

1. **Develop patience:** You don't always need sexual comfort. Try exercise, reading, watching a good movie, praying, etc. Don't insist on your desires being met all the time. Remember, when your wife sees your patience, she will know you are growing in Christ-likeness and maturity, not being so self-centered.
2. **Learn and pay attention to her energy level and her signals showing that she is interested in having sex.** Ask her less pressured questions about how she feels (Are you tired? How are you feeling?) as your first approach. Don't insist on asking for sex if you can see she is tired. If you feel you cannot wait patiently due to temptations to masturbation or inability to concentrate, then . . . #3
3. **Learn to gently or humorously ask for sex:** Some men assume their wives know what they are thinking, and get irritated when their wives do not notice or suggest having sex. Then the man withdraws until the wife notices that he is upset. This withdrawing grumpiness is manipulative (if you won't notice my needs, I'll make you suffer) and shows immaturity and poor communication skills.
4. **Don't interpret your wife's occasional lack of interest in sex as a personal offense** ("lack of interest" meaning that she is not interested every time you are). Sometimes your wife is just too tired at night. If she is not interested it doesn't mean that she doesn't like you. Suggest another time or agree on another potential time when she might be more energetic and responsive. 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 "*do not deprive each other*" has mutual responsibility to each other's needs, not just a man's desires for sex. Also defining *deprive* is not so simple: What is really a need and what is a lust/gluttony for sex? It is also important for the man to develop self-control and patience, even in the sexual relationship with his wife.
5. **Make your wife the only definition of physical beauty that attracts and excites you sexually.** (Prov 5:18-19) Regardless of how your wife's body changes with age, sickness, disease or injury, you must train your eyes and mind to sexually desire her body alone. Love is much more than physical attraction and sex is most wonderful with the wife you are committed to serving, feeding and caring for (Eph 5:29). Pornography and lust after other women in real life or movies will destroy the pleasure you have in her physical beauty and create an insatiable appetite for an imaginary physical sex object. Never criticize her appearance, but praise her for her body and physical appearance and tell her how appealing she is to you and really mean it. Don't use these compliments to try to manipulate her into having sex; be sincere in your spoken words of love (Rom 12:9).
6. **Do not move away from your wife for sexual satisfaction:** Masturbation is one step away from her into fantasy, and easily leads to sinful attempts to satisfy yourself (pornography, R or X rated movies, lustful looks at other women, pursuing adultery). Male masturbation in a marriage is the easy way out—you don't have to invest in your wife or pursue her relationally. The problem is that you do not use your natural motivation for sex to move you towards your wife relationally. Further, a man should not be away from his wife so long that he might be tempted to masturbate or pursue any other individual attempts to satisfy his sexual needs. Is it ever "ok" to masturbate as a married man? I would say it is possible to masturbate in a few limited situations where you must be apart from your wife or she is physically incapable of having sex with you or incapable of manually stimulating you for more than a month (but this cannot be done with lust toward any other women, [Matt 5:27-30], nor with lust toward your wife as a sex object). Some men get prostate infections easily if they haven't had sex within 6 or 7 days, so these situations might require masturbation to prevent infection if you must be away from your wife. However, for those who easily get addicted to masturbation or have had a teenage pattern of obsession with masturbation, I advise refraining from any masturbation.
7. **Persevere in pursuing your wife relationally, caring for her and encouraging her all day long (Eph 5:26-29)** Speak her love languages all day long without expecting immediate returns every night. If she enjoys talking and likes you to listen attentively, learn to enjoy talking & listening with her as your way to show love to her. Arrange for date nights with just the two of you to talk and be together. If she appreciates help with housework, help her without being asked. Find some household jobs you enjoy doing. Listen to sermon tapes or pray while you work. Your wife may not be interested in sex if you have not invested in her relationally, helped her or regularly showed concern for her needs.
8. **Maintain a healthy curiosity about your wife.** You do not know everything about her or about her reactions. You are not omniscient! Only God can search the heart and know it completely (Jer 17:10; Ps 139:1-7; 1 Cor 2:11). Every day is a new experience of life, with new opportunities for communication and romance that will be different from anything you have experienced before. Every day is a new opportunity to know your wife better and more intimately. Yes, there are familiar patterns, but the marriage experience is new every day. Boredom is really blindness to the multitude of life nuances that happen every day, choosing instead to focus on the familiar patterns rather than the changing nuances.
9. **Be thankful for your wife and pray for her with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel.** God will change your spouse into the image of Christ in his time. Your wife is his project. Pray for her, and assist her in this change process (Phil 1:3-6).
10. **Communicate love in your sexual relationship that your wife accepts and understands.** Be patient with her during sexual intercourse if she has trouble concentrating. Ask her what she prefers in sexual foreplay. Your goal in sexual intercourse is to give her pleasure. Your level of pleasure should be parallel with her level of pleasure. In other words, you are most excited when she is most excited. You try to ejaculate when she has

orgasm. This is the goal to patiently work towards, but do not be critical if you do not reach climax together every time. Show your concern by trying to make all aspects of sex as pleasurable as possible for your wife (including adequate privacy & locked doors, no interruptions from kids, relatives or phone calls, positions which please her and help her enjoy sex, showered and clean body, pleasant smelling body and breath, teeth brushed, hair clean, smooth hands, cut fingernails to avoid scratching her, pleasant room temperature, music, etc.)

11. **Guard your heart and eyes from sexual temptation** (Job 31:1; Matt 5:27-30): **a)** *see the lies of advertisements and sexually explicit movies . . . most women are not really like that! They are only doing it for the love of money or fame (but causing many men to stumble). The few women that are seductive in real life are revealing God's wrath (Rom 1:20-26). Do not allow your mind to fantasize about these lies of women as sex-slaves who entice you sexually, worship you and do whatever you ask. b)* *Use the Bible's metaphors to remind yourself of the evil and foolishness of sexual sin (adulterous women eats you like one loaf of bread Prov 6:26; ox to the slaughter, bird shot with arrow Prov 7:22ff; men and women are like grass Is 40:6-7. c)* *Hear the warnings of Scripture against fornication, adultery and impurity: "Those who live like this shall not inherit the kingdom of God," (1 Cor 6:9-10; Rev 21:8). For those in ministry, the cost will be very high if you do not guard your heart. You will not have peace in your conscience, joy in your Christian experience nor will you be able to preach or pray with integrity. If you are caught in some kind of sin, you may lose your entire ministry and dishonor Christ and his church. d)* *The things that people do in secret (as in pornography and sexually explicit movies) as shameful to mention in public or view in public for both adults and kids (Eph 5:8-12) e)* *Realize that sexual lusts of the eyes and heart for pornography, sexually explicit movies or real women other than your wife actually destroy your pleasure in the real sexual relationship you have with your wife. You will create insatiable desires for imaginary sex objects and unrealistic fantasies. Don't destroy your real pleasure for a paper fantasy!! f)* *Practice contentment in your sex life. Cultivate an attitude of being completely satisfied with your wife and all that she is for you. This will be a major factor in preventing sexual temptation. The satisfied man will not be easily tempted (though gluttonous desires for sex can always lead men astray!).*
12. **See the glory of God revealed through all women** (both his wrath on seductive women and his kindness through faithful women—Rom 1:18-26; 2:4). Use these women to praise, love and worship God for his greatness, sovereignty and power. Put them "on the mirror" and tip the angle of the mirror up towards God. Refuse to look straight at things on the mirror and assume that these things exist to give you pleasure apart from drawing you nearer to God (Rom 1:20-26). Things in the world only bring true joy and pleasure when seen as coming *from God*, existing *through God* and returning *to God* (Rom 11:36).
13. **Enjoy doxological sex with your wife**—*that is, the act of sexual intercourse should assist you in knowing, loving and delighting in God himself.* Put your sex life on the same mirror and praise God for revealing his covenant love and delight in you through your wife's sexual faithfulness to you and delight in you. Do this even during the act of sexual intercourse.
14. **Learn to repent of your self-focus on sexual pleasure and repent of lusting after your wife.** You lust after your wife when she becomes a sex object to please your every sexual desire. Your lust is evident when you complain about her not doing everything you wish she would do or when you try to force her to dress up like some prostitute in pornographic pictures in all types of seductive clothes. If you ask her to watch X-rated movies to try to get each other excited or learn some new sexual technique, this is turning your marriage bed into a bed of lust. When you cannot adjust to her needs, but force her to have sex, or "rape" your wife, or impatiently ejaculate without concern for her readiness for orgasm, you are lusting after her, not loving her. Whatever is not pleasurable to her and is not something she also desires, do not ask her to do it for you.
15. **Seek out a married male prayer partner to meet with you weekly (or talk on the phone) to confess any lust or sexual sins, share ideas on how to serve your spouse better and pray for each other** (Heb 3:12-14; 10:23-5). Exposing temptation or actual lust fantasies destroys much of the power of lust. Your heart is easily hardened by sin's deceit, so consider how to spur each other on to doing loving things for your wife.
16. **Do not live apart for more than two to three weeks unless God gives you special grace to control your sexual desires.** Normally, you should always go together and never plan for just one of you to go someplace for a long period of time (more than a month) for work or study. Especially do not separate even for these shorter periods without the full consent of both you and your wife (1 Cor 7:1-5). This would be '*depriving each other without consent.*'
17. **Appreciate a variety of pleasures together with your wife.** Cultivate your friendship through sharing mutual hobbies, interests, exercise, reading together, etc.
18. **Mostly initiate what your wife enjoys, not mostly what you enjoy.** Study her delights and pleasures and make them your delights and pleasures.
19. **Never threaten divorce as a way to try to resolve conflict.** This is emotional manipulation by threatening to move out if you don't get what you want. Divorce is not part of your vocabulary! Conflict is never resolved by threatening to end the relationship. This attitude destroys all motivation to try to solve the problem. The pattern easily leads to looking somewhere else for sexual pleasure because you see no hope continuing in the current marriage. Instead you need to communicate that the things your spouse did hurt deeply, but you are

committed to working things out and repenting or changing where you need to change and making the marriage even stronger and better.