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Why women *test* men, and how to hold your frame

Your “frame” is how steady you stay when someone pushes. Here's how to build it for real.

Words are free. Every man says he's confident, loyal and laid-back. A woman can't verify that by listening, so she watches what happens under a little pressure: a tease, a late reply, a “not sure about you”. It isn't cruelty. Picking the wrong partner has historically cost women far more than men, so reactions matter more than claims. Your frame is what she's reading.

01 Defensive reaction

WHAT'S GOING ON You argue, explain, or get prickly. She learns your confidence breaks when it's questioned.

DO THIS Let small digs bounce. Humour and a shrug beat a justification.

02 Needy reaction

WHAT'S GOING ON You chase, over-text, or seek reassurance. She learns her approval controls your mood.

DO THIS Keep your routine. Your day doesn't stop because she's quiet.

03 Steady reaction

WHAT'S GOING ON You smile, stay warm and stay the same. She learns you'll be the same man when life gets hard.

DO THIS This is the target. Not cold, not tough. Just unbothered and kind.

04 How to build it

WHAT'S GOING ON A frame can't be faked for long; it comes from having a life you'd keep even if she left.

DO THIS Train, work on something you care about, keep friends, sleep. A full life is what makes you steady, not lines.

05 Boundaries are part of it

WHAT'S GOING ON Holding frame isn't tolerating anything. Steady men also leave when they're disrespected.

DO THIS Decide your dealbreakers in advance so you don't renegotiate them under pressure.

MISTAKES THAT COST YOU

- Faking indifference. Coldness reads as insecurity in a costume.
- Treating every bad mood as a test. Sometimes she's just having a bad day; be kind.
- Changing your opinions to match hers.
- Making her the centre of your whole week.

THE ONE RULE

She isn't dating your words, she's dating your reactions. Build a life that keeps you steady.

New guide with every reel on @marco.dates. These are common patterns, not mind-reading: every woman is different, the only way to know is to pay attention and ask, and a clear no is always a no.