



These smokin' celeb women have fallen for a younger model.

DELTA, 28, AND NICK, 19.

EVA, 38, AND RYAN, 31.

KOURTNEY, 32, AND SCOTT, 28.

JENNIFER, 42, AND CASPER, 24.

KYLIE, 43, AND ANDRES, 33.

Sexy, spontaneous, super-hot. There are plenty of reasons to go for a younger guy – but can he hack a serious relationship?

When Aisha*, 33, started dating Will, 25, the chemistry was fantastic, despite the eight-year gap between them. Only when she threw her friends in the mix did their differences become obvious. “My friends and I would talk about how amazing the late '90s were for music and gigs and he'd say, ‘I was in Year 7 then’. Or he'd take me to parties with his friends who were really young and I just couldn't relate,” she says.

Not getting pop culture references is just one of many challenges dating a younger guy can raise, says psychologist Sue Miller from Relationships Australia. “A lot of older women just want a bit of fun and spontaneity, and a younger man might be able to provide that more than someone her own age,” she says. “But [if you] have completely different expectations ... often those relationships don't work because there's friction and tension. She may want to settle and he may want to party, or vice versa.”

So, how do you get the best of both worlds – a fun younger guy who offers you the commitment you crave?

Take the pressure down

If you and your friends are talking about Tiffany diamonds while he and his mates are planning their next surf trip, he may not be on the same “future” page as you. “When all your friends are engaged and having babies, he [can] feel so pressured he wants to run,” says psychologist Meredith Fuller.

Rather than scattering pregnancy and bridal magazines around the house, Fuller suggests casually talking about where he sees himself in his forties. “You can't make anyone do something they don't want to do, but you can get them to reflect on their lives and what their values are,” she says. “If he says, ‘I never see myself with kids’, then don't try to convert him. But if he says, ‘I've always seen myself with a couple of kids, but not right now’, then there's a chance.”

Remember, it's not necessarily his age holding him back. “We have the largest population of youth who have experienced their parents divorcing or separating,” Miller points out.

The guy's perspective
James*, 24, says it's not easy being the younger partner. “My girlfriend Sarah and I got together when she was 22 and I was 19. For a few years we coasted along smoothly, but recently the age gap has become more of a problem. She's now 27 (I'm 24), and the majority of her friends are either engaged or living with their partners. I'm not ready for us to move on to that stage yet, but she's putting the pressure on. I can tell she's getting clucky – and the more she talks about it, the more I freak out!”

Mind the generation gap

When it comes to an issue like Aisha's, where you just don't get each other's friends, Fuller suggests playing down such differences by quickly explaining the context. “If you're talking about a type of music or a reference to a film, all you have to do is say, ‘It's sort of like so and so,’” she suggests. “That way, you're giving your partner the context so he can relate it to something in his experience.”

In Aisha's case, she and Will started spending time with friends they both felt comfortable being around. “Now he's better friends with some of my mates than I am,” she says.

Adjust your expectations

If you're dating a younger guy, chances are you'll be on better money, which can be another source of tension. Lee, 25, got used to this when she started dating Luke, 22, who was still at uni. Sometimes the age gap doesn't have to be so wide to cause issues – even a few years can make a difference in life experiences. “I like going out for dinner but he never had any money so I often shouted him,” she says.

Fuller suggests overcoming such disparities by arranging alternate dates – you pay for a great meal one week and he scopes out cheap Indian the next – or have him contribute in other ways. “If he's got a beautiful meal ready every time you get home from work or he doesn't mind doing the cleaning, it can become even,” she says.

And remember, young guys will grow up. “As soon as Luke got a job, he insisted on shouting me back,” Lee says. “You've got to take the good with the bad – sure he didn't have much money at the start, but he was so much fun it was worth it.” **Kimberly Gillan**

Mind the AGE GAP!

*NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED. BIG AUSTRALIA; GETTY IMAGES; SHAPPER MEDIA