

HOW TO
GET A

YES

FROM
MOM

We know you're grown up now—but your mom might still see you as her little girl. Here's the secret to getting her to treat you more like an adult. By Lois Ann Demko

The puppy dog eyes used to work when all you wanted was permission to wear a little lip gloss. But now that you're older and have more sophisticated requests, getting a yes from your mom (or your dad, if he's the one you have to answer to) is a lot trickier. Whether you want to go to a late-night prom after-party or to Miami with friends this summer, it can seem like your mom puts up a roadblock every time you approach her. And it may not get any easier when you're in college—all year, you come and go as you please, but when you're home for the summer, your mom forgets that and expects you to keep your *curfew!* Well, cookie, no matter what your situation, it's time to stop complaining about how impossible your mom is and figure out how to change those *no's* into *yes's*.

tip 1: TIME IT RIGHT

Approach your mom only when she's relaxed. Even if you've been waiting to talk to her all day, if she just walked in the door from a bad day at the office after being stuck in traffic for two hours, and she has to let the dog out to pee, has to pee herself, and has to start making dinner... stay away! Think about it: If you just got home after failing the trig test you were up all night studying for and your little sister said, "Can I borrow your new mini?" you'd probably say, "Not on your life—and get away from me!" Well, your mom's no different. So wait to put in your request until she's sipping a latte while watching her favorite TV show (hang on until the commercial). But don't go overboard: If you approach her with a fresh latte and you've never made her one before, she'll immediately be suspicious. It might look to her like you're buttering her up because you *expect* her to say no—and that will just make it easier for her to *actually* say no.

tip 2: SHARE THE DETAILS

Don't just yell over your shoulder on your way out the door that you're "going out"—you have to give your mom time to react, or she'll think you have something to hide. Approach her at a relaxed moment, like over dinner. Say, "Mom, I'm going to a graduation party at John's house. His parents are away, but they know all about it and put his older sister in charge. I'll be home by midnight." Then, if she has questions, answer them calmly—if you get agitated, that will only raise her suspicions and make her less likely to let you go.

tip 3: USE KEY WORDS

Just as commercials for laundry detergents reel viewers in with words like *fluffy white* and *soft and clean*, you can win your mom over with certain phrases. Follow up a request or suggestion with something like "What do you think, Mom?" or "Just think about it a little before you answer, okay?" That will show your mom that you respect her need to consider it for a while—after all, no one likes to feel pressured to make a decision right away. And if your mom starts to express her concerns, don't snap back with "Whatever—you don't understand!" That will make her view you as immature—and certainly not someone who's adult enough to stay out until 1 a.m. (or whatever it is you're asking for).

tip 4: WALK IN HER SHOES

For a second, try to put aside what you want, no matter how urgent it is. Now think about what your mom might want. Help cleaning the bathroom? Someone to keep her company on a Friday night? This isn't about sucking up. It's about trading places with her so you get a clearer idea of where she's coming from. Once you get a glimpse inside her life, you'll be able to better understand what makes her tick (and why she might turn down some of your requests). You'll stop seeing your mom as an evil barrier between you and a good time and start seeing her as someone who really just wants the best for you.

tip 5: REASSURE HER

If your mom still hesitates to let you go to Saturday night's party no matter what you tell her, compromise: Offer to call during the party so she'll know you're okay. Then *do* it—no matter what. Because if you don't, you'll just be showing her that you're irresponsible, and you may find yourself with even stricter rules than you had before (chaperone, anyone?!). No one has to know—just take your cell phone to the bathroom at some point in the night and give her a ring. If your mom sees that you're making an effort to put her more at ease about the situation, she'll start to develop a real *trust* in you. And when that happens, you two can start to have the kind of adult relationship where you're not always asking for her permission—but looking for her input, support, and blessings. ☐

THE BOTTOM LINE: When you learn to communicate with your mom the *right* way, she'll give you a lot more freedom. You'll see—this could be the best summer of your life!