

Standard Relationship Framework

Classifying The Relationship:

Current Relationship Status:

What is your current relationship status?

- **Friends**
 - You have no affiliation with each other beyond shared interests.
 - No flirting.
- **Talking Phase**
 - You've transitioned past just being friends but are still not an item.
 - Flirting.
- **Friends with Benefits**
 - You're now physically involved with each other but still not an item.
 - Flirting, sexting, making out, sex, etc., with no strings attached.
- **Situationship**
 - You're physically involved and one of you wants to transition the relationship into something with a higher degree of commitment.
- **Dating**
 - You've transitioned into the lowest level of commitment.
 - May or may not be physically intimate.
 - Can come after a talking phase or a situationship.
- **Private Relationship**
 - You're dating but you haven't told people about it.
 - May or may not be physically intimate.
 - Follows dating because you're not sure if it will work out so you don't tell a bunch of people about it, so you don't have to walk it back later.
- **Public Relationship**
 - You're dating and you've told people about it either in person or on social media.
 - May or may not be intimate.
 - Usually follows a private relationship.

Future Intentions:

What are your future intentions for the relationship?

- Move to the next phase?
- Stay in the current phase?
- Go back a phase?

What are your goals for the relationship?

- Have a partner?
- Not be alone?
- Get married?
- Reproduce?
- Have fun?

Timeline:

What is your timeframe for relationship progress?

- Is the relationship supposed to be short term?
 - A wedding date.
 - A summer travel companion.
 - Etc.
- Is the relationship supposed to be long term?
 - Long term partner.
 - Future spouse.
- How soon do you want to enter the next phase?
 - One month?
 - Six months?
 - A year?
 - Two years?
 - Five years?

Weekly Time Commitment:

How much time do you want to spend on your relationship on a weekly basis?

- Only on weekends?
- A few times per week?
- A few hours every day?
- As much is humanly possible?

Does this time have to be spent in a specific way?

- Doing dedicated activities?
 - Eating together.
 - Talking.
 - Walking.
 - Playing games.
- Doing passive activities? (Just hanging out.)
 - Silent walking.
 - Watching TV.
 - Reading.
- Shared presence?
 - Being in the same room but each doing their own thing.

General Expectations for The Relationship:

Resources:

Who's paying for stuff?

- All bills incurred are paid by one party.
 - Traditional approach where one person just pays.
- All bills incurred are split evenly.
 - Everything is split by dollar amount.
- All bills are split in accordance with income levels.
 - Most fair if dating across socioeconomic status but more complicated from a math standpoint.
- Whoever initiated the bill pays for it.
 - The one who wanted it gets to pay for it.
- Note: As a general rule, it's best for one party to take the lead here and just cover the cost initially to put a good face on for the public. It's awkward for everyone involved to figure out how to split a check at a table in a restaurant. It's better to just pay initially and then squabble after the fact to split it up.

What will the gift situation be for special events?

- No gifts at all.
- Gifts for special occasions to one party.
- Gifts between both parties for special occasions.
- Frequent gifts for no reason.

If there are gifts, what's the price range?

- Homemade
- Cheap.
- Medium Tier.
- Expensive.

Family Involvement:

What degree of involvement will you have with your families?

- No family involvement.
 - Your families don't even know you're in a relationship.
- Some family involvement.
 - Your families know but there is no expectation of participating in family events.
- Excessive family involvement.
 - Your families know and you're expected to attend Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc.

Exclusivity Terms:

What is the exclusivity of your relationship?

- **Open**
 - No expectation of exclusivity.
 - Both parties can do whatever or whoever they want whenever they want.
- **Casual**
 - Can talk with and hang out with other people and plan events with no concern of your partner.
 - Some consideration for your partner.
- **Guarded**
 - Expectation of having first dibs on activities.
 - Partner events trump other events all things being equal.
- **Exclusive**
 - Expectation of no fraternization with other parties.
 - Full commitment to partner.

Intimacy:

What level of intimacy do you have in your relationship?

- **No intimacy.**
 - No physical contact between parties.
- **Casual intimacy.**
 - Hugs and handholding.
- **Cuddling**
 - Usual transition between casual intimacy and first base.
- **First Base.**
 - Kissing along with touching taking place above the belt.
- **Second Base.**
 - Touching taking place below the belt.
- **Third Base.**
 - Mouths being used below the belt.
- **Home Runs.**
 - Intercourse.

Will the level of intimacy remain the same or increase?

- **Intimacy will remain constant.**
 - No plans of escalating further up the intimacy ladder.
- **Intimacy will increase.**
 - Plans of escalating further up the intimacy ladder.
- **Note:** Very rarely does intimacy decrease unless the relationship ends. It can happen through, but it usually signals a death spiral for the relationship.

What are the requirements for increasing the level of intimacy?

- **Increased level of comfort.**
 - Greater comfort being needed to increase the level of intimacy.
 - Additional time in relationship to build familiarity.
- **Appropriate timing.**
 - One party is too young.
 - One party is in a different state of life.
 - High school.

- College.
- Work force.
- Unemployed.
- **Increased commitment.**
 - Official committed relationship.
 - Marriage.

Interactions With Members of The Opposite Sex:

How should you and your partner act around the opposite sex?

- **No prohibitions.**
 - Anything goes.
 - Typical case for open relationships.
- **Friendly.**
 - Casual and normal interactions.
 - Light flirting.
- **Guarded.**
 - Casual and normal interactions.
 - No flirting.
 - No one-on-one time with friends of the opposite sex.
- **Minimal reasonable interaction.**
 - Be polite but generally avoid members of the opposite sex.
- **No interaction with members of the opposite sex.**
 - No communication or interaction with members of the opposite sex.

How should you and your partner handle preexisting friends of the opposite sex?

- **End friendships.**
 - All friends of the opposite sex are politely ignored going forward.
 - “Hey, I’m in a relationship and don’t have time to talk” etc.
- **Limit friendships.**
 - All friends are limited to minimum possible interactions.
 - Talking is okay provided you’re completely transparent with your partner.
- **Continue building friendship.**
 - Interactions proceed as normal from before the start of the relationship.

Social Media:

Will you post about your relationship on social media?

- **No.**
 - No social media posts about the relationship and no status update admitting the relationship exists.
- **Initial status update announcing it.**
 - No posts about the relationship but making a status update to announce it.
- **Occasional pictures.**
 - Occasional posts about the relationship.
- **Frequent pictures.**
 - Frequently posting about the relationship.

Will you continue posting about yourself on social media?

- **No.**

- You'll stop posting about yourself or delete your social media.
- **Posts will be toned back.**
 - You'll continue posting about yourself, but you'll stop posts that were designed to get attention.
- **Posts will be at the previous level.**
 - Your social media usage will remain unchanged.

Conflict Resolution:

How will you resolve conflict in your relationship?

- **Address it directly.**
 - When conflict occurs, talk about it directly.
- **Avoid it.**
 - Avoid conflict.
- **Discuss and defer.**
 - Discuss the issue and then one party makes the decision.

Relationship Termination:

What will you do if your relationship ends?

- **Excommunication**
 - Cease all communication and interaction and never speak to each other again.
- **Just be friends.**
 - Stay on friendly terms but set boundaries.