



## Signs & Red Flags for Domestic Violence

### What are the signs of domestic violence?

**Destructive criticism and verbal abuse**: shouting/mocking/accusing/name calling/verbally threatening

Pressure tactics: sulking, threatening to withhold money, disconnect the telephone, take the car away, commit suicide, take the children away, report you to welfare agencies unless you comply with his demands regarding bringing up the children, lying to your friends and family about you, telling you that you have no choice in any decisions.

**Disrespect**: persistently putting you down in front of other people, not listening or responding when you talk, interrupting your telephone calls, taking money from your purse without asking, refusing to help with childcare or housework.

**Breaking trust**: lying to you, withholding information from you, being jealous, having other relationships, breaking promises and shared agreements.

**Isolation**: monitoring or blocking your telephone calls, telling you where you can and cannot go, preventing you from seeing friends and relatives.

**Harassment**: following you, checking up on you, opening your mail, repeatedly checking to see who has telephoned you, embarrassing you in

**Threats**: making angry gestures, using physical size to intimidate, shouting you down, destroying your possessions, breaking things, punching walls, wielding a knife or a gun, threatening to kill or harm you and the children.

**Sexual violence**: using force, threats or intimidation to make you perform sexual acts, having sex with you when you don't want to have sex, any degrading treatment based on your sexual orientation.

**Physical violence**: punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, strangling.

**Denial**: saying the abuse doesn't happen, saying you caused the abusive behaviour, being publicly gentle and patient, crying and begging for forgiveness, saying it will never happen again.

**\*This information is taken from the Women's Aid (England/ Wales) website.**

They have a [comprehensive resource section](#).

### Red Flags for Domestic Abuse



The list below was adapted from lists written by several different organisations as well as submissions to our website:

[Caring Unlimited](#)

[New Choices Inc.](#)

[The Red Flag Campaign](#)

[Lundy Bancroft](#)

Red flags to consider when beginning a new relationship or questioning one you are currently in.

### **Quick Involvement**

- 6 months or less before living together/engaged
- Claims of love at first sight
- Says you are the only one who can make him/her feel this way
- Pressures you for commitment

### **Unrealistic Expectations**

- Compliments you in a way that makes you seem superhuman
- Very dependent on you for all needs
- Expects you to be perfect
- Says things like, I am all you need. You are all I need

### **Controlling Behavior**

- Pretends to be concerned for your safety or your productive use of time
- Acts like you do not have the ability to make good decisions
- Becomes extremely worried or angry when you are late
- Constantly questions who you spend your time with, what you did/wore/said & where you went
- Insists that you check in constantly
- Monitors your phone/email
- Makes you ask permission to do certain things
- Keeps you from seeing your friends and family
- Ignores you
- Threatens to kill themselves

### **Controls your appearance:**

- Advises you how to dress without your asking for advice
- Insults your hair or make-up
- Insinuates or calls you fat



- Forces you to change your clothes before going out
- Buys you clothes which are too small because “you need to lose weight”

### **Financial Flags:**

- Controls your money
- Keeps you in debt
- Takes possession of your debit/ credit cards
- Ensures all the benefit money is in his name
- Hides money from you
- Prevents you from getting a job or makes you quit

### **Jealousy**

- Wants to be with you constantly
- Accuses you of cheating all the time
- Follows you around or frequently calls during the day
- Odd behaviors like checking your car mileage or asking friends to check in on you

### **Isolation**

- Tries to cut off all your resources
- Puts down everyone you know: says friends are stupid, promiscuous, or accuses you of cheating with them; says family is too controlling, they don't really love you, or you are too dependent on them
- Refuses to let you use car or talk on the phone
- Makes it difficult for you to go to school or work

### **Blames Others for Problems**

- If there are problems at school or work, it is always someone else's fault
- You're at fault for everything that goes wrong in the relationship

### **Blames Others for Feelings**

- Makes you responsible for how they feel:
- You made me mad.
- You're hurting me by not doing what I ask.
- I can't help being angry.
- You make me happy.
- You control how I feel.

### **Hypersensitivity**

- Easily insulted
- Sees everything as a personal attack



- Has a tantrum about the injustice of things that happen to him
- Totally goes off about small irritations
- Looks for fights
- Blows things out of proportion

### **Disrespectful or Cruel to Others**

- Punishes animals/children cruelly
- Insensitive to pain and suffering
- High expectations of children beyond their abilities
- Teases children or younger sibling(s) until they cry
- Doesn't treat other people with respect

### **Expects Control During Sex**

- Little concern over whether you want sex or not
- Uses sulking or anger to manipulate you into compliance
- Makes sexual or degrading jokes about you
- Forces you into doing things sexually that makes you uncomfortable
- Rapes or sexually assaults you

### **Rigid Sex Roles**

- Believes women are inferior to men
- Unable to be a whole person without a relationship
- Uses words like “fag” or “sissy”
- Insists boys don't cry
- Believes women should do all the childcare and wifework

### **Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde**

- Sudden mood changes--like the person has two different personalities
- One minute nice/next minute exploding
- One minute happy/next minute sad
- Behaves differently in public than he does in private
- Cancels plans at the last minute

### **Past Abuse**

- You may hear the person was abusive to someone else they were in a relationship with, they may deny it saying it is a lie or their ex is crazy/it wasn't that bad
- Criminal record, particularly for violence

### **Breaking or Striking Objects**

- Used as punishment



## **Everyday Victim Blaming**

challenging institutional disbelief around domestic & sexual violence and abuse  
<http://everydayvictimblaming.com>

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- Breaks cherished possessions
- May beat on tables with fist
- Throws objects at/around/or near you

### **Any Force during an Argument**

- Physically restrains you from leaving the room
- Pushes or shoves you
- Hits, punches, bites, kicks
- Threatens to kill you, your friends, your family or your children