

Your Guide to Online Dating

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Your Guide to Online Dating

“Do you want to meet other singles who share your interests, values, and perspective on life? Do you feel as if it’s impossible to meet anyone, because you’re too busy, too broke, or too shy?”

There are millions of men and women around the world who are in the same boat. They’ve gotten tired of looking for partners in all the wrong places and want to streamline the process of finding a compatible mate.

Now there’s an option! It’s called **online dating**.

You may have seen movies like, “You’ve Got Mail,” “Must Love Dogs,” or “Napoleon Dynamite.” Online dating has made it to Hollywood, and it’s here to stay.

In 2004, in the U.S. alone, thirty to forty million people logged on to online dating sites each month. Over the year, they spent \$469.5 million on these services. One of the largest online dating services, **Match.com**, boasts 15 million members over 32 countries and 18 languages. Like most other dating services, it posts the numerous success stories it receives, as if to say, “Don’t believe that online dating works? Here’s the proof!”

The online dating services try to best one another with claims of success. **Date.com** boasts one marriage a week. **Eharmony.com** claims that it has the highest success rate, as measured by marriages per match, than any other service. Clearly, online dating services have a stake in your romantic success.



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Online dating sites offers many advantages over typical dating venues like bars and clubs.

- 1. They're less expensive than a night on the town.** For the same price as going out a couple a month, you can pay for a membership at an online dating service and meet hot girls any time of the day or night.
- 2. You can check out her interests, personality, and intentions before wasting time.** Dating profiles are intended to give you the idea of what a person is like at a glance. Don't be fooled by her looks: her profile will give you an insight into what she *really* like. And ultimately, *that's* what matters when it comes to enjoying her company.
- 3. Your dating pool just got bigger.** Even if you date aggressively, the number of people you can physically expect to meet where you live is limited. Online, you can meet people from your home town, from your home state, or from anywhere in the world. You get to decide the geographic proximity you prefer. And whereas in the real world you can't chat up every girl in the room, with online dating you can contact as many people as you like.
- 4. Everyone can see what a catch you are.** One problem with traditional dating venues is that they are so based on first impressions. If you're shy, it may be hard to get noticed at all. Online dating changes all that. Potential lovers get all your pertinent details up front, and you have just as much space as everyone else to sell yourself. Suddenly, you're on an equal footing with that barrel-chested football player who commands a room. That's power.
- 5. You potentially have a higher rate of success.** Considering that your dating pool has just got larger, you can afford to flirt and exchange emails with dozens of women at a time, and you can scope out compatibility before wasting time on girls you know aren't looking for the same thing you are. Even if you do better at the bar scene, adding an online profile is *still* going to get you in contact with more women. Dating is a numbers game, so the more women you meet, the more likely you are to find the girl you've been looking for to share your bed or your life.

So, what's holding *you* back from dating online?

1. Is It Right for Me?

If you have home internet access, are single, and would like to expand your dating possibilities, then online dating is for you! It's that simple.

The three biggest reasons that people don't use online dating services are as follows:

1. They don't know enough about it.
2. They have a misconception about the type of people who use these services.
3. They're worried about the type of people they may encounter online (e.g., freaks, stalkers, psychos).

If you don't know enough about online dating to know whether it's right for you, this book will provide you with the information you need to make an educated choice.

Take a minute to form a picture in your mind of the "typical" online dater. Include as many details as you can: is this person male or female? Professional or a student? Young or old? Educated or uneducated? Socially skilled or inept? Looking for marriage or for sex? A geek or a fashion plate?

The truth may surprise you. The "typical" online dater is likely to be male, with men outnumbering women on most sites, up to a two for one ratio on some sites. According to www.profilehelper.com, the sort of person you are most likely to encounter dating on the net has some higher education, earns a good income, and can be anywhere from 18 to 85 ... but is likely to fall between the ages of 35 and 55. Surprisingly, one of the largest growing demographics is seniors. It is becoming easier and easier for people over 50 to find love online.

Online dating has gone mainstream, but it has branched into a hundred of specialized services along the way. There are online dating services just for fitness fanatics, for widows, for Christians, for Jews, for African-Americans, for professionals, for gays and lesbians.... You name it, there's a dating service for it.



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EVERYONE uses internet dating services: young professional women, seniors, single dads, ... the list goes on. And why not? Online dating is fun, harmless, and a great way to expand your social circle. Online daters come from all walks of life. They are just as likely to be social butterflies looking for more chances to flirt as shy introverts. In fact, there's nothing "desperate" about online dating at all! Most online daters agree that the internet has become an acceptable, even preferable alternative to the bar scene. A high percentage of online daters are looking for old-fashioned romance, love, and marriage.



If you're looking for a short-term fling or casual sex, you're in luck. Many online daters are looking for the same thing. There are dating services that specifically cater to people looking for casual sex. Other online daters are married or in a rocky relationship, and want to check out their options or have a discrete affair. Unfortunately, they may not tell you until it's too late—in which case you need to decide whether you care or not.

Yep, online daters—just like the gal at the bar who says she models for a major cosmetics company—lie. And lying in print is often easier to pull off than lying in person. That's why you need to be savvy before swallowing her story.

Fortunately, online dating services have a raft of technologies designed to keep stalkers and baddies out of the system.

- Many services block any email message containing offending language and have a system set up to report any member who sends an offensive email.
- If you find yourself being pestered by anyone or bombarded with emails, you can simply delete the messages or block the sender from every sending you a message again.
- Most services prevent you from including any identifying details in your profile, like an address, telephone number, or email address, that would allow a user to locate you any other way except through the site.

2. How Does It Work?

There are two kinds of online dating services: **matchmaking services**, which use compatibility tests to match you up with potential beaus, and **personals sites**, which allow you to browse through all the profiles and contact whomever you please.



Online dating services function as a business by offering memberships to people who want to use all the services they have to offer. Usually, they allow you to browse their database for free to “hook” you. Most services also let you post a profile for free. However, if you want to contact anyone on the site, you must pay a membership fee, which can range from \$19.95 a month to \$49.95 a month.

In order to make sure you get the most for your money, you need to consider the following:

- **How many profiles they have in their database.** The more profiles they have in their database, the more chance that one of those profiles will be a woman right for you. You may also wish to check how many profiles are in your geographical area.
- **What clientele they cater to.** If you are *only* interested a particular sort of partner—someone with the same religion, ethnic background, or specific hobby—then you may want to try one of the specialized dating services. There are services for people seeking serious, long-term relationship (such as **Yahoo! Personals Premium**) and other services for people seeking casual hookups. There are services for seniors and services for single parents. These specialized services tend to have a smaller database but offer more chance of finding someone compatible with you.
- **Whether or not non-members can reply to you.** Most matchmaking services, in order to increase the size of their database, allow non-members to create and post free profiles. However, many sites, such as **eHarmony.com** and **AmericanSingles.com**, require that *both* individuals be paid members before they can communicate. Other sites, like **FriendFinder**, have a better system. Only one individual has to be a paid member, and membership enables him or her to send messages to whomever he or she likes. Once the member sends a message to another person, that person can respond *regardless* of whether or not he or she is a paid member.

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- **What other services they offer.** All online services, at the mere minimum, offer the ability to browse through members' profiles and exchange email messages. Many online services, though, are distinguishing themselves from the pack by offering other services. Some offer chat rooms, instant messaging, keyword searching, quizzes, and the ability to send "smiles," "teases," or other pre-programmed indications of interest.

Take a moment to browse through and familiarize yourself with the look and feel of some of the major online dating sites. You can tell a lot about the clientele of the site by browsing through profiles of their members.

- www.match.com
- personals.yahoo.com
- www.date.com
- www.eharmony.com
- www.lavalife.com
- www.americansingles.com
- www.friendfinder.com
- www.matchmaker.com
- www.dreammates.com
- www.ugate.com

An excellent source of reviews of online dating services can be found at:

www.onlinedatingmagazine.com



3. Getting Started

Once you've decided to try online dating and have chosen the site that most suits you, here is what you need to get started.

- 1. Internet access.** Even if you don't have a computer at home, I've known people to use the computer at their local library, at work during breaks, or at internet cafés. You don't *have* to have access at home ... though it helps.
- 2. A credit card.** If you decide to become a paid member of a site (which I recommend, since it's incredibly frustrating to see a girl who looks perfect but be unable to contact her), you'll register for a membership online and usually pay via credit card.
- 3. A quality digital photo of yourself.** This is the image that will appear next to your profile. Online dating sites review photos before posting them and will reject profiles that don't meet their standards. Make sure that the photo is well-lit, of good quality, and shows your face clearly. You want to show potential dates what you look like so that there will be no surprises.
- 4. Brainstorming materials.** It's a good idea to start brainstorming what you want to put in your profile before you even start the registration process. Look at a variety of profiles of other guys who suit your age group and see how they are selling themselves. Is there anything that makes one person stand out to another? Use any ideas that you particularly like, then come up with your own unique angle.

The registration process can be lengthy or quick, depending on the kind of site. I recommend that you set aside a good half hour, if not longer, for registration and creating your profile. You don't want to feel rushed and botch the job.

Remember that the clock is ticking from the moment your photo goes online. The online dating community can be quite static, so people will be immediately interested in any newbies to the site. You want your first impression to be good. So put the time in and invest in your profile like you would a résumé.



Creating a Profile



A profile, on average, will contain the following components.

- A profile photo and additional photos of yourself, often with captions.
- A subject line that describes you or what you're looking for.
- Your basic stats (selected from options they provide).
- What criteria a potential date must meet (again, selected from their options).
- An area for you to write whatever you like. You can choose to write a few paragraphs on who you really are, what kind of relationship you're seeking, your ideal date, a recent memorable experience, or anything you hope will attract the type of person you're looking for!

If you're not a good writer, coming up with a clever profile can feel like writing an essay for English class all over again. How can you possibly describe yourself in a paragraph? Where can you come up with a witty subject line to entice viewers to read your profile?

If the prospect of creating a profile is making you frantic, enlist the help of your friends. Your friends often know you better than you know yourself. They can offer suggestions, ideas, and the perfect way to sell you to all those available women out there. Just don't cross the line into having them write the whole thing for you. Your profile should be your creation.

Here are some tips to keep in mind as you write your profile.

- **Create a fun, quirky username.** Start standing out from the pack by choosing a username that intrigues or tickles the imagination. Whether or not you choose to identify yourself by your real name is up to you. Many people don't; they only divulge their first name once they've started a conversation with someone. Spend some time thinking about a username that suits your personality.

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- **See what tickles you in other profiles, and do the same yourself.** It's not plagiarism unless you use their words verbatim (and why would you, since this profile is about you?). So take advantage of the tricks of the trade!
- **Know what you want before you start.** You need to have a clear idea of what you are looking for in a woman *before* you start online dating. There are tons of women online, and you're going to need some criteria to sift through them all. Being specific in your profile about the kind of girl you're looking for can help, but be too specific and you risk the chance of no one replying at all. So the best bet is to make sure that you clearly indicate whether you're looking for a long-term relationship, casual dating, or just a friendship.
- **Don't talk about what you don't want in a potential partner. Do talk about what you do want.** If you talk about what you *don't* want, you'll be seen as a negative person. Better to expand your horizons than limit them.
- **Attract the kind of girl you want.** If you really like dating particular types of girl, then make sure that your profile is tailored to appeal to that type of person. Do you want to attract a business professional? Then mention your career experience and love of Armani suits. Do you want to attract an outdoorsy gal? Then mention a fun camping experience and your favorite hiking trail. If you want to try dating someone in a completely different field that you have no knowledge of whatsoever, then mention that you're fascinated by it and would love to learn more about it. (This is a great tactic in general, because women will take that as an invitation to teach you!)
- **Describe who you are, not what you look like.** A lot of online daters waste their time describing their appearance when anyone can see what they look like by looking at their photo. Don't waste space trying to make a girl believe that you're the hottest guy since James Dean. Leave that up to her to decide. Instead, use your valuable space to describe your personality, interests, where you are in life, or what you'd like to do someday.
- **Write like you talk.** If you find yourself getting stuck, then talk yourself through what you want to say out loud. Let what you write reflect how you talk. DON'T use overly formal language or that three-part essay structure

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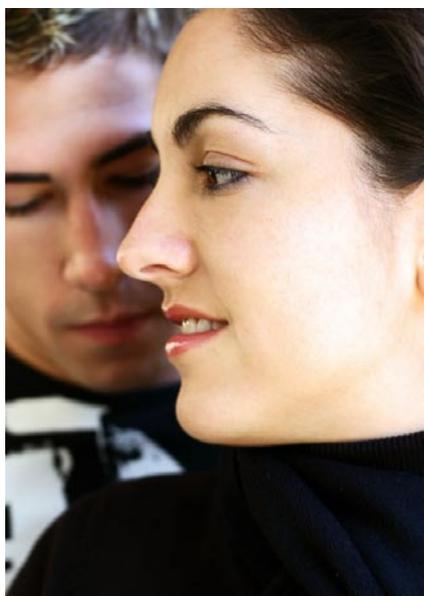
you learned in school. Instead, imagine yourself on a date for the first time. What would you say? How would you break the ice? What anecdotes would you tell about yourself?

- **Avoid lists.** I've seen so many profiles filled with lists of words. "I'm happy, fun, energetic, attractive, athletic, uninhibited, exuberant, enthusiastic...." Stop, please! Or there's the hobby line: "I like reading, cooking, visiting friends, sewing, road trips, art house movies, classical music, nice restaurants..." Avoid lists wherever possible. They'll just make your reader tune out.
- **Make yourself memorable with details.** Most people write such generic profiles that you forget them the moment you move onto the next. Profiles that stand out are profiles rich in details. For example, instead of saying, "I enjoy hiking, photography, and being outdoors," say something like, "I climbed Mt. Shasta last summer and won a photography award for my picture of the summit." Instead of saying, "My ideal date is hanging out on the beach," say, "I love how the feeling of cold sand under my feet contrasts with the warm skin of my girl as we walk along the beach." Get the picture?
- **Friendly—Upbeat—Approachable.** These three words will get you more dates than any other. That's because the world of online dating can be daunting. Your profile may seem standoffish without your even realizing it. That's because it's easy to get intimidated when you think about how many strangers are going to read your profile and make a judgment about whether or not they'd like to get you know better based off from a few paragraphs. Get over that paralysis fast by pretending that you're writing about yourself to a friend. By assuming that the person reading your profile is well-disposed to you, you'll convey a warm, friendly, genuine tone. You'll let the reader in on you inner thoughts, hopes, and dreams.
- **Show a sense of humor.** A sense of humor is consistently one of the most attractive features that both sexes look for in a mate. Be light-hearted and fun with your profile. Don't take yourself too seriously.
- **NO Downers!** Avoid mentioning *anything* bad about yourself. That means no mention of emotional baggage, no mention of past failed relationships, no mention of financial problems or that extra weight you'd like to lose.



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You need to present yourself honestly, but save the disqualifiers for the guys who contact you directly. There's one exception: ALWAYS mention children.



- **Intriguer.** Don't explain yourself completely in your profile. Maintain some sense of mystery. One technique that has worked successfully in many profiles is adding a "teaser" at the bottom. Tell about a suspenseful experience you had, but stop before the end so that the reader is left hanging. You may want to add, "Write to me and I'll tell you the rest of the story!" Or briefly mention a wild and exotic place you lived, but move onto another topic quickly so that the reader's interest has been spiked but not assuaged. In this way, teasers are a great icebreaker because they give potential dates something to ask you about in their first email.

- **Fill out the profile COMPLETELY.** Don't leave any blanks out. You want to give prospective suitors as much information as you can about yourself. Too, if you have the option of adding additional photos, do so. Add pictures of yourself doing an activity you love. Pictures of you on vacation in some exotic landscape can be a great conversation starter. Add informative captions.
- **Edit, edit, and edit again.** One of the biggest complaints about online profiles is how shoddy they appear. Profiles with spelling mistakes, grammatical errors, ALL CAPS, and abbreviations (how r u?) turn potential dates away. You wouldn't go on a first date dressed in grubby clothes or not having showered for a week, so make sure your profile meets résumé standards. Use spell-check. Spell out words completely and avoid putting whole sentences in all capital letters. Ideally, have at least one friend check over your profile before submitting it to make sure it conveys what you want.
- **Don't include any contact information.** I can't emphasize this enough. For your own safety, do not include your phone number, address, or personal email address. (Yeah, there are female stalkers out there, too.) Many sites don't allow you to, anyway. Once you get to know someone better, you can exchange details, but for now you don't want the whole world knowing how to get in contact with you.

Getting the Perfect Photo

When it comes down to the one thing you can do to get more responses, updating your photos is at the top of the list. Invest the time, effort, and planning in getting great photos for your profile. You'll be rewarded with more responses.

If you want to improve your photo profile, consider the following.

- **Take a picture when you're relaxed and having fun.** When you're relaxed and enjoying yourself, it shows in your face. When you're tense, nervous, or anxious to make a good first impression, the strain also shows.
- **Be spontaneous.** Spontaneous photos are better than planned photos, because they capture more of the "natural you." Have a friend who's a budding photographer bring a camera along to a fun excursion and take photos. Try to forget about the camera. The minute you're self-conscious, you'll stiffen up and take a poorer photo.
- **Good lighting or good editing.** Fortunately, digital photo editing can correct many problems, including red-eye, underexposure, or overexposure. Don't let that be an excuse to take a bad photo, though. The best photos are taken under the right lighting and right conditions.

Try to have your photo taken in natural lighting, with enough shadow to soften your features. If your photo doesn't turn out as you'd like, don't feel bad about modifying it with one of the many photo editing software programs out there. (One of my favorites is a free program by Google called Picasa. Download it at www.picasa.com.)



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- **Emphasize your best features.** It goes without saying that you should choose a flattering photo. Most people don't realize, though, that the photo shouldn't *just* flatter your features; it should also flatter your personality! Photos taken with animals, with kids, or with groups of friends will show your social side off to best advantage.
- **Tell a story.** The best pictures tell a story. Ask yourself what each of the photos you've picked tells about you. Is it a story that intrigues you?

What Next?

Once you've and filled out your profile, you will have a waiting period while the dating service reviews your profile to make sure that it meets their standard. Most sites have a several-day lag in between the time you submit a photograph and it is uploaded onto the site, as they must review every single photograph for decency standards.

Once your profile is online, you can either sit back, relax, and wait for the responses to start flowing in, OR you can start the fun part: proactively searching for your perfect woman yourself!

4. When Should We Meet?

The online dating world is a bit of a free-for-all, where there are few clear lines on etiquette. Though some believe that you should respond to every email sent to you, even if it's just a gentle rejection, other people have told me that they don't have time to write back to everyone who writes them. They just pick out the most promising and go from there.

The ideal is probably a balance of the two approaches. Avoid creating form letters that you send out to a number of women, hoping for one or two replies back. Women can spot these form letters from a mile away. Any letter you send should include identifying details about the person you're writing it to, such as her username or the interests she wrote about in her profile. Another common mistake is creating a "cover letter"-style first message, explaining your merits and why she should give you a chance.

Keep your first letter brief. Mention one or two things that you found interesting in her profile, or some interests that you have in common, and ask her if she'd be interested in chatting further. This will give her an opportunity to check out your profile and see if she's interested without wasting too much of her time. One great strategy is to always end every letter with a question about something you'd like to know about her. This will give her an opening when she writes back.



You may not get a response back. Women—especially good-looking women—get a lot of emails, and they don't have time to write personally back to them all. If you do get a reply, consider yourself lucky! She may have just written to tell you thank you but she's not interested, but at least it's a response. Write a quick thank-you note back, and continue on your search.

You may find that the handful of women you've managed to start conversations with balloons to ten, fifteen, twenty. You can't keep their names and stories straight. You're spending half the night on the computer trying to keep up with your correspondence AND sift through all the new messages you're receiving. What do you do?

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When you start dating online, you need to get used to rejecting women (and being rejected). There are so many people online that you have to continually narrow your field. Every so often, go through your regular contacts and weed out those that don't seem to be real prospects. It's only polite to write one final email telling them that you've appreciated your conversations, but that you no longer have time to write.

Sometimes, you'll find that women just stop writing to you. Chalk it up to the same intention: they just don't have time to correspond with everyone. If you're still keen, write to her one final time to see what she's been up to and ask if she'd like to continue corresponding. She may very well have just gotten bogged down and forgotten about you. Or she may no longer be interested; you don't know until you try.

Picking out the Good Ones

The process of getting that first email to eventually lead to a first date is a long and tricky one. Your initial emails should focus on getting to know one another better: ask questions about hobbies, career, family, musical preferences, political affiliations, religion ... anything *but* past relationships goes!

There's no set pattern to online relationships. You may just start emailing casually, then find you have more in common later down the line. Or, your initial attraction may be so strong that you email one another daily.

The good thing about online dating is that you decide whether you're compatible based on conversation and common interests rather than physical appearance. Online daters often establish a friendship and learn to sustain a conversation before they meet in person. Many people find it easier to share personal details and express their inner thoughts with the anonymity of the internet, so it may feel as if you're truly getting to know one another faster than you ever would in real life.

However, this sense is often an illusion. The anonymity of the internet also hides true intentions and identities. You may feel as if you and your online interest really connect, but unless you meet face to face, you're missing out on a crucial part of the person herself.



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Many guys find that women they've clicked with over the net are nothing like what they imagined in person. That blonde who exudes wit and charm in her emails is tongue-tied and distant in person. That's because email and face-to-face conversations are completely different, and there's no guarantee that a person who is good at one will be good at the other. Too, she may have expected someone different than the person standing in front of her. It's easy to build a fantasy in your head of the other person when all you've had is online contact.

If you feel quite strongly about someone, it's best to meet sooner rather than later. Otherwise, you may build up your expectations quite high and be crushed when the other person doesn't fulfill them. The face-to-face meeting is the clincher for an online romance: either the chemistry is there ... or it isn't. And I hate to say that, in the majority of cases, it simply isn't. But that's the gamble of online dating. You won't know until you meet!

Jumping the Hurdles

Before you meet for the first time, you should have done the following:

- **Exchanged extensive personal information.** The more details you share about your personal life, the more information you'll have to decide how much potential you have. If you live for snowboarding and she doesn't like to leave the house, chances are you don't have enough in common.

Be aware that women are quite wary of online dating. They may give a potential date the third degree and want to exchange entire life histories before meeting. This can not only frustrate and discourage both parties, but it removes all mystery from your first date *if* it happens. She wants to make sure that you're who you say you are, but sometimes she ends up making you feel like a criminal when you're just trying to ask her out on a date.

- **Have seen at least one clear, current photo of her.** Ideally, you'll want to see several photos of her in various settings—close up, torso, full body, etc.—so that you have a clear picture in your head. Be aware that very few people look like what you imagine them to look like in person. People often submit photos that are several years old, indistinct, or show them from a distance. Some people even submit photos of someone else! If her photos don't jive with what you know of her since you've chatted, ask her directly how recent her photos were. She should be able to give you dates and offer you a current photo, if you ask.



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- **Talked over the phone.** The next step after chatting online is chatting on the phone. You should ALWAYS talk over the phone before you agree to meet someone in person. Talking to her will give you a much better idea of her personality, her conversational style, and the way you interact. Don't ask for her home phone number (women are encouraged not to give away this information for security reasons). Instead, swap cell phone numbers.

5. Your First Meeting

You've done it. You've met a girl you're interested in, engaged in some cyber flirting, talked several times over the phone, and agreed to meet. How can you ensure that she feels comfortable and safe meeting a man she's only chatted online with?

- ✓ **Always meet in a public place.** Often, it can be best to arrange a meeting during the daytime so that things feel more comfortable. Don't feel offended if she wants to provide her own transportation. (Avoid asking her back to your house until the second date for security reasons.)
- ✓ **Suggest coffee.** There's no better place for a first date than a coffee shop. Why? Unlike dinner, meeting for a coffee is short, sweet, and to the point. If you click, great—make another date. If you don't click, you don't have to suffer long.
- ✓ **Agree on a signal to recognize one another.** I know one guy who always dresses in the same clothes that he has on his profile photo. Another guy tells his dates that he'll be wearing a particular team's baseball cap. Carry cell phones and have one another's numbers in case you arrive and can't find one another.
- ✓ **Avoid alcoholic drinks.** The first time you meet one another, it's best to steer clear of alcoholic drinks. Being clear-headed is essential for that first date.
- **Realize that both of you are going to be nervous.** Especially if it's your first date with a girl you've met online—or if it's her first date with a guy she's met online—you're going to feel strange, to say the least. Confess your situation, and laugh about it!



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- ✓ **Be warm, engaging, and non-threatening.** If she seems nervous, make sure you're always in close proximity to other people so that she feel safe. Make sure to speak in a quiet, gentle tone and avoid any aggressive direct eye contact. Sit back in an easy, relaxed posture. Talk about your family or your neices and nephews to reassure her that you're an average guy. Remember that she simply may be shy and need to relax around you first.
- ✓ **Keep the conversation flowing.** Review her profile beforehand and brainstorm a list of conversation topics based on what she put on her profile. If you're stuck for conversation topics, it's always a great starter to joke about the online dating experience. (Avoid talking about all the "weirdos" you've met, though. Be funny, not negative or judgmental.)
- ✓ **If something feels suspicious, look for an excuse to end the date.** If she is acting strangely enough to raise the hackles on your head, then trust your instincts. Check your cell phone and tell her sorry, but something has come up.
- **Keep the first meeting short.** The point of the first meeting is to see if you click, and you should know after a half hour to an hour whether or not this will go anywhere. If you're interested in her enough to see her again, end the date at a high point and ask her if she'd be free for another date next week. If you've been having a good time, she'll be regretful to see the date end and will likely to agree to a rematch.
- **Don't promise to call if you won't.** If, when it's time to say goodbye, you're not into her, then thank her for the date and say farewell. There are plenty of other guys and gals out there. One coffee date isn't going to make or break either of you.

If you end up finding the girl of your dreams online, don't ever feel ashamed about telling people where you met her. **Online dating is mainstream.** Your story may even encourage other people to try online dating.

Good luck, and happy dating!