

## **5 Ways to Make “Same Old” Feel New**

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“New year, new you.” The saying has become ubiquitous, but the idea of a new calendar year signaling a fresh start is hard to deny. The problem with the phrase is that it insinuates that you need to change completely, but hey, you might really like what you have going on! And the same goes for your relationship. You might not need a complete relationship overhaul, but perhaps there is room for a “refresh” in areas that have begun to feel mundane or routine. Similar to the burst of motivation and energy you get when you rearrange or reorganize your office, your relationship can be energized as well!

Here are five ways to inject some “new” into your “same old.”

### **1. Strive to surprise.**

There is comfort in always knowing what to expect from each other, but that’s also where complacency can begin to take root. Surprising each other can ignite the feelings you experienced when you were still getting to know each other. Whether it’s a getting their car washed and filling the tank with gas, bringing them a midday pick-me-up in the form of their favorite treat, or initiating and planning a date when it’s usually the other person who does it, try to surprise each other.

### **2. Reassess your roles.**

On one hand you’ve gotten the “who does what” down to a science. You know each other’s strengths and struggles and hopefully align responsibilities accordingly. But things can change over time, and that task you used to enjoy doing is now something you dread. Talk these things over. Switch things up. Share tasks that you used to do separately. Suddenly you might look forward to folding the laundry or cooking dinner because it’s a small pocket of time you can spend together.

### **3. Freshen up your look.**

No, looks aren’t everything, but there’s something to be said for continuing to make an effort, even if you’ve been married for decades. Maybe you shave the beard or get a new haircut. Maybe it’s a trendy pair of glasses or donning a bold lipstick even though you work from home. You may already be married, but that doesn’t mean you can’t (or shouldn’t) still do things to attract your spouse’s interest.

### **4. Spend time apart.**

This probably sounds counterintuitive but ensuring you both get time to do your own thing separately makes room for feeling fully charged and excited to spend time with each other when the time comes.

### **5. Swap out the usual.**

Think of something you routinely do together and swap in something new! For example, if your usual evening routine involves Netflix and more Netflix, try swapping in something that doesn’t involve a screen – have a friendly board or card game competition or start a new 20-minute workout program. It doesn’t mean you still can’t settle in for some Netflix later, but switching things up creates a sense of novelty.

It’s not always about a complete renovation – sometimes a new piece of furniture or rearranging the existing furniture makes all the difference. Similarly, your relationship might just need a little refresh to inject energy and excitement into the good thing you have going.