

# Kept men: a choice or necessity

Upper-Intermediate level

# Task 1 - Warm-up

## **Answer the following questions.**

- What do you think is meant by “a kept man”?
- What is your attitude towards kept men?
- Why do some men become kept ones?
- How do they feel being kept by women?
- (If you’re a woman) Would you like to provide your man financially while you are climbing a career ladder?
- (If you’re a man) Have you ever considered to be a kept man? Under what circumstances?



# Task 3 - Let's find out more about kept men

**Watch the video and mark the sentences True or False.**

A kept man:

1. ... can be financially dependent but help his woman with child upbringing.
2. ... is financially insolvent.
3. ... strives for living together with a woman as fast as possible after having acquainted.
4. ... seems usually to be forgetful.
5. ... financially dependent but is able to do household chores by himself.
6. It's impossible to predict a kept man's emotional pattern.

# Task 4 - Discussion

## Discuss the questions:

1. Do you agree with the description of a kept man provided in the video?
2. What other traits would you add?
3. Do you know any kept man? How does he behave?
4. Why do some men choose this lifestyle?
5. Sometimes men become kept ones not just because they want to have easy money, but because they want to help their women. Can you provide any idea when and how it happens?
6. Can we consider paternity leave as a type of a kept man pattern? Why/Why not?



# Task 5 - Reading

**Read the article and say what you have learned new about the problems kept men could have.**

For modern men sick of the daily grind, it may seem like the perfect solution.

But stepping back from work to let your wife be the main breadwinner may not be quite as relaxing as it sounds.

It turns out that being a kept man may be rather dangerous for your health, raising the risk of suffering heart problems, chronic lung disease and stomach ulcers.

Men whose partners are the main earner are thought to suffer from stress-related physical

conditions because their masculinity is damaged. Toppled from the position of breadwinner, they may also seek to regain their manliness through smoking, drinking and eating unhealthily.

Psychologist Professor Cary Cooper, from Manchester Business School, says:

‘When men no longer play that role, their health suffers psychologically and that in turn damages their physical health. And it’s much worse if they have been made redundant. It will take generations before this mindset really changes.’

The research has found house-husbands are more likely to be unfaithful, with the risk of an affair rising the greater the earnings gap with their spouse.

While women who are the main breadwinners may try harder to keep their marriage on track, their husbands are more likely to abuse them or cut back on their contribution to housework.

The latest study looked at men who had always been breadwinners, those who held that position for most of their marriage and couples who alternated in breadwinning over the years.

The researchers also examined the effect of becoming a kept man early in a marriage in your twenties and thirties, midway through, and later on

Compared to men who had always been the main provider, those who lost their breadwinner status as young or older men were more likely to suffer stress-induced stomach ulcers, heart problems and chronic lung disease.

Explaining the effect on younger men, who also slightly raised their risk of high blood pressure, the study states: 'Given pervasive expectations that young men will invest heavily in their careers to ensure future success and that they will provide financially for their dependent children, we might expect that the negative consequences of wife breadwinning are particularly strong for men who violated the breadwinning norm during young adulthood when expectations are most stringent.'

Explaining the effect on older men, who may let younger wives shoulder the financial burden as they come close to retirement, co-author Deborah Carr, now professor of sociology at Boston University, said: ‘Men who came of age in the 1950s and were raised to be the main breadwinner may feel they are falling short, and may be made to feel inadequate by their peers, family members, and even their spouse and children.

‘These processes of stigmatisation can take a toll on a man’s sense of masculinity, self, and competence.’ She added: ‘Men who do not uphold

the male breadwinner role may feel like a professional failure, or may feel that they are failing their families by not providing for them economically.

‘Men who hold particularly rigid gender role expectations also may be troubled by their wives’ career success and earnings capacity, especially if the husband believes his wife’s work activities are taking away from her home-making activities.’

# Task 5 - Post reading activities

**Read the text again and answer the following questions:**

1. How do kept men compensate their lost status of a breadwinner?
2. How does kept men's behaviour change in a family?
3. What is the reaction of young men to their lost positions?
4. What is the aftermath for older men who lose the status of a breadwinner?



# Task 6 - Vocabulary

**Read the article again. Find the words and guess their meanings. Match the words with their definitions.**

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. daily grind          | a. a member of a family who earns money to keep it         |
| 2. breadwinner          | b. employment, that consists of boring activities          |
| 3. to topple            | c. to exist one after another                              |
| 4. to be made redundant | d. to cause something to happen                            |
| 5. to alternate         | e. to remove a person from a position of power             |
| 6. stringent            | f. not permitting any change                               |
| 7. rigid                | g. extremely severe  |
| 8. to induce            | h. to lose a job because your employer no longer needs you |

# Task 7 - Vocabulary practice

**Complete the sentences. Use the words:**

daily grind, breadwinner, topple, made redundant, alternate, stringent, rigid  
induce

1. I like to \_\_\_\_\_ physical and intellectual activities.
2. This was a secret bid to \_\_\_\_\_ the chairman and take his job.
3. Men are often expected to be the \_\_\_\_\_ in a family.
4. I keep to a \_\_\_\_\_ schedule.
5. The recession has driven many would-be-retirees back to the \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Regulators are forcing issuers to adopt more \_\_\_\_\_ criteria.
7. She was \_\_\_\_\_ from the company after eight years.
8. The aim of advertising is to \_\_\_\_\_ brand loyalty.

# Task 8 - Speaking

## Discuss the questions.

1. Do you believe that boring daily grind makes some men become kept ones?
2. (If you are a man) Would you agree to become a kept man if you were made redundant?
3. What is the reason that some men become kept ones?
4. Is the opinion that only a man should be a breadwinner stringent for you?
5. Do you believe that females have already toppled males from being breadwinners? What are the negative consequences?



# Homework

**Write an essay on the topic “The number of kept men is rising: reasons and consequences”**

# Keys

## Task 3

1.F, 2.T, 3.T, 4.T, 5.F, 6.T

## Task 5

Possible answers

- 1.Toppled from the position of breadwinner, they may also seek to regain their manliness through smoking, drinking and eating unhealthily.
- 2.The research has found house-husbands are more likely to be unfaithful, with the risk of an affair rising the greater the earnings gap with their spouse. While women who are the main breadwinners may try harder to keep their marriage on track, their husbands are more likely to abuse them or cut back on their contribution to housework.
- 3.For young men negative consequences of wife breadwinning are particularly strong for men who violated the breadwinning norm during young adulthood when expectations are most stringent.'
4. Men who came of age in the 1950s and were raised to be the main breadwinner may feel they are falling short, and may be made to feel inadequate by their peers, family members, and even their spouse and children.

# Keys

## Task 6

1.b, 2.a, 3.e, 4.h, 5.c, 6.g, 7.f, 8.d

## Task 7

1.alternate, 2.topple, 3.breadwinner, 4.rigid, 5.daily grind, 6.stringent, 7.made redundant, 8.induce