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**WHY YOU SHOULD ALWAYS TELL A WOMAN HER PARKING IS PERFECT**  
**BYLINE:** DAILY MAIL REPORTER  
  
**LENGTH:** 253 words

FOR some men, keeping quiet while their wife is on her 17th attempt at reversing into a parking spot would not come naturally.

But research suggests that they might be better advised to bite their tongue Z as lack of confidence is a factor in women's tendency to struggle in tasks requiring spatial awareness.

Tests showed that women improved in these activities when their self-belief was given a boost.

University of Warwick psychology researcher Dr Zachary Estes, working with Dr Sydney Felker from the University of Georgia Health Centre, looked at the ability of 545 U.S. students to perform a standard 3D mental rotation task, while at the same time manipulating their confidence levels.

Dr Estes, whose research paper is published in the journal Archives Of Sexual Behaviour, said: 'Prior research shows that women tend to do poorly on tasks that require spatial awareness.

'That's borne out in the common jokes we always hear about men being better at parking and map-reading than women.

'But we wanted to see why that was so we manipulated people's confidence in our experiments with spatial tasks, and it does seem that confidence is a key factor in how well women perform at this kind of task.'

He added: 'Our research suggests that by making a woman feel better about herself, she'll become better at spatial tasks Z which in the real world means tasks such as parking the car or reading a map.

So a little bit of confidence-boosting may go a long way when it comes to reversing the car into a tight parking spot.'

telegraph.co.uk

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**Sexist jokes 'make women worse drivers';   
Sexist jokes make women worse drivers, psychologists have claimed.**  
**BYLINE:** By John Bingham  
  
**LENGTH:** 545 words

They have come up with a new explanation for why some women struggle to read maps or fit into narrow parking spaces - it is the fault of men.

Women behind the wheel have been the butt of sexist barbs by their male counterparts for decades.

But now psychologists have found evidence that jokes about female drivers could be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

A joint study by researchers at the University of Warwick and the University of Georgia in the US found evidence that self belief was important for a woman's performance in spatial tasks which might naturally favour men.

It suggested that confidence-knocking jokes were likely to reduce a woman's performance behind the wheel while they performed better when it was boosted, the study suggested.

The findings of the study co-authored by Dr Zachary Estes, of Warwick, and Dr Sydney Felker from the University of Georgia, have been published in the US journal Archives of Sexual Behavior.

The researchers asked more than 500 US college students to perform a variety of spatial tasks, deliberately chosen to favour men.

They were divided into several groups along gender lines.

In some tests, the participants' confidence was manipulated by offering positive or negative feedback on their performance.

In one test half of the groups were made to monitor their own confidence levels while the other half were not.

The researchers noted that when the female groups had to monitor their confidence levels they fared less well than men.

But when they were left to their own devices they performed equally well as their male counterparts.

In another test some participants were showered with praise while another was not.

Those given the praise appeared to fare better in the next task.

Those women who were praised tended to fare as well as their male counterparts in tasks which were thought to favour men.

"Prior research shows that women tend to do poorly on tasks that require spatial awareness," said Dr Estes.

"That is borne out in the common jokes we always hear about men being better at parking and map reading than women.

"But we wanted to see why that was so we manipulated people's confidence in our experiments with spatial tasks, and it does seem that confidence is a key factor in how well women perform at this kind of task.

"Our research suggests that by making a woman feel better about herself, she'll become better at spatial tasks - which in the real world means tasks such as parking the car or reading a map.

"So a little bit of confidence-boosting may go a long way when it comes to reversing the car into a tight parking spot."

How about these sexist one liners

My wife drives the car like lightning.

You mean she goes very fast?

No, she hits trees.

My wife says she is a careful driver - she always slows down when going through a red light.

We bumped into some old friends yesterday... my wife was driving.

Policeman: When I saw you coming around that bend

I thought, "45 at least".

Woman: How dare you.

Wife: There's trouble with the car.

It has water in the carburettor.

Husband: That's ridiculous.

You don't even know what a carburettor is.

Where's the car?

Wife: In a swimming pool.

Why are jokes about women drivers usually one-liners?

So that men can understand them.