

## Teased for being taller than boyfriend <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

I have a boyfriend that I love so much but everyone teases me about him because he is three inches shorter than me. I know I shouldn't be worried about this, but it just bothers me to think people can't accept the fact that I am going out with someone shorter. Even some of his friends say, "Aren't you taller than him?" and I will say, "Yeah, just a little," and they will be like, "Isn't the guy supposed to be taller than the girl?" They won't say it in that form, but you know how people say one thing that really means the opposite? That is what they do. I am not thinking about dumping him because he is shorter or anything, but why do people say this, and does it matter that he is shorter?

Thanks,  
Taller than B/F

### Answer

Dear Taller than B/F,

Many, many couples are out there where the female partner is taller than the male — especially when you factor in high heels! Maybe your friends are giving you a hard time because:

- They have insecurities about their own height
- They are jealous of your relationship
- They have narrow-minded views about how men and women are supposed to look and behave
- They are intimidated by you because you are tall and elegant
- They hold notions that height = power. With your head above your boyfriend's, they may think of you as challenging the idea that women are not as physically strong, smart, or opinionated as men
- They are curious about how you and your boyfriend kiss, hug, and are intimate

It's also possible that your peers are teasing you because this is their way of making conversation. Sometimes when people feel awkward, or are having trouble finding things to say, they'll resort to mocking and joking — shifting the focus from them to you. If their underhanded

remarks are really bothering you, it's totally okay to say something about it. Some ideas to try include:

- The straightforward approach: "Why do our heights matter to you? We'd appreciate it if you stopped with the jokes."
- The jokey approach: "Well, you know what they say about short men and tall women..."
- The "get lost" approach: "I really don't appreciate those comments. [Your boyfriend's name here] and I are really happy. Can you give it a rest?"

You can also talk with your boyfriend about how their remarks make you feel. They probably bother him, too! Together you can make the point that your relationship is great, and that you don't need or want your friends to give you two a hard time about your difference in size. If your friends don't get the idea that their comments are upsetting to you, and stop, then it may be time to re-consider whether hanging out with them is really worth it.

Alice!

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