

Men, living with your parents isn't such a turn-off - but don't delay cutting the cord

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MORE men in their 20s and 30s are living with their parents but the stigma of staying at hotel mum and dad appears to have worn off in the dating world.

Although much of society still takes a dim view of men who have not made the full transition to adulthood, Gen Y is more understanding of the pressures they face - up to a point.

Relationship experts told news.com.au that for most women in their 20s and early 30s, finding out that a man still lived with his parents wasn't a

deal-breaker when dating. The idea of it being a warning sign to future troubles no longer applied.

However, psychologists warn that the longer a man delays leaving the parental nest - where there is a real temptation to rely on mum and dad to do the cooking and pay the household bills - could harm their chances of forging healthy relationships.

The biggest reason men give for living at home is the surge in the cost of living, with most men in their 20s staying with their parents out of necessity, not by choice. Many fear they won't be able to get a foothold on the property ladder if they rent.



Women give men some leeway on when it's time to grow up - but there is a limit / Picture: Thinkstock
Source: news.com.au

Dating Workshops for Men

Alexander Marks, [from the dating site The Modern Man](http://www.themodernman.com.au/) (<http://www.themodernman.com.au/>), puts the rise in male clients who stay with their parents down to Australia's expensive housing market. "It's a bit of a tragedy," he said.

His dating advice for those men was: be honest and don't worry. "Don't make a big deal of it. If a woman sees it's not a big deal for you, then maybe it won't be a big deal for her."

However, he said men still needed to appear independent. There was the risk that a man whose parents did his cooking and cleaning would take that mentality into their relationships - even once they had flown the nest.

Pam Lewis, NSW director of clinical services at [Relationship Australia](http://www.relationships.org.au/) (<http://www.relationships.org.au/>), said putting off leaving home could have a damaging effect if a man had little autonomy. "It works when young men have good relationships with their family and have clear goals, whether saving for a deposit or study," she said.

"Where it can be harmful is when the man doesn't have clear goals, is out of work and is not expected to help out in the home. The relationships those men strike up are likely to be less rewarding, for all concerned."

Lose all respect

[Relationship counsellor Tobey Green](http://www.tobygreen.com/) (<http://www.tobygreen.com/>) agreed. "If he's never left home, if he's still bounded by the decisions of his parents and hasn't cut the umbilical cord, there could be a problem."

She said there was more of stigma attached to men living with their parents than for women. "I don't think a guy would perceive a woman still living at home as weak. It wouldn't be a problem for them."

"But the reverse would be a problem for many women, especially if the man had never left home and didn't show independence. I don't think women would have any respect for a man like that."

Kate de Brito, who writes the [agony column Ask Bossy](http://blogs.news.com.au/bossy/) (<http://blogs.news.com.au/bossy/>), said women were "generally pretty tolerant". But there is a limit.

"Women don't want a mummy's boy. If you're 30 and still haven't paid an electric or gas bill and you're handing over board money to your folks rather than paying your own rent or mortgage, it's probably time to take a leap."

Robert Holtom, 26, a web developer, who lives with his dad, told news.com.au that for his generation living with your parents isn't a big thing.

"I originally moved out of my parents' home when I was 18. A couple years ago I lost my job because of the GFC and the only option was to move back."

He said that when his parents separated he stayed with his dad to help him cover the rent. "It doesn't affect my social life."

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