

## A quick guide to understanding men

by MARK PAVILONS

First off, let me state, for the record, men are dumb. They're also the weaker sex.

Now that we have that out of the way, here's a simple (get it?) guide to understanding the males of our species.

Of course, mine is subjective, but it's one assembled from more than five decades of hands-on study and in-depth research.

Most women likely know a lot about their boyfriends or spouses, since we're a pretty easy read.

Ladies, this won't take long!

By nature, men like newfangledness, English poet Chaucer wrote. Even back in the 1300s, men loved their gizmos and gadgets.

Some of us love cars, smart devices, audio equipment and the like. But it has to be simple and respond accordingly. Throw a few monkey wrenches in our enjoyment and look out! After just a short time indulging in newfangled things, we become instant experts!

Part of this enjoyment comes from the fact we never grow up! We love our toys, they just get bigger and more expensive.

We all want a supercar, flamethrower, slingshot, lightsaber and phaser. We like to build and display models. If you hear weird airplane noises from time to time, it's your partner.

Every time my wife catches me in a childlike moment, this ditty runs through my brain: I don't wanna grow up, I'm a Toys R Us kid ...

If you ask me, the first 50 years of childhood are the hardest!

To expand on this, we also like to collect things, sometimes odd things. But they're valuable collectibles and will be worth something, some day. Really! And we got a great deal!

While I do have quite the collection of tiny models and such, my newest passion has been artifacts - centuries' old coins, pendants and small swords. But I'm on a budget, so I have to be quite savvy when it comes to internet shopping.

My wife can't believe that my Byzantine crosses or Roman coins have survived thousands of years. She's convinced these are modern replicas, made in Asia. I do my homework. They're real, baby.

Like your pet dog, a man loves sticks, any sticks really. Give him a stick, tree branch or bamboo pole and he's happy. He will swing it around wildly before using it for its intended purpose. He will also keep it and put it in the garage because it's cool and you never know when it will come in handy.

When not engaged in our favourite hobby, we prefer to do nothing. But to us, that's something. When our better half asks us what we've been up to, instead of telling her the truth, we make up stuff that sounds like something, when it's really nothing.

While doing nothing, we are easily amused. Slapstick, bawdy humour, farts and burps make us laugh. The wiser women in our midst merely shake their heads in disbelief. I can never reach the pitch or length of my son's prize-winning belches, but they are impressive, almost worthy of the history books! Again, the smarter of the sexes don't get it.

When our partner is not around to advise us, left alone we will do stupid things. Trust me on this one.

We often have good intentions on fixing things or doing stuff when our spouse is out of the house, but when they go terribly wrong, we bury the evidence. But more often than not, she will find out!

?Why would you do that???is one of the most often heard phrases from our females.

We seldom have an acceptable answer.

Some men also like to take shortcuts, even though we know we shouldn't. We're told, time and again, ?the right tool for the right job? and ?something worth doing is worth doing right.?Ya, but why use a complicated tool set when a fork will do? If I wrap something in enough electrical tape, it has to work. Just hide it behind the bush, no one will notice!

While our partners may be better cooks, men want to be grillmasters. We love our BBQs. I?think it goes back to our ancestors who were obsessed with fire. It has taken me many years to learn the proper way to grill a steak or burger. Chicken requires finesse, and I?have yet to figure out how to grill the perfect pork chop. Again, cover it in sauce and onions, and no one will notice!

When confronted, we blame it on the grill!

When we're not the ones doing the actual grilling, we still like to hover around it with our buddies, beverage in hand.

Aside from these funny examples, there are some rather bleak, sad ones, too.

As men get older it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain friendships with other men. None of my friends are nearby, so we converse via the internet and Facebook. We're all busy with families and kids and stuff, so it's hard to get together.

Many men seek approval, perhaps they never got much from their parents.

My dad was a man of few words. He worked hard and expected help. He didn't think he'd have to ask.

In some cases, men do things to get their woman's approval and nothing he does is for his own happiness.

We don't talk as much as our partners and we often don't talk about our issues. We just don't.

Men are fixers and doers. We don't like talking about problems and would rather look for solutions.

This sometimes spills over in our communication skills with our partner. My wife thinks I?have ADD and I?have to put in the effort to look at her and give her my full attention when we talk. I?have no idea why it's difficult.

Fortunately for us men, we have the women in our lives to help us out.

They prevent us from doing dangerous, reckless things on a daily basis. You are the conscience, the ?sober second thought.?

That doesn't mean they stop us, though. My wife got quite the chuckle one winter, watching me helplessly slide down a hill on the ice, ending up face first in the cedar hedge!

Despite our drawbacks, men are simple, but can be brave, fearless, strong, generous, and even romantic. And we sure can be entertaining!

End of lesson. There won't be a test, because we're too lazy to hand one out!