

**FAIR FIGHTING: EVERYBODY WINS!**  
*GUIDELINES FOR FIGHTING FAIR*

1. Fight by mutual consent: Don't insist on a fight at a time when one of you can't handle this type of strain. A good fight demands two ready participants.
2. Stick to the present: Don't dredge up past mistakes and faults about which you can do nothing.
3. Stick to the subject: Limit this fight to this subject. Don't throw every other problem into it; take them at a different time.
4. Don't hit below the belt: In your lives together you discover each other's sensitive areas. Don't throw them at each other.
5. Don't quit; work it out: Bring the fight to a mutual conclusion. Otherwise, it will just recur again and again. One or both may need a time out to cool down, but do work it out.
6. Don't try to win, EVER: You actually lose by winning. If one wins, the other loses and begins to build resentment about this relationship. That destroys rather than builds the relationship.
7. Respect crying: It is a valid response to how we feel, but don't let crying sidetrack you. It is a response for men as well as women.
8. No name calling: Saying things you'll only regret later cause bitter feelings and do nothing to solve problems.
9. No violence: Physical violence violates all of the above rules for fighting by mutual consent.

Remember, a fight between a couple has the purpose of clearing the air and expressing deep feelings in order to build a more unified life. Keep your goal in mind--the goal of sharing your lives with each other.

**WORDS WORDS WORDS**

**"No-No" Words**

"You never."  
"I told you so."  
"You always."  
"I don't want to discuss it."

"When will you ever learn?"  
"How many times do I have to tell you?"

### **"Yes" Words**

"I'm sorry."  
"I need you."  
"Please help me."  
"I did wrong."  
"Thank you."  
"I love you."  
"I want to understand you."

### **RECOMMENDED READING**

*Resolving Family and Other Conflicts: Everybody Wins*, by Mendel Lieberman & Marion Hardie

*Fighting Fair: Family Mediation Will Work for You*, by Robert Coulson

*The Good Marriage: How and Why Love Lasts*, by Judith Wallerstein & Sandra Blakeslee

*How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk*, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

*Getting the Love You Want*, by Harville Hendrix