics men and women use.