

# Travel Tips: Learn Your Rights as an Airline Passenger



Interview by [Mara Miller](#)

It's important to know your rights as an airline passenger when you fly frequently. Even A-list passengers run into unpleasant situations when jetting off on [celebrity vacations](#). In some situations, you may be traveling with pets or run into restroom issues on the plane. You may even be denied boarding. In these travel tips, we have partnered with AirHelp to get some answers to our questions.

# Check out travel tips from AirHelp on how to make the most of your passenger rights:

## 1. Many airline passengers aren't aware of the rights they have when they fly. What are your rights if you are denied boarding?

In a recent survey, AirHelp found that 92% of U.S. travelers don't know their rights, which extend to when they are traveling abroad. Specifically, passengers' rights if they are denied boarding are dependent on their situation, but the main regulations that protect passengers in these instances are EC 261 and U.S. National law.

EC 261 is a European law that covers travelers flying to Europe on an EU airline, or out of Europe on any airline, including for U.S. citizens. In cases of denied boarding, passengers can be eligible to claim up to \$700 each, as long as they did not volunteer to give up their seat in exchange for vouchers or perks.

Under U.S. national law, U.S. travelers are entitled to compensation for up to \$1,350 if denied boarding as a result of an overbooked flight, depending on the value of the ticket fare and ultimate delay in arrival to their final destination. If travelers find themselves in situations like Mayim Bialik, where she was denied boarding on a domestic flight and did not volunteer to give up her seat, they may be eligible for compensation, in addition to re-routing to their destination on an alternate flight.

In all situations at [AirHelp](#), we recommend holding onto boarding passes and other travel documents, and immediately requesting compensation. You should also hold onto receipts for expenses incurred because of the disruption. You may be

eligible for reimbursement from the airline.

**Related Link:** [Travel Tips: 5 Pointers for Traveling by Train in Europe](#)

## **2. If an airline loses your luggage, what do you do? Are you entitled to compensation?**

Earlier this year, [Matt Damon](#) made headlines when his luggage was lost and he had to borrow someone else's suit. Additionally, last summer, [Rihanna's](#) makeup artist lost her luggage and her [celebrity beauty](#) supplies. In these situations, and for many other passengers who experience similar issues, travelers can file for compensation from the airline.

In the United States, travelers are protected by two laws when it comes to luggage problems, including U.S. national law and the Montreal Convention. U.S. national law covers travelers on domestic flights, and the Montreal Convention covers travelers flying internationally. In either case, the amount of compensation is based on the value of the baggage and should be negotiated with the airline. Under U.S. national law, the maximum compensation is \$3,500 and under the Montreal Convention, the maximum is \$1,525. Airlines will work to keep costs down by paying depreciated value for things and not covering certain types of items at all like jewelry and electronics, so it is important for passengers to know that they are entitled to compensation by law, and not just based on an airline's goodwill.

A passenger's right to compensation extinguishes if they don't bring an action within two years under the Montreal Convention, but there are also other time constraints passengers should be aware of. Damages to luggage need to be reported within seven days of receipt, and we advise travelers to take photos of their luggage before leaving the airport to prove that damages happened while the luggage was in an

airline's care. Complaints about delayed luggage should be filed within 21 days, and passengers must notify the airline if their luggage is missing before leaving the airport and fill out a Property Irregularity Report (PIR) detailing the contents of their lost baggage. If a passenger's luggage doesn't arrive within 21 days, it is considered lost, so after this period there is no time limit for complaints.

**Related Link:** [Travel Tips: 5 Ways to Live Like a Nomad While Traveling Abroad](#)

### **3. If your flight turns around mid-flight and doesn't make it to its destination, what are your rights?**

If your flight does not make it to its final destination, your rights to compensation are dependent on the circumstance. If your flight is eligible under EC 261, as long as your flight isn't turned around because of "extraordinary circumstances" like weather, terrorism, air traffic control restrictions, or political unrest, you could be entitled to up to \$700 in compensation per person if you arrive at your destination with delays of more than three hours. This means that if your flight turns around like [Chrissy Teigen's](#) did and it was eligible, you could claim compensation.

**Related Link:** [Travel Tips: How to Plan Your First Getaway Together as a Couple](#)

### **4. A broken toilet on a plane can be a huge inconvenience. What can you do as a passenger if this happens?**

If a broken toilet causes a flight disruption, travelers should check for eligibility under EC 261. Specifically, if a delay is caused by a broken toilet, passengers are entitled to compensation under EC 261 as this is considered a technical error. However, in cases when toilets become unusable just before takeoff, such as if they are caused by a sick passenger, it is often beyond the airline's control, and therefore travelers aren't eligible under EC 261.

## **5. What are your rights when it comes to traveling with pets?**

Animal lovers don't have to skip their vacations, as long as they make themselves familiar with individual airlines' pet rules. This is especially important in light of recent tragedies. If you wish to travel with your furry best friend, at AirHelp, we advise you to research the airline's rules. For example, some airlines only allow assistance or guide dogs to travel in the cabin. Others base their paw fees on your pet's size and weight, plus their carrier's measurements. When making the decision of whether to bring your pet along, you should consider: the size of your pet; the pet carrier; pet/dog carrier fees; the temperament of your four-legged friend; and the airline's overhead bin space availability.

## **6. Are there different rights for disabled passengers? What are they?**

Airlines cannot refuse to accommodate passengers with disabilities; in fact, they are required by law to make sure accommodations are available. This is because of the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA), a law which makes it illegal for airlines to discriminate against passengers because of their disability. Airlines are also required to provide passengers with disabilities many types of assistance, including wheelchairs or other guided assistance to board, deplane, or connect to another flight; seating accommodation assistance that meets passengers' disability-related needs; and assistance with the loading and stowing of assistive devices.

## **7. When it comes to frustrating delays, what are some useful hints that passengers can apply?**

Below are some tips that travelers should consider when flying to have the best chance of a smooth, disruption-free experience:

- **Fly during off-peak days or times to avoid the largest crowds at airports.** The late night flights are often the

least crowded, which means that your flight may be less likely to be overbooked, and your wait time at security will be shorter.

- **Use the free AirHelp app to check for compensation eligibility and flight disruptions while on-the-go.** The app provides travelers with information about compensation eligibility when travelers enter their information.
- **Leave extra time for traveling to and from the airport.** No matter when people are traveling, they should anticipate traffic near the airport. Schedule extra time for driving, and be sure to leave ample time to get through lines at security in case of large crowds. If it is easy, travelers can also consider public transportation to eliminate parking fees and cut costs.
- **Pack light or only use a carry-on to skip baggage claim.** With larger flights, waiting for luggage can take a lot of extra time at the airport. For short trips, travelers may consider using only a carry-on item, as long as all items fall under TSA requirements.
- **Bring chargers and extra entertainment for the airport.** Sometimes, flight disruptions are inevitable, so consider packing an extra phone charger and book to take on the flight.
- **Know your rights for flight disruptions, as you could be eligible to claim compensation.** If you are flying within the U.S. and you are denied boarding due to an overbooked flight, you may be eligible to claim 400% of the one-way fare to your destination in compensation, of a value up to \$1,350. Also, for flight cancellations or lengthy delays, if you're flying to the EU on an EU airline, or departing from an EU airport, you may be eligible to claim up to \$700 per person in compensation under European law EC 261.

## **8. Is there a time limit on submitting a claim?**

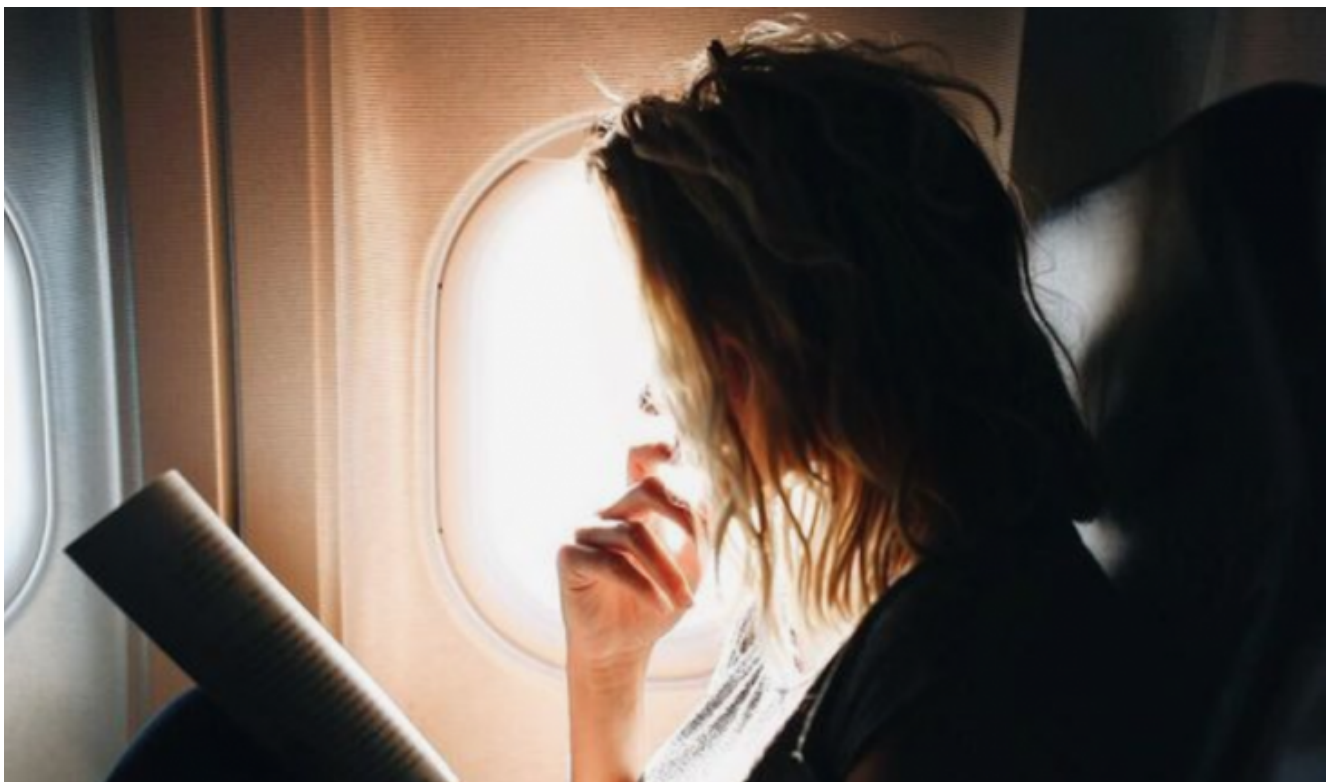


Under EC 261, passengers can file claims for up to three years after the disruption.

Have you had any disruptive flight experiences? Let us know in the comments below!

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## ‘Girl Most Likely’ Shows the Ups and Downs of the Healing Process



By April Littleton

Kristen Wiig plays Imogen, a failed New York playwright who

has lost her self-confidence after a horrible breakup. After a fake suicide attempt performed on stage to try to win back the affections of her former flame, Imogen is forced to live with her estranged mother, Zelda (Annette Bening). Desperate to get back to the glitz and glam she once knew so well, Imogen realizes she must come to terms with her family, including her brother (Christopher Fitzgerald), her mother's new boyfriend (Matt Damon) and a random stranger who just happens to have taken over her room (Darren Criss).

### **Should you see it:**

Fans of the comedy genre will find plenty of laughs in this film. Lead performances by Kristen Wigg, Matt Damon and Annette Bening will not go unnoticed by the audience either. Once fellow Gleekers realize Darren Criss (who plays Blaine Anderson on *Glee*) has a predominant role in this film, they will fall in love with the star all over again.

### **Who to take:**

This film falls into the PG-13 category for sexual content and language, so it's safe to say that the movie may not be entirely kid-friendly. *Girl Most Likely* would be best to see with a group of friends, some older family members or a potential love interest. If you already have a significant other, drag them to the movies on your special date night together.

**Related:** ['Between Us' Tests the Boundaries of Old Relationships](#)

### **How do you regain your confidence after a bad breakup?**

#### **Cupid's Advice:**

Enduring a bad breakup can put a big damper on your self-confidence. Dealing with the pain of rejection and heartache



can have a negative impact on the way you see yourself. If you let these feelings fester for too long, you'll never get back to your fabulous self. It's time to move on from the guilt you feel over your breakup and get your life back. Cupid has some advice:

**1. Stop blaming yourself:** After the end of a relationship, it's perfectly natural for you to blame yourself for what happened, especially if you were the one who was dumped. However, you need to realize the entire breakup doesn't just fall on you. Your ex has a part in what happened as well. It takes two people to make a relationship work. The relationship didn't fail because of one person. Beating yourself up over something you have no control over will only make you feel worse about yourself.

**2. Get a makeover:** You've probably let yourself go a little bit while grieving over your former boo. Now it's time to show them what they've been missing! Clean yourself up, buy a whole new wardrobe and put on a brave, new smile. A smile is the most attractive attribute on a person's body, so give it your best shot. Once you get all dolled up, all eyes will be on you in a positive light and you'll feel like a million bucks.

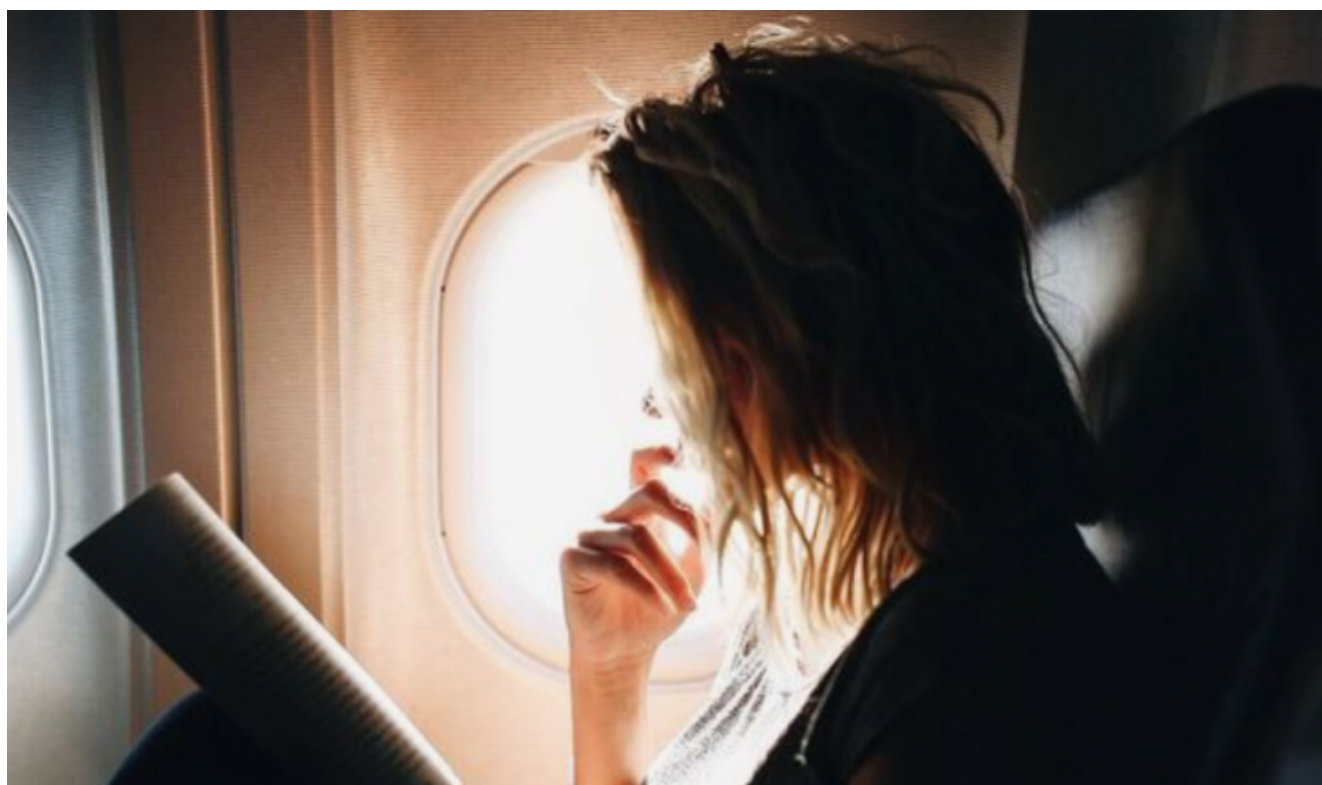
**Related:** [Kat Von D and Deadmau5 Call It Quits](#)

**3. Remind yourself of the good:** Every time you start to feel down, keep in mind all of the positive traits you possess. Are you good at making people laugh? Do your friends say you're the best cook in town? Can people come to you for non-judgemental advice? Remind yourself of all of the great things about you and if it's hard for you to see yourself in such a positive light, your friends and loved ones will be more than happy to help.

**How did you regain your confidence after a breakup? Share your experience below.**

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# 10 New Celebrity Dads



By Jennifer Harrington

Pregnancy, babies and parenting are always some of the hottest topics when it comes to celebrity news. Much of this news revolves around the mom and baby (think of how much time we spend on “bump” watch and anticipating Hollywood baby name choices), and an important part of the equation is often overshadowed: the celebrity dad. There are some great fathers in the celebrity world, and we wanted to shine a spotlight on them to celebrate their dedication to their children and fatherhood. Here is a list of our top 10 celebrity dads:

## **Brad Pitt**

Hollywood heartthrob Brad Pitt is a father of six (Maddox, Zahara, Shiloh, Pax, Knox and Vivienne) with longtime love, Angelina Jolie. Often when Angelina is working, Brad plays the role of stay-at-home dad with the kids, and it seems to be a duty he relishes in. In a 2012 interview with *People* magazine, Brad revealed that fatherhood has made him a better man and explained that being a dad “takes you right off yourself.”

**Related:** [Mario Lopez Wants “At Least 4 More” Children](#)

## **David Beckham**

Soccer superstar David Beckham is the dad of four (Brooklyn, Romeo, Cruz and Harper) with wife Victoria Beckham. David has confessed that he hopes his children will be independent and lead normal lives, despite their parents’ star status. He is open about how challenging it is to spend time away from his family for his soccer commitments. He’s also very proactive when he’s with the little ones (he was recently spotted having some quality one-on-one time with Harper in Paris).

## **Chris Noth**

*Sex and the City* star Chris Noth is the father of one child (Orion) with his wife, Tara. Despite a long list of acting accomplishments, Noth is emphatic about his favorite role. He said, “I love being a dad... being a dad is by far my favorite role!” It may be difficult for some to imagine Mr. Big as a devoted dad, but Noth is frequently photographed as a hands-on dad (we have even seen him sport matching Halloween costumes with his little one), and has even said the sound of his son crying is “music” to his ears.

## **Tom Cruise**

Major movie star Tom Cruise is a dad of three (Isabella, Connor and Suri). While Isabella and Connor are grown and

embarking on their adult lives, Tom is famously undertaking the role of single dad, in light of his recent divorce from Katie Holmes. While Suri calls New York City home with Katie, and Tom is frequently traveling for his movies, Tom remains committed to daddy duty for Suri. The duo has been photographed at Disney World together, and most recently, celebrating her 7<sup>th</sup> birthday together. Tom has also remarked that Suri can call him whenever she needs him!

## **Ben Affleck**

Boston-native Ben Affleck has three kids (Violet, Seraphina and Sam). After a whirlwind year of work and accolades for Ben, his current focus now is parenting his children, so his wife, Jennifer Garner, can go back to work. The couple has agreed that while one is working, the other will stay at home with the kids. Of his summer plans, Ben has been quoted as saying, "There's going to be a little Mr. Mom action."

## **Matt Damon**

Ben Affleck's best buddy, Matt Damon, is also a fantastic dad. Matt is a father to three daughters (Isabella, Gia and Stella) and a stepfather to Alexia, from wife Luciana's previous marriage. Matt has a simple rule that guides his life and establishes his commitment to his daughters: the family can't be separated for more than two weeks at a time. Matt is open about the fact that his feelings toward his family are much more than he ever expected, and has remarked that parenthood is "really quite something."

## **Will Smith**

*The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* star is a father of three (Trey, Jaden and Willow). Will famously rapped about fatherhood in the 1990's song "Just the Two of Us", and he's watched with admiration as Jaden and Willow, his children with wife Jada Pinkett Smith, have launched their own acting/music careers.

Will is very involved and supportive of their blossoming careers, and is always available to provide them with counsel as they navigate Hollywood. He has remarked, "I love producing my kids and my wife's TV show and all that. I think that's my most natural space in the business."

## **Seal**

The singer is father to four children (Leni, Henry, Johan and Lou) with ex-wife Heidi Klum. While Seal and Heidi are no longer married, Heidi knew that Seal would be a good dad the first time she met him because of his "kindness and compassion." She has publically stated that he is a great father and always puts the needs of the children first (even Leni, who is not biologically Seal's child), noting that he "does everything in his power" to make sure the kids are happy and safe. Time will tell how Seal adjusts to fathering without Heidi by his side, but we have no doubt he will continue to be a fantastic papa.

## **Matthew McConaughey**

Matthew is dad to three kids (Levi, Vida and Livingston) with wife Camila. His recent acting schedule has been packed, but when he's not on set, Matthew's favorite activity is story-time with his tots! Matthew shared with *People* magazine, "My favorite thing is reading a five-minute story that turns into a never-ending story. When it's story time and I get to the end, there's no the end. The kids hate the end!" Matthew also loves long phone chats with Levi, when he's away shooting movies!

**Related:** [10 New Celebrity Moms](#)

## **Barack Obama**

President Barack Obama has two daughters (Sasha and Malia) with wife Michelle. Despite his schedule loaded with meetings with world leaders and policy negotiation, Obama makes

spending quality time with his teenage daughters a priority. Sasha and Malia absolutely know where they stand with their father; Obama told *Essence* magazine, "I want my girls to know that no matter what else is going on, they're my first priority."

What qualities make a terrific celebrity dad? Any other celebrity dads we should include on this list of Hollywood's finest?

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## Celebrity News: Matt Damon Returns to Work After Renewing Vows with Wife Luciana





By Andrea Surujnauth

Matt Damon returns to work after his Cancun vow renewal getaway. Damon and wife Luciana had an intimate celebration for their 10 year mark of knowing one another. "It was a very family-oriented and happy celebration," a source told [People](#). The source went on to spill the beans about the lovebirds, "They were smiling and looked very happy together." Now, only a week after his romantic vacation, Damon was seen at the Summer of Sony event with director Neill Blomkamp and costar Sharlto Copley to promote their new movie Elysium.

**How do you deal with your partner's busy work schedule?**

### **Cupid's Advice:**

You and your partner can't get enough of one another. So how do you handle their busy schedule? You want to be able to see them as much as possible so how do you pull that off if they are always busy? Cupid is here with some advice for you:

**1. Communicate:** If you can't physically be there with your partner, show them you are thinking of each other by sending



each other flirtatious text messaged throughout your day. This way, although apart, you will know that you are on each other's minds.

**2. Free time:** When the two of you finally do have free time to spend together, make the most of it. Do not spend your time sitting on the couch. Get up and do something together. Have fun with your sweetie and make each other feel special during this time.

**3. Eliminate distractions:** While spending time with your love, make sure you give each other all your complete attention. Put away the cell phones and refrain from answering any work related calls and emails. Enjoy being together without all of the work stuff.

**How do you handle your partner's busy schedule? Comment below and let us know.**

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## **Celebrity Couple: Matt Damon and Wife Luciana Renew Wedding Vows**





By Jessica Conigliaro

After eight years of marriage, Matt Damon and wife Luciana Barroso say, “I do” again. According to [UsMagazine.com](https://www.usmagazine.com), the couple renewed their vows Saturday, April 13 on the Caribbean island of St. Lucia. Damon and the bride exchanged vows under thatched roofs right at sunset. After the 15-minute ceremony, all guests were escorted onto the beach for a cocktail reception. Damon and his wife simply had to celebrate their blissful marriage with everyone they are close with.

**What are some reasons to renew your wedding vows?**

**Cupid's Advice:**

You and your husband have been married for a while now and want to show each other how much you love them still. Cupid is here to show you when it is a good time to renew your vows:

**1. Anniversary:** Your 10<sup>th</sup> year wedding anniversary is coming up and you want to make it special. Celebrate it by renewing your vows in front of close friends and family. You will get to

relive the biggest day of your life and show your husband how happy he makes you each and every day.

**2. Spice things up:** Even though you are extremely happy with your husband, things have been feeling a bit routinal lately. Between work, the kids, and weekend errands, the romance of your relationship has been slipping away. Rekindle the flame by renewing your vows. You will get a chance to express your love for each other yet again.

**3. Fresh start:** You and your spouse have been arguing a lot over little nuisances; you forget to turn off the kitchen light before going to bed, or he leaves a mess after cooking dinner. Take a break from the bickering and remind yourselves why you fell in love. Plan a vow renewal ceremony and write out new vows. You and your husband will see how much love you have for each other and the bickering is sure to die down.

**How did you renew your wedding vows? Share with us below.**

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## Matt Damon and Scarlett Johansson Learn to Love in 'We Bought a Zoo'





Benjamin Mee (Matt Damon) is a single parent, journalist and widow. While attempting to balance school lunches, fight off single moms and deal with a lousy editor, Mee spontaneously quits his job. Instead of worrying about how to pay bills and get by raising his 14-year old son and 7-year old daughter, he buys an old house in the countryside with amenities like lions, tigers and bears. His zookeeper, Kelly (Scarlett Johansson) is often his saving grace. *We Bought a Zoo* highlights the fact that a small amount of courage and a lot of love can get people through any number of tough situations.

**How do you support a loved one in tough times?**

### **Cupid's Advice:**

Stress on a relationship is like carrying a heavy weight on your shoulders. It slows you down, but the will to keep moving is the best way to survive. Here are some tips on how

to do so:

- 1. Get involved:** The best way to show your significant other support is to get involved with projects in which they are involved. It will also give you both some time together.
- 2. Give an ear:** Some days, your partner just needs to vent and have someone listen to them. Offer a shoulder for them to lean on.
- 3. Spin the cynicism:** It's okay to have doubts and to share them. It's more important for a relationship to have no hidden truths.

Release Date: 12/23

**How do you support your significant other? Share your thoughts below.**

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## **Matt Damon Credits Spouse for Keeping Busy Lives on Track**





Matt Damon may have a hectic schedule, but he told [People](#) that his wife, Luciana, “really keeps it together,” the actor said at a poker event at the Rio All Suites Hotel. “We just talk it out and work it all out.” The duo are expecting their third child this fall, (the baby will be Luciana’s fourth; she has a daughter from a previous marriage). Even their children are excited about the pregnancy, monitoring the arrival of their sibling closely. Damon said the kids can tell how their mother and her belly are doing at any given time.

**How can you keep a busy family schedule on track?**

### **Cupid’s Advice:**

Many families today juggle responsibilities beyond the parents’ jobs and kids going to school. How do you keep it together? Cupid has some ideas:

**1. Keep a calendar:** Create a calendar that allows you to manage multiple schedules in one place. Hang a wipe off board in a central location, like the kitchen. This will make it

easy to view and add new information as needed.

**2. Periodic Family Meetings:** Gather regularly to discuss upcoming activities and scheduling conflicts, so the family as a whole can find workable solutions (i.e., carpooling with the neighbors) in advance.

**3. Mistakes are OK:** When trying to handle many events that occur simultaneously, there's always the possibility of double booking something, or forgetting to add an activity on the list. Realize that everyone slips up sometimes – including you! Discuss ways to keep one another informed and help one other stay on track.