



Men's Rape Prevention: What Can Men Do To Make Women Feel Safer?

Most people think “rape prevention” is just a women’s thing. Locking doors, being careful at night, not getting too drunk.

Uh uh. Rape prevention is a men’s thing, because men can make rape stop.

Immediately. Right now. Rape will stop when men who rape stop raping.

In the meantime, women unfortunately have to live with the reality that sexual assault does happen, and nearly always happens only to women...by men. This means that sometimes women are fearful. Anxious about getting home safely. Worried about opening the front door. A little tense on that first date.

(Sexual assault can happen to anyone—men or women, boys and girls—and we don’t mean to overlook problems like child molesting, incest or male rape. Here, we’re focusing on adult sexual assault of adult women because statistically, this is what occurs most frequently.)

One in three women are sexually assaulted in their lifetimes, and they are not being paranoid when they get a little nervous about sexual overtones from someone they hardly know. Women want to be with men who they know are allies in the struggle against sexism and ending rape. Certain attitudes and many behaviors lend themselves to rape. This list begins to target some of them so that the women of UCSB can walk around feeling just a little—or alot—safer.

**Be a leader. Make a difference for all the women you know.
And for the men, too. Take time to answer and think about these questions:**

☞ When you are talking with a woman do you look her in the eyes or do you look at her chest?

☞ When you’re walking behind a woman at night who is alone, do you follow too closely or do you make an effort to cross to the other side of the street?

☞ In elevators, do you do any thing to help a woman feel more at ease and safe?

☞ When you are introduced to a woman do you shake hands without any sexual overtones?

☞ Do you touch women you don’t know without their invitation to do so?

☞ Have you thought about the impact of posters that use women to sell beer, surfboards, music or sports? Would you remove them if asked? Have you discussed this with women who are your friends?

☞ Do you try to keep an open mind when a woman tells you something feels sexist, insensitive, or demeaning? Do you take her as seriously as you would want to be taken?

☞ Do you compliment women on more than their looks? For instance, their ideas, imagination, cleverness, humor?

*Do you or your friends ever follow or stare at women you see in cars or make noises at them?

☞ Are you aware if you interrupt women while they are talking?

☞ Have you thought about the impact of jokes that make fun of women’s size, looks, brains, fears, anger, ideas or opinions?

☞ Do you know anyone who describes having sex harshly or violently, as in nailing her, doing it to her, banging, dogging?

☞ Have you considered enrolling in a women’s or ethnic studies class to gain a better understanding of power issues?

☞ When you see other men engaging in negative behaviors, do you speak up and explain you reasons to them?

☞ Do you stick to your beliefs in front of other men? Are you a leader, or a follower?

☞ Do you accept a “No” from a woman the first time she says it?

☞ Are you aware that having sex with someone who says “no” or who is too drunk to give complete consent is rape?

If you are interested in learning more about some of these issues, enroll in a women’s studies course, visit the Women’s Center library, meet the men in the Rape Prevention Education Program, schedule a workshop for your res hall, fraternity club or group, or talk about some of the questions with friends.