The Friend Zone

Have you ever been forced into the friend zone by a woman you were really attracted to? Have you ever wanted to force a woman into the friend zone because you weren't attracted to her? The friend zone is surprisingly easy to control, but most men aren't able to because they make the same mistakes over and over again.

Falling into the friend zone is almost always an accident, but unfortunately it's an accident that's very difficult to recover from. A man who is a badass with women has learned how to guide interactions so that he will never just be a friend unless he wants to. In this chapter, I'm going to teach you everything you need to know to keep yourself out of the friend zone, and if you ever find yourself in a situation where you want to force a woman into it – because you're not attracted to her, perhaps, or because you're in a relationship – you can do so fairly easily by simply *not* doing the things you're going to learn here.

When a woman starts using "we" verbiage, calls you "a good friend," or says things like "I'm glad you're around," you're seeing the beginning signs of being placed into the friend zone. Even though they indicate that the process has just started, it's already too

late to pull yourself out of it. There is only one way to potentially remove yourself from the friend zone, but you must risk everything – including the platonic friendship – to make it happen. You're much better off knowing how to stay out of the friend zone in the first place.

Humans use their extraordinarily intelligent subconscious minds to judge people almost instantly after meeting them. We gather all of the information available to us about someone, and form an impression of that person based on what we learn from it. When a woman looks at you for the first time, she decides immediately if you're the kind of man who talks to a lot of people, or the kind of man who introduces himself to strangers. She assesses whether or not you're a man who would buy her a drink, or who would be good to bring home to her mother. In the first few moments, she will make as many decisions about you as she possibly can with the information given to her. This is why it's essential that your default mode is one that encourages your success later on in the interaction.

Ask yourself now if you're the kind of guy – or, more correctly, if you're giving off signals that you're the kind of guy – who naturally touches everyone casually. If you're not that guy already, you're going to need to become him. The reason this is so important is a concept referred to as a touch gap. Think of the touch gap like this: when you first meet a woman, there is a little crack in the ground between you. As you communicate with her without touching her, the crack grows larger until it becomes a crevice that you must leap to get over. If you continue to build rapport without touching her, it becomes a massive canyon that you can't cross. You'll have to walk away, give the situation time to reset, and then return later - months, maybe even years, later.

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Obviously, that is not an effective strategy. The only way to defeat the friend zone is never to fall into it. So why does it happen? A man falls into the friend zone A) Because he does not bridge the touch gap, and B) Because he builds rapport at the appearance of the first, tiny glimmer of interest from a woman. Many men, especially those who are new to learning this subject, tend to blow their chances with women by doing too much too quickly. Men who aren't used to thinking of themselves as attractive to women tend to be needy, and pursue women too strongly when they've shown only minor signs of interest. Trying to build rapport too early in an interaction is a huge error that will land you in the friend zone.

You might spend two hours at a bar connecting with a woman, discussing art, literature, philosophy, and find yourself stuck in the friend zone afterwards because you failed to escalate. Combining poorly timed rapport building with a failure to bridge the touch gap will destroy your chances all together.

Scared yet? Don't be. There is a system for escalation that every man can learn. You may have noticed that certain cultures seem to breed Don Juans – the French, for example, and the Italians – who are intensely successful with women, particularly American women. This happens because they come from cultures in which people naturally touch each other a great deal. They touch parents, friends, strangers – everyone! – because it is customary in their society in a way that it is not in ours. Women tend to accept this increased amount of touching when they find out that a man is from one of these cultures, and all of a sudden, he has a free pass to do whatever he wants to! He will be able to escalate more quickly than men who are not from traditionally touchy cultures.

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Fortunately for you, you do not have to be Italian or French to successfully escalate an interaction with a woman. When you meet a random girl in a bar, she is not judging you based on your nationality; she judges you based on how you're acting. If, from the very beginning, you act like you touch a lot, she will accept that that's a part of your personality. It's just who you are. She will think of you in the same way that she thinks of a man who is from a culture that frequently physically engages with other people.

Don't expect a group of people who knew you before you started studying this to accept this new part of you immediately, because they've already made their judgments about you. When they met you, you were not the kind of guy who naturally touched people. Changing your behavior can often lead to very adverse reactions from people you already know – they might even try to cut you out of their lives or keep you from growing – but don't be discouraged. If you find yourself in this situation, there's really nothing you can do to fix it. You must simply have the courage to leave it behind, secure in the knowledge that your self-improvement is more important than people who are trying to stunt your growth.

When you have become confident in the mindset that you are a man who touches people, you're ready to learn how to use the system for touch escalation to your advantage. How do you do it? What happens if you screw it up? How do you know you're doing it well? How do you learn to make it natural instead of a conscious effort? Ultimately, the most important thing to remember is that touch escalation will only work if you touch with the proper mentality, at the proper time.

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If you don't touch with the proper mentality, even if you do so at the proper time, you will come across as trying to move too quickly or trying to move too slowly. You need to touch differently based on what phase of the map of interaction you are in at the moment, so review that chapter of the book if you need a bit of a refresher. During attraction, you must have the mentality of a boy. During rapport, you must have the mentality of a friend. And during seduction, you must have the mentality of a man. I'm leaving out relationship balance for the moment, because it has a completely different set of rules for touch that are based on the value and power dynamics of the relationship.

To be successful, you must also have the proper intention during each of the three phases mentioned above. For attraction, the proper intention is to build curiosity. For rapport, the proper intention is to build a connection and to transfer emotions. And for seduction, the proper intention is to escalate sexually. If you have both the right mentality and the right intention, you're ready to throw time into the mix.

The first step is to be able to recognize what phase you're in. Most men understand seduction, but attraction and rapport can be a little more difficult to deal with. Guys tend to think that they don't understand attraction but are pretty good at building rapport, when in reality it's usually the other way around. Men typically know a lot more about attraction than they think they do, and know a lot less about rapport than they think they do.

A badass knows everything about each one of these phases. He's not strong in some areas and weak in others. He is an expert across

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the board. You have to work to become the best at what you do, so study hard until you fully understand how touch must differ in attraction, rapport, and seduction.

Let's begin with attraction. Attraction, again, is the phase in which you build curiosity. As you probably remember, the first stage within attraction is introduction, the time in which someone first becomes aware of your existence. This is your default mode, so it should come as no surprise that your touch during attraction is going to be your default touch.

Here's how it works: during attraction, you should have a light hand. As you build rapport with someone you can have a heavier hand, especially if you move into seduction, but in the beginning of an interaction you must be gentle because a woman is not yet sure if she can trust you. Your touch should also be friendly, playful, and boy-like, in keeping with the mentality you must maintain during the attraction phase. Be careful not to move too quickly or the woman will feel like you're attacking her. She must feel safe around you if you want to escalate. The last thing to remember is that touch during this phase must be fleeting. It can't linger for too long. The last thing you want is for a woman to take your hand off her.

Where are you allowed to touch and how long can each touch last during the phase of attraction? There's no real rule about where you can and cannot touch, because every rule I know can be broken if you know how to fix a situation that goes wrong. When you're comfortable with all of the material here, you can skip stages and escalate at a more rapid pace if you so choose. It takes a tremendous amount of skill and awareness to skip stages, however, so don't attempt to do it before you're ready.

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In general, touch during the phase of attraction should last no longer than 1-3 seconds. Touching longer than that is extremely risky. If she has to pull your hand off because you've allowed your touch to linger too long, you will be catapulted back to the beginning of the map of interaction. Every time you're forced to start over, the process takes longer and your chances of success decrease dramatically. At some point, if this keeps happening, the interaction will be FUBAR – fucked up beyond all repair. There will be no way to fix the situation, and no point in you trying to do so.

When it comes to where to touch, you should touch on the extremities but not on the extreme extremities. That means that, to be on the safe side, you shouldn't touch a woman's hand too early on unless it's to shake it or give her a high five. Stick to the shoulders, the triceps, and the upper back area. The four words to keep in mind, regardless of which of these areas you're touching, are light, friendly, safe, and fleeting. The message all of your actions should send is "I touch a lot, but I'm not going to hurt you in any kind of way. In fact, I'm going to protect you if something happens."

As you move forward, you will find yourself in the phase of rapport. During rapport, you have stopped bantering and have become very real in an effort to establish an emotional connection with a woman. Touches should be both lingering and understanding. Whereas touch during attraction can only last 1-3 seconds, a touch during rapport can last for 4-7 seconds. The guidelines for where to touch during this phase depend on whether you are standing or sitting. When sitting, touching knees is acceptable, as is interlocking fingers when things become more intimate. While standing, the small of a woman's back can be touched. It's also possible, if you move slowly,

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have built a great deal of trust, and are nearing the seduction phase, to touch the hair, neck, and face during rapport.

As you can probably guess, touch during seduction is more aggressive and sexual. Be firm, but also be sensual. The difference between sensual and sexual is simple: the word "sexual" refers to sex, while the word "sensual" refers to one's senses. Move your hand around a woman's body to heighten her senses (and your own as well). This will allow her to focus on emotions that will aid in the seduction process.

I know this sounds a little bit mechanical, but you don't need to be thinking about why you're touching a woman in a certain way while you're doing it. You just need to know when to turn it on, and when to turn it off.

You also need to be very careful with your interpretation of the word "aggressive." When I use the term, I mean being aggressive while also having approval. To tell the difference between a woman who is playing hard-to-get and a woman who actually doesn't want you to touch her, look for incongruence in her communication. If she says "No, stop!" but has positive body language, you must question further to figure out if she really wants you to quit. It might be tempting to follow only the signals that her body is sending you, but you can't. She doesn't necessarily want you to continue just because her body says she does, so be on the safe side and never push too hard. Take a "No, stop!" seriously, but if she says "We shouldn't be doing this," you don't have to take it as seriously, especially if she is still exhibiting positive body language.

When a negative remark is coupled with negative body language, you're done. Do not keep attempting to be aggressive. A lot of guys

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can't tell the difference between playing hard-to-get and legitimate disinterest, so it's vital that you learn this. Making that mistake – even just once – will destroy your reputation.

Ultimately, your goal should be to make everyone around you as comfortable as possible (especially the women you're attracted to!). Part of that comfort comes from the amount of time you allow your touches to linger, as we've been discussing. The unusual thing about seduction is that there is no touching time limit. You should actually have your hand on a woman for as long as possible during this phase, even if that means sliding it from one location to another.

So, to recap, touches during attraction must be light, friendly, safe, and fleeting, and should last for no longer than 1-3 seconds. Acceptable areas to touch during attraction are: arms, shoulders, and in some situations, hands. Humans accept touches in those areas because they are the parts of the body that we are most able to control, and therefore are most able to pull away quickly if needed.

In rapport, your touches must be lingering and understanding. As far as everyone is concerned – yourself, the woman, anyone around you - you are only trying to be a friend. Contact should last from 4 to 7 seconds, and can occur in areas that are more intimate than the areas touched during attraction, such as the small of the back, the forearms, and interlocking the fingers. You can also occasionally touch a woman's neck during this phase, but keep in mind that when you do so she is literally putting her life in your hands, so make sure you don't attempt to do it until you've built up a lot of rapport.

Lastly, think sexual, firm, and sensual during the phase of seduction. Be aggressive, but not so much so that a woman feels like she needs

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to push you away. You'll need to reassess everything you've done if you ever find yourself in that situation.

When you've screwed something up, it's important to recognize that you have created a problem so that you can go back and fix it. If you've messed up too many times, however, you will have done so much damage that the situation cannot be repaired. The last things that you want are to be overly aggressive or to not be aggressive whatsoever. Calibrate your aggressiveness well, and follow these rules as much as possible, because only after you learn to follow the rules of touch can you start bending them.

Wondering what the consequences of poor calibration are? Acting too aggressive with a woman will cause obvious problems, so I'm not going to go over them here, and not being aggressive enough is the fastest way to condemn yourself to the friend zone.

There are several ways to tell if you are calibrating correctly. During attraction, a woman will begin to touch you in return if you are touching her properly. You might notice an increase in random touches on your shoulder, or she might high-five you back. In the phase of rapport, lean back and study the woman's body language. Did she lean forward? If she did, she's sending you another positive signal. Humans tend to lean towards each other while building rapport in a literal attempt to bridge the gap between them and build a stronger connection. You'll know you're effectively building rapport if she continues to do this even when you lean back or break physical contact with her. When you're in seduction, a woman is indicating interest if she faces you with her hips when you touch her, especially if she places her hips against you.

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You'll know you've failed to touch a woman properly if she A) Removes herself from the interaction by walking away, B) Turns her back on you, especially during rapport or seduction, or C) Takes your hand off her. When I was studying, I found that a good rule to live by was "Remove your hand before she removes it." Use your peripheral vision to keep an eye on her hands at all times. Whenever she starts moving them in a way that you think indicates that she might be about to remove your hand, take your hand off her immediately, take a step back, and keep talking. Don't look at your hand while you do this – in fact, don't ever look at your hands while you're touching. Lots of guys do this, and it ruins the atmosphere of their touches.

All of that being said, don't assume that you must end an interaction just because a woman removes your hand. It's often a sign that you're moving too quickly, not a sign that she wants you to leave her alone. If this is the case, you're probably allowing each touch to linger for too long, or you don't realize what stage you're in. You might think you're in rapport when you're actually still in attraction. So don't freak out if a woman takes your hand off – as long as she doesn't walk away afterwards, she's just asking you to slow down a little bit.

Being able to recognize what stage you're in – "seeing the matrix" – is one of the most important skills you'll ever learn because it's useful in every part of this process, touch included. Pay attention, and practice, practice, practice. You'll be able to have a lot more control over your interactions when you can do this.

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