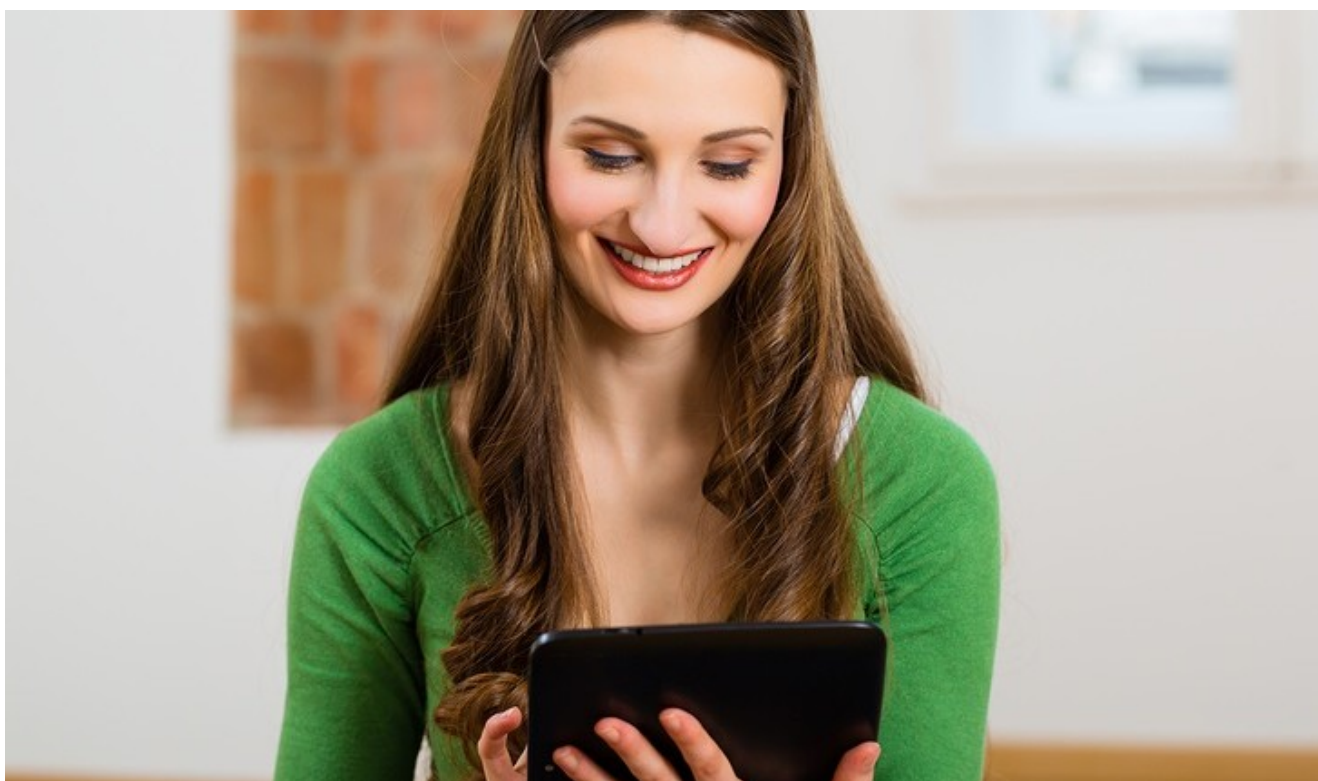


6 Ways to Tell if a Dating Site is Right for You



When you're choosing a dating site, ask yourself: what would make this one the right choice? Look beyond the free membership and unlimited messaging, and think about how all the different features of a dating site add up to give members a certain result. Of course, that's not to say that everyone on the same dating platform will get the same result – but they're often in the same general area. For instance, people don't go to eharmony when they're searching for a guy who can masquerade as their boyfriend at a big family function. By the same token, a lot of the users on Tinder didn't sign up for the purpose of finding lasting romance. Most users go to [CamSurf](#) because they are specifically looking for instant video chat.

Back to the main point – what features would a dating site need in order to give you the result you’re hoping for? Fortunately, the answer isn’t as complicated as you might think. Behind all the branding, proprietary algorithms, and psychology-based questionnaires are the basic features that every dating site should offer.

Once you know what you’re searching for, finding the right one won’t be hard at all.

1. What criteria does the algorithm use to find matches?

Dating apps like Tinder usually pair people based on their distance from each other. This type of algorithm doesn’t read into your preferences or personality, or even from your activity on the dating site. It’s just pure and simple – “here’s someone I found, they live 17 miles away”.

Then there are the algorithms that dig deep into what makes you who you are. Of course, in order for these to work, you’ll have to answer plenty of questions so it has something to work with. Once that’s done though, you’ll be amazed at how accurate the matches can get.

Another great feature is when a dating site can learn from the kinds of choices you’re making on the platform. You may have filled out some information as you were getting started, but what about the way you detail your preferences with likes, matches, and messaging? A really awesome algorithm will take this into account as well.

2. Are you able to use search tools?

Algorithms are one thing, and search tools are another. If you're tired of stopping to smell the roses, a well-developed search tool is the feature that can take your search for a date to the next level.

Keep in mind that not all search tools are created equal. There are the very basic ones – age, gender, distance, and maybe a couple of other things. Then there are the more advanced ones – ethnicity, eye and hair color, height, income, religion, occupation, etc. If that isn't enough, there are even search tools that are so keyword-friendly, you'll feel like you're googling your next date. You could search for a musician, a breed of dog, or a favorite food, and anyone with those words in their profile would come up as a match.

3. Can you report and block sketchy accounts?

Dating sites like to focus on the features that set them apart from their competitors, but this is one of those things that should always be there, even if it tends to get ignored. Romance scams, spam messages, and people who are just too demanding shouldn't be a part of your dating experience. Since the dating platforms themselves usually can't prevent this before it happens, it's pretty much up to the members to block and then report the accounts that are causing issues. It's not a very glamorous feature, but it sure does come in handy.

4. What are the limits on messaging?

Yes, there are places that allow people to send messages to their hearts' content at no cost, but this might not be what you want. Some people see "unlimited" and decide that they're going to take advantage of it, like they're at an all-you-can-eat buffet. This results in lots of messages that really didn't need to be sent. After all, how many times per day do you want to read "hey what's good"?

A better approach is to set limits on who the members can message. For example, if two people have to like each other's

profiles before chatting, that considerably reduces the number of unwanted messages they'll get in a day.

Some dating platforms apply limits to the number of messages or the word count. This won't be an issue for everyone, but it could end up cramping your style.

5. Are there filters that automatically weed out certain kinds of accounts?

Even if you already know what you want, sometimes it's nice to know what you don't want too. Everyone has a pet peeve (or several) that they aren't going to let slide on a dating platform. Do you hate it when people write out messages like a teenager composing a text in 2008? There's a filter for that. Is a drinking habit a dealbreaker? There's a filter for that too.

Different dating platforms have different kinds of filters, so do your research on how they work before deciding that it's a done deal. One platform might let you filter out certain kinds of accounts from appearing in your matches; another will let you personalize your inbox to prevent specific accounts from being able to message you.

6. Can you link a social media account?

You probably see them all the time – the little buttons that let you log in using social media. Believe it or not, there's actually more than one reason to do it if you're setting up an online dating account. You can save time by auto-filling information from your social media, and you can show other members that you're a real person.

Now that you're in the know, what's next?

All you have to do is start applying these questions to dating platforms. It shouldn't take that long to find one, with all the choices that are available. Once you've found the perfect

one, the real fun can begin!