

Home Environment: A Soft Place To Land

April 25, 2016 | 25 upvotes | by [eliza_schuyler](#)

In my previous [post](#) I outlined **four** aspects of a home environment that contribute to it being a “soft place to land” for your SO. These were:

1. Clean
2. Comfortable
3. Organized
4. Undemanding

In this post I'd like to compile a list of tips and tricks that I, and other women I know, use to help them provide this environment amidst the hustle of work/study/childcare/external commitments. These aren't specific to any particular type of relationship/living arrangement. They are aimed at women who, for whatever reason, don't have a lot of free time, but *wish to provide these elements of home-making to their SO*. This isn't a commentary on how couples *should* necessarily divide chores and duties, but simply a list of suggestions on how to make your home environment enjoyable for your husband.

Clean

- You are a busy woman, so pick 5 things that most quickly make your house look more tidy. In my house my top 5 priorities are:
 1. Laundry (Washed, folded and put away)
 2. Dishes (Washed up and left to dry)
 3. General tidy of surfaces (Put any clothes and books etc. lying around away)
 4. Make the bed
 5. Wipe down the kitchen counters and inside the kitchen and bathroom sinks

I have these five items down to a fine art. Other than putting the laundry on and hanging it out, I can get these jobs done in around half an hour. Make a list of your top 5 housework jobs and see how much time they take up each day. Plan it in.

- Be efficient. Use a weekly planner if you have some time each day to clean. If you work full time and can only do significant housework on the weekends, keep a running list of the jobs to do. When it gets around to the weekend, prioritise, prioritise, prioritise. If there's any type of mess that particularly irks your SO, make that the first thing you get to. Because, why not?
- If you have kids, a messy SO or a bunch of meals to cook, you probably need to accept that your house isn't going to be clean and tidy 24/7. Choose the time of day when your SO most needs a tidy house, and aim for the house to be its cleanest then. If you work, and your SO stays at home, try to clean before work, so that you are leaving a tidy house for him to begin his day in. If he works, and you stay at home, try to make sure he is getting home each evening to a tidy house. If you both work, aim to clean in the morning, so that you both get home to a tidy house.

Comfortable

- This is probably the easiest item on the list. Be chill.
- If your man walks through the kitchen with muddy boot prints after you've just mopped the floor, take a deep breath. Did he purposefully undo your hard work? Does it matter in the grand scheme

of your life together? If the answer to both of these is no, suck it up and ask him if he would mind taking his boots off. Nicely.

- No matter how much work you put into keeping a lovely home, he should feel welcome in it. Treat him the way you would treat a guest.
- This extends to all aspects of the home- food in the fridge, toilet seat position...etc!

Organized

To be personally organised:

- Think about creating a household [binder](#).
- Have a cleaning schedule of some sort.
- Use a daily, weekly or monthly planner.
- Choose one cupboard a week to sort through, declutter and tidy.
- Make the bed every morning when you get out of it! It should only take a few minutes.

To help your household be organised:

- Think about creating a [household binder](#)!
- Have a system in place for receiving, storing and paying bills, car registration etc.
- Try sharing a calendar (virtual or on paper) with your SO, so that you are aware of each other's commitments and free time.
- Schedule in free time together!
- Depending on who does the shopping/cooking, talk to your SO about meals, write shopping lists and plan your week's food in advance in order to *minimise going to the grocery store*!
- Think about what routines your household has. Are there any routines that might be useful to add? Think meals, cleaning, how you spend free time...

Undemanding

- If you have children, remind them (regularly!) that their father has spent the day working hard. He is not their entertainment committee, and both the children and yourself should be aware of this. Of course, your SO will want to spend time with his kids! But he should not feel obliged to entertain, "babysit," or "take them off your hands," the second he gets home from work, or the children get home from school.
- As I mentioned in an earlier post, jobs that are his responsibility should be put aside. He will get to them in his own time. /u/VintageVee suggests that you can wait for him to ask what jobs need doing around the house, rather than asking/nagging. In our house, we have a large whiteboard where jobs are written after we have discussed them, and crossed off once they are complete. Whatever you decide works for your family, getting into a routine where you *do* discuss work that needs doing around the house is essential.
- Listen carefully to what aspects of home life your SO feels are making demands on his time, and minimise them. Perhaps it's masses of dirty dishes on the sink (stack them neatly) or paperwork that needs doing (sort bills neatly into paid and unpaid trays).
- Again, remember- you don't have to do everything that needs doing around the home. You just

need to remove the pressure from him to do work immediately, and change your own mindset to accept his timeframe. If it's not life or death, it's probably not worth the relationship cost involved in nagging him into your timeframe.

A Note On Making Time

So you're busy. Maybe you have a few children, maybe you work full time. Maybe your husband works from home, maybe he's a SAHD, maybe he also works fulltime. If you can get up half an hour earlier, go to bed half an hour later, or spend half an hour less on the internet each day, you will have time to make the bed, do a load of washing, and smash out the previous night's dishes. The little things count. Also, remember that not everything requires a time commitment; making your SO feel comfortable in the home is more of an attitude/mindset change than anything else.

Please add your own tips and tricks in the comments. I'm looking forward to hearing what you ladies do to make a welcoming home environment for your SO.

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Comments

stevierose345 • 11 points • 26 April, 2016 01:59 AM [recovered]

This is absolutely awesome advice, and I wish I had managed to accomplish half of those things in my marriage and I am sure my husband would second the motion. For those of you who are C students in household management like I am and find this unattainable, I am going to give you the cliff notes.

If it impossible to have all the laundry done, concentrate on making sure the essentials are clean: underwear, towels, his work clothes, the kid's school clothes. Sometimes the laundry will pile up, it just will. If you can't have the whole house clean and picked up when he gets home, you can at least ensure that he has a space of his own that is off limits to the rest of the family where he will find everything where he left it. It can be a desk in the corner of a room away from the noise, or a heated area in the garage, but it is his sanctuary. I have found that when the choice is coming home to a hot home cooked meal on the table or a clean house, it was always the hot meal that won out. If you work full time or home school and have kids in activities it is sometimes necessary to prioritize. If you try to do it all you end up being exhausted and a bitch. There will be times you have to ask him to do something right away, like snake out the drain that backed up again so the kids can take baths that night, but you can make things as easy as possible for him to accomplish the task and reward him generously later when the kids are in bed. If your yard is the neighborhood play ground, you can make sure that the skateboard ramps are out of the driveway when he comes home. You can also make sure that all the kids greet him respectfully. You can make sure you have cold beer, lunchmeat and cheese in the refrigerator at all times. You can make sure the mail and newspaper are on his desk where he can find it every day. And most important in my book, you can give him something he will look forward to each day by instilling some type of ritual whether it is a family dinner hour or a bed time routine where he can catch up with his children and share in their day. A five year old who proudly presents his/her dad with a gold star student of the month certificate makes all his troubles melt away. Many of you encouraged me to share my perspective. I hope my comment is positive and in no way detracted from Eliza's post. I greatly admire her abilities and her advice.

eliza_schuyler4 points 26 April, 2016 02:07 AM [recovered]

This is an awesome comment!

I have found that when the choice is coming home to a hot home cooked meal on the table or a clean house, it was always the hot meal that won out.

I totally agree with this. Food>everything else!

And most important in my book, you can give him something he will look forward to each day by instilling some type of ritual whether it is a family dinner hour or a bed time routine where he can catch up with his children and share in their day.

Not having children, this is the sort of thing I struggle to contribute. Great point- I think the routine is key in ensuring that this doesn't get forgotten in the business of daily life.

I'm very fortunate at the moment in being able to study from home and do housework in my breaks. When I am working full time or raising children I can see these cliff notes being invaluable. Thanks so much /u/stevierose345!

stevierose3457 points 26 April, 2016 02:25 AM [recovered]

Not having children, this is the sort of thing I struggle to contribute<

What a great opportunity to establish a ritual between the two of you where you share your day. You will have no problem in adapting it to accommodate a family later on.

[deleted] • 6 points • 26 April, 2016 01:29 AM

Excellent advice!

If you have kids, a messy SO or a bunch of meals to cook, you probably need to accept that your house isn't going to be clean and tidy 24/7

This is so on point. I used to get frustrated with my husband over clutter he just doesn't see. Now he has a couple of consistent tasks which are hard to ignore (laundry) and I take care of all the rest. Rather than nag him about laundry, I add his favorite boxers to the hamper. ;)

HieronymusBoschClone6 points 26 April, 2016 12:04 AM [recovered]

And /u/eliza_schuyler knocks it out of the park again! Thank you so much for posting this! Hopefully everyone can gain some wisdom from this post.

cats_or_get_out6 points 26 April, 2016 01:59 AM [recovered]

This is fantastic. Thanks for posting!

[deleted] • 4 points • 26 April, 2016 04:14 PM

I am loving all the "guidelines" posts that are being created lately. They're so helpful for any of us to just use as a reference or a checklist. It's easy validation for a woman to be like "check, check, check, ok I'm being the best wife I can be today."

Lovely job Eliza, this is definitely going to be a reference for me and I'm sure many others!

BeautifulSpaceCadet • 3 points • 26 April, 2016 03:30 AM [recovered]

Holy crap, Eliza. This is absolutely insane...I hope you're proud of this baby!

Thank you for such a fantastic wealth of information; it's so well structured and organized (which I guess shouldn't be surprising considering the content!). Not to mention it isn't judgmental or preachy about the non-negotiable etiquettes of proper housewifery /s.

I hope it could be added to the essential posts section of the side bar? At a minimum I'm sorry I can't upvote this 5 more times.

eliza_schuyler4 points 26 April, 2016 03:38 AM [recovered]

Thank you so much! I'm still having arguments with reddit formatting but I think I'm starting to win.

I'm trying to be even-handed with the "non-negotiable" stuff- I'm super lucky at the moment to have more time for home-making, but at other times in our relationship, I have worked full-time. The balance has to be up to you, I think. But I like the idea of setting aside a certain amount of time and getting as much done as possible in that time.

I'm hoping to add posts on "Your Demeanour" and "His Needs" over the next couple of weeks. I'm loving this sub, and the feedback I have been getting in comments is freaking incredible. So many accomplished women out there balancing children, husbands, jobs, self care, housework, etc. I'm learning so much!

[deleted] • 3 points • 26 April, 2016 04:31 PM

Great post!

Organization seems to be my toughest hurdle, and all the clutter just builds up over time. How do you start to conquer the mess when it seems so overwhelming? I wish I could just skip to the scrubbing part, that's the most satisfying haha.

[deleted] • 3 points • 28 April, 2016 06:43 PM

This breaks it all down so simply, what a great post! Thank you!

practicewhatyoulearn • 1 point • 4 May, 2016 02:26 AM

Thank you so much this is fantastic!! <3 I can't wait to start putting it into practice!