

# Valentine's Day Outfit Ideas: Sophisticated



By Sarah Thaman

Excited about an upcoming Valentine's Day date? Even if you're going out with your husband or long time bf, it's a great excuse to shake things up and go out for a night on the town. Lost on what to wear? Never fear! I'm here with different looks that are sure to please you and your man. Here's the final of the three looks:

This Valentine's Day look is great if you're meeting up with your date after a long work day. Switch out your shoes for a flash of metallic and a big cocktail ring to jazz it up. Keep your makeup minimal and freshen it up with a highlighter to give your face a subtle glow. When swiped down the bridge of

the nose, the Cupid's bow, and near the temples, highlighter gives your face a gorgeous, fresh look. The pop of seafoam green in the fold-over clutch adds a surprising and polished detail. Again, keeping with the "fresh" and sophisticated look.

Enjoy a romantic night out looking fabulous! For more Valentine's Day inspiration visit this Gal's Guide to Valentine's Day at [handbagheaven.com](http://handbagheaven.com)!

*While Sarah Thaman may not be a professional stylist, she prides herself on choosing fashion that looks polished and classic, and she's always helping friends choose their date outfits. Although she's a writer for Handbag Heaven by day, outside of work she takes joy in being a matchmaker, a newlywed, and a momma to her precious puppy, Luna.*

---

## **Valentine's Day Love Advice: Does Your Relationship Add Up?**





By Donetta Huffman

Finding out if you and your sweetheart are meant to be is sometimes a gut feeling, judged by your relationship's strengths and flaws. However, many couples (more often women) seek clarity by visiting psychics and astrologers. Whether for fun or to validate some serious decision-making about the fate of a relationship, these 'supernatural' predicting methods are a trend for young women looking for advice. If you're a numbers gal, numerology may be the thing that you crave.

Numerology is the study of the symbolism of numbers to determine a couple's life path, destiny, soul and overall compatibility. It can lead you to some interesting romance facts. You may have heard about numerology, but thought it was a complicated mathematical process that was difficult to master. Don't worry; it's not like those hard to memorize, crazy x-y equations that made your palms sweat and gave your stomach butterflies while taking high school algebra tests. It's much simpler and can be easier applied and utilized in your everyday life. The

math is fairly simple. Here's what you do:

**Related:** [How to Define Your Aura to Find Lasting Love](#)

First, take the birthday of your boyfriend, husband, fling or love crush and add the numbers together one-by-one. For example, Justin Timberlake was born on: 1-31-1981. So add  $1+3+1+1+9+8+1$ . The sum that you get should be double digits. In this example we get the number 24. Now add those two numbers together to get the single digit Life Path for that person. In this case, Justin's Life Path number is  $2+4=6$ . This number has a meaning that numerology specialists use to decode relationships.

Take a look at these three celebrity couples below to see if numerology ranks true for these Hollywood Sweethearts:

### **Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel**

These two have very compatible numbers, Justin is a 6 and Jessica an 8. Both are goal-oriented and do not shy away from responsibilities. These two may pursue their goals in different ways, but as long as they play off of each other's strengths, their relationship has a chance to last. In addition, Jessica has an 8 Soul and Personality and Justin has an 8 Destiny, so the couple feels like they understand one another on a deeper level. Jessica feels protected by Justin, with his nurturing 6 Life Path. They actually share numbers with an actress who eventually became a princess. Grace Kelly transformed into Princess Grace when she left Hollywood and married Prince Rainier of Monaco in 1956. This is still known as one of the greatest [love stories](#) of all time.

**Related:** [Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel Show PDA at Dinner Party](#)

### **LeAnn Rimes and Eddie Cibrian**

This couple got off to a somewhat rocky start, as they were

both married to other people when they met. LeAnn is a Life Path 2 and Eddie is a Life Path 6. Considered one of the most loving unions, this is a romantic combination, as both numbers [love](#) easily, without holding back. Neither number is afraid to show their true feelings. Also, with LeAnn's 2 Life Path, she sees herself in Eddie's 2 Personality. His 6 Life Path recognizes her 9 Soul, thus having a deep artistic connection. LeAnn and Eddie are in great company when it comes to lasting relationships. With the same number combinations, Hollywood icon Bob Hope and his wife Delores were married for 69 years, while Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos have it all – three lovely children and very busy, successful careers.

### **Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie**

Somewhat of a curious combination of numbers, with Angelina's 5 Life Path and Brad's 4 Life Path. This can sometimes be a challenging combination, as 4's usually like routine, whereas 5's love change and the unexpected, but that is where the initial attraction might have started. They are so different, but could have found admiration in these qualities. Angelina not only has a 6 Soul, but also a 6 Destiny – it is no wonder she keeps having and adopting children. 6's are the maternal, paternal number. When she met Brad, she saw this in Brad's 6 Personality. The qualities they show to the world are that of loving parents. With Angelina's adventurous Life Path 5, life with her promises never to be boring!

Originating from the most well-known Greek mathematical thinker, Pythagoras, Numerology predates Tarot, and is quickly becoming the biggest craze in self help. Semi-Circle Numerology cards can give people the ability to feel powerful in the realization that they have been sent here for a purpose and given many tools to accomplish life's mission.

For more information on Donetta Huffman and Numerology or to purchase one of her many services, visit

# Valentine's Day Advice: Indulge In Simple Pleasures



By Renee Lee

It doesn't matter if you live life in the fast lane, with family in the suburbs, or somewhere in between, Valentine's Day is a time to take a moment to appreciate yourself and those we love. My rule of thumb is to remove all pressures associated with the holiday and instead indulge in life's simple pleasures. Because I am a Matchmaker here in NYC, I've

ended up working in a very celebrity focused market.

Therefore, let's take a look at recent heart break and hookups as examples on how to make Valentine's Day that much sweeter.

### **Treat yourself to chocolates**

Going through a Demi Moore style break up is awful! The dread of Valentines Day looming ahead can feel more excruciating than the idea of an all day screening of *The Notebook*. But the key thing to remember is the Diva you are within. Forget the "I am no one, until someone loves me" stigma, and instead take a moment to be kind and celebrate the most awesome love of all – the love for yourself! Why be upset you didn't end up with some sad drugstore chocolate, when you truly deserve something as sophisticated as Frangelico Truffles? These truffles, created by my favorite sweet liqueur, are the perfect simple pleasure when it comes to treating yourself.

Plus, once you realize your worth in chocolates, you will never again accept a boy to do a man's job.

### **Bring back the first meal you had together**

For couples like Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel who have been through the break-ups, shake ups, and make ups, why not take a moment to celebrate the joys of what brought you to the strong place you are in now? A great way to go back to the simple pleasures for dinner is to cook the first meal you ever made together. For a gift highlighting your life together, create a photo book of your life so far, with the last page saying "to be continued..."

### **Predict your own future**

This will be the first Valentine's Day that Justin Theroux and Jennifer Aniston spend together, so why not get a little frisky? Jennifer is probably over tabloids predicting her future, and perhaps your family and friends do the same thing

to you. This time it's your turn. Create her own future with some custom fortune cookies. Nothing will be more of a surprise than an after dinner dessert that holds sexy hints to your next move for the evening.

### **Dedicate and decorate cupcakes**

It's Heidi Klum's first Valentine's Day with just the kids and no Seal, so a great idea is to make cupcakes with a heart.

Put all the family members names in a hat, and have each person grab one or two. For the person you selected, you will decorate a cupcake as a dedication to them. No matter if it's for an ex-husband, best friend, book smart cousin or meddling sister, it's a creative way to remember those who make your life sweeter.

So this year, take a minute, de-stress and think about those simple pleasures that make life sweet; whether it's a Frangelico truffle, time with your children or something as easy and nice as a meal and a great book.

*Renee Lee is a Matchmaker in NYC and has a Master's Degree in Counseling from New York University's Department of Applied Psychology. She's been featured in publications such as OK! Weekly, In-Touch Weekly, People Magazine, and The New York Daily News, and also hosts her own radio show "Your Dating Truth with Renee Lee."*

---

## **Valentine's Day Date Ideas: Five Unique Ways to Spend the**



# Holiday



By Erika Mionis

Valentine's Day is the one holiday completely dedicated to our love lives. If you're single, you'll survive. If you're in a relationship, then congratulations! Now you can worry about gifts and date ideas for the coming holiday. Though there's nothing wrong with the classic dinner date, you can be sure you and your significant other won't be the only couple with the same idea. Here are a few unique date ideas to make this Valentine's Day one you'll never forget:

- 1. Hot air balloon ride:** Hot air balloon rides are well worth the expense. Find the nearest hot air balloon company (it may be a bit of a drive, depending on where you live) and set out to see the sunrise or sunset. Most companies offer a light

breakfast or dinner after the ride. Hot air balloons can easily carry up to five people, so try splitting the cost with another couple.

**2. Horse-back riding:** For the animal-loving couple, a date on horseback can be fun and romantic. Most ranches offer trail rides that bring you through isolated parts of nature. Make sure to talk over lunch or dinner afterward, as loud conversation mid-trail often startles the horses.

**3. Hiking:** Tough out the last of winter on an outdoorsy date with your partner. Make sure to pick a trail that suits your athletic abilities, because though exercise is fun, it's hard to feel attractive when you're sweating and gasping for air. Pack a picnic for a quick lunch/snack once you reach the end of the trail or the top of a mountain.

**4. Paint pottery:** Decorating pottery is a fun and creative way to spend the holiday. You can work as a team on a single pottery piece, or you can each work separately and compare your craftsmanship. For the especially artsy couple, try making pottery instead of just painting it.

**5. Play games:** Try visiting an upscale arcade to play some pool. To make the game a little more interesting, decide on a friendly wager, like a massage exchange. After the game, grab some quarters or tokens and visit some of the other games in the arcade. Your next competition comes in the form of skee ball.

**Do you have any Valentine's Day date ideas? Feel free to share them below.**

---

# Valentine's Day Outfit Ideas: Sweet



By Sarah Thaman

Excited about an upcoming Valentine's Day date? Even if you're going out with your husband or long time bf, it's a great excuse to shake things up and go out for a night on the town. Lost on what to wear? Never fear! I'm here with three different looks that are sure to please you and your man. Here's the second installment:

If the sophisticated and sexy styles aren't really you, go for a sweet look with pinks and reds! After all, it is Valentine's Day. Take a cue from the holiday's signature colors and pull together a feminine ensemble. Don't worry, this "sweet" look won't be too candy hearts and lollipops.

This dress hits on the color-block trend and the sheer fabric makes this look extra flirty. A red wedge offsets the outfit, and the quilted handbag makes for a great shoulder bag. Use a light pink makeup palette to keep your face soft and pretty.

Enjoy a romantic night out looking fabulous! For more Valentine's Day inspiration visit Handbag Heaven's Gal's Guide to Valentine's Day!

*While Sarah Thaman may not be a professional stylist, she prides herself on choosing fashion that looks polished and classic, and she's always helping friends choose their date outfits. Although she's a writer for Handbag Heaven by day, outside of work she takes joy in being a matchmaker, a newlywed, and a momma to her precious puppy, Luna.*

---

## Top 10 Most Romantic Movie Locations





By Matthew Dougherty

The big day for romance is coming up, which means it's time to figure out where you might spend the holiday. Here are ten locations from great movies that if you can afford to visit, and if they are real, they would be a perfect spot to spend Valentine's Day with your significant other.

#### **10. Hawaii- *Forgetting Sarah Marshall***

In *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*, Jason Segel's character goes to Hawaii to get over his recently ended relationship. On the trip he finds a new love in Mila Kunis. They spend their time together going to bars, hanging out on the beach, and exploring the beautiful islands. Hawaii proves to be a land of love in this great romantic comedy.

**Related:** [Celebrities Who Love to Vacation in Hawaii](#)

#### **9. Forks, Washington- *Twilight***

The atmosphere may be gloomy, but love is in the air in this small northwestern town. Whether you are into vampires or

werewolves, Forks has everything you would need for a perfect Valentine's Day. The true challenge will be trying to find a date who won't bite.

## **8. Aboard the Titanic- *Titanic***

Unfortunately, the Titanic is buried under water, but it was such a beautiful ship. And, while the plot may be mostly fictional, Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio make their love so believable that you forget what has to happen in the end, making that iceberg all the more tragic. Titanic was a perfect place to meet someone and if it hadn't sunk, it would have made a great Valentine's Day vacation.

## **7. Hogwarts- *Harry Potter***

Like any other high school, Hogwarts is a place full of drama. Whether it's the return of the Dark Lord, or the hero's first kiss, Hogwarts never feels too far off from your ordinary Muggle high school. The second half of the series saw Harry date his best friend's sister while Ron and Hermione finally get together. No love potion required.

**Related:** [The Most Romantic Destinations in the United States](#)

## **6. 1920s Paris- *Midnight in Paris***

Paris on its own is perhaps the most romantic city in the world, but as portrayed in *Midnight in Paris*, the 1920s was the time to be there for true romance. Running into such legends as Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald, Owen Wilson's character eventually falls for a beautiful French girl, played by Marion Cotillard. This beautiful city becomes the stem from which their love blossoms.

## **5. The American South- *The Notebook*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Forrest Gump***

A lot of great love stories take place in the South. One of the earliest and most famous is *Gone With the Wind*, which took

place in Georgia. Forrest Gump and Jenny both grew up in Alabama. *The Notebook* took place in South Carolina. Clearly, the South is the place to be for love.

#### **4. Beast's Castle- *Beauty and the Beast***

In this tale as old as time, Belle is taken to a beautiful castle full of lively characters and one beast. But as the story goes, the beauty falls in love with the beast in this magical place. Furniture speaks when Belle and the beast choose not to.

#### **3. Any 1980s High School- *Sixteen Candles*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, *The Breakfast Club***

High school is a time where everyone at least partly grows into who they are meant to be. A lot of that has to do with relationships. In the 1980s, director John Hughes made three movies that got high school perfectly, while having that '80s stamp on them. *Sixteen Candles*, *The Breakfast Club*, and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* all showed high school romances at their best.

**Related:** [Weekend Date Idea in the Big Apple](#)

#### **2. New York- *Manhattan*, *When Harry Met Sally*, *Spider-man*, *New Year's Eve***

New York City is the setting for numerous love stories. Woody Allen saw the romance of the Big Apple in his film *Manhattan*. *When Harry Met Sally* shows Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan fall for each other in the populated borough. Plus, who can forget the upside down kiss Spiderman and Mary Jane shared? The most recent romance in New York was *New Year's Eve*, a film showcasing a large number of romances. Clearly Manhattan is the place to be for love, but one other movie location beats it out...

#### **1. Casablanca- *Casablanca***

Arguably the best love story ever told aside from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, *Casablanca* is a classic film that is all about its location. Humphrey Bogart stars as Rick Blaine, the owner of a nightclub in Casablanca. An old flame comes back into his life, and they end up rekindling their love. It is the ultimate love story, but since Casablanca is in Africa, you may just want to rent this one instead.

What other movie locations would you want to visit on Valentine's Day? Share your thoughts below.

---

## Valentine's Day Outfit Ideas: Sexy







By Sarah Thaman

Excited about an upcoming Valentine's Day date? Even if you're going out with your husband or long time bf, it's a great excuse to shake things up and go out for a night on the town. Lost on what to wear? Never fear! I'm here with three different looks that are sure to please you and your man. Here's the first one:

Go for an understated, sexy look this Valentine's Day. Instead of baring it all, choose a dress with a fair amount of coverage, and just the right amount of skin. This one-shoulder body con dress is sure to do the trick. Plus, it's navy, which happens to be the new black. Keep accessories nude and minimal to bring the focus to your face. A nude lip and smokey eye would pair beautifully with this look, and so would a low messy bun. The clutch purse with a large buckle is a great match for this look! Be fierce and fabulous in this sexy look.

Enjoy a romantic night out looking fabulous! For more Valentine's Day inspiration visit [Handbag Heaven's Gal's Guide](#)

to Valentine's Day!

*While Sarah Thaman may not be a professional stylist, she prides herself on choosing fashion that looks polished and classic, and she's always helping friends choose their date outfits. Although she's a writer for Handbag Heaven by day, outside of work she takes joy in being a matchmaker, a newlywed, and a momma to her precious puppy, Luna.*

---

## **Valentine's Day Advice: How Successful Women Can Ditch Dating Duds**





By Jane Atkinson

A few weeks ago, on the new hit show *Whitney*, one of the characters was freezing her eggs in order to delay finding a partner and having children. Is this a sign of the times?

Both women and men are waiting longer and longer to get married for the first time, according to the Census Bureau, and fewer women are having babies before their 40<sup>th</sup> birthdays, the Centers for Disease Control reports. Interestingly, more and more women are having babies well into their 40s. Could it be that it has become more difficult for couples to connect romantically?

**Related:** [Romance Resolutions for 2012](#)

“Women are likely to be more independent and professionally successful than they were a generation or two ago, and that’s wonderful, but it can come with baggage,” says Jane Atkinson, author of *The Frog Whisperer: A Three-Step Approach to Finding Lasting Love*. “We’re less likely to think about the energy we’re putting out to others, particularly the opposite sex,

and that energy has a lot to do with how people react to us.”

The thing is, finding Mr. or Ms. Right requires taking your eyes off of work and focusing on yourself more. What can you do to become the person *you* would want to date? Atkinson offers some tips for finding “the one.”

**Related:** [Fishing for Mr. Right – Types of Guys to Throw Back](#)

**Figure out what you’re looking for:** Have you thought hard about what kind of person you’re looking for? One trick is to visualize your perfect day. Are you at the beach? Traveling? Is the man with you quiet or chatty? Is the woman serious or funny? Does he want children? Does she go to church? This will help you identify the characteristics and values of your Mr. or Ms. Right so you can recognize them when he or she comes along.

**Get happy in your own head:** Once again, it’s all about attraction. Putting out positive, confident energy will attract the same. Besides, it’s never a good idea to rely on other people to make us happy. If you need to recover from old hurts, lose weight or find a job, take care of that business first.

Think you’re ready? Test yourself with this quick quiz.

1. Are you happy with yourself? (Or are you miserable because you’ve put on 50 pounds since your divorce?)
2. Are you looking for someone to rescue you or take care of you? (If you answer “yes” to this one, you may not be ready.)
3. Is there room in your life for a relationship? (Or do you have three kids and work a 60-hour week?)
4. Has enough time passed since your last relationship? (Or are you still wounded?)

Now, get yourself fabulous. Rather than, “Why can’t I find a good man?” ask yourself, “Who do I need to become to attract the man (or woman) who is perfect for me?” It’s not about

changing you; it's about being your best you. Part of that is your mojo – your self-esteem. If your mojo is slipping, you'll attract control freaks, players and jerks. Pump it up with a makeover, a workout, a sincere inventory of your attributes.

Get out there! Put on your sexy jeans get yourself out the door. Where to start looking? If you enjoy working with your hands, volunteer for a Habitat for Humanity project. If you've always wanted to learn Italian, take a class. If you love to do yoga, check out a new studio (ladies, you'll find a surprising number of guys there.) Perhaps you find a new church or take a class on Buddhism. The list of meeting spots for singles is a long one: bookstores, dance clubs, supper clubs, book clubs, gyms, golf courses, rowing clubs, dog parks.

Atkinson's tips come from real-life experience. At 40, she realized she'd been [kissing](#) a lot of frogs and found not one prince. She applied the model she developed for her business, tweaked it and came up with "The Frog Whisperer" – *and* a prince of a husband.

Although it was never in her playbook to have children, when she got married, she became an instant stepmom and grandmother (G-Ma) to now 4-year-old Jayden. Looking back, she realizes it sure beat freezing eggs and starting down the difficult road to conception in mid-life!

*Jane Atkinson is the author of The Frog Whisperer and The Frog Whisperer Journal as well as a Positive Practice audio CD to help women (and men) get mentally ready for meeting their perfect mate. She lives in London, Ontario, with her husband of four years, John.*

---

# 5 Ways Nice Guys Can Finish FIRST



**By Romance Recovery's Johanna Lyman for GalTime.com**

Listen up guys everywhere – I'm tired of hearing that nice guys finish last. Women, at least emotionally mature women, want a man who is nice, not a jerk. They just don't want a doormat.

Think nice, not passive. Doormats are no fun to date, but most women want to see their friends (and themselves) dating a nice guy.

To help you guys understand the difference, I came up with a list of things a man can do– nice guy or not– to finish first.

**1. Act confident.** If you don't believe you can get a date, you definitely won't. But remember, confidence doesn't mean arrogance and it doesn't mean you're self-absorbed. How do women perceive confidence, you ask? Smile and maintain good eye contact to start. I don't mean stare her down, or give a smoldering, "I know you want me" look (that's not nice). Just be direct and open. Your eye contact should say, "*I'm interested in getting to know you better, I'm curious about you.*" Put your drink down between sips (sips, not gulps) rather than holding onto it like a pacifier. And use your body: lean in every once in awhile for more intimacy. Just don't forget to pull back again to give us space. Non-sexual touch is great too: rest your hand lightly on her forearm after a laugh, or give a shoulder nudge to emphasize a point.

**Related:** [Do Nice Guys Always Finish Last?](#)

**2. Ask her questions about herself.** This is a no-brainer for the nice guy, because you are genuinely interested in her. If you're not a natural nice guy, this is the best tip you can get for your money. Women can't stand it when men are so self-absorbed they only talk about themselves. We want to know about you, but we also want to know that you remember we're real people, not just a piece of meat.

**3. Stop trying so hard to please.** It's ok if we don't agree on every single thing. We want to know you have a spine of your own. Have a strong opinion about something and let us know about it. That doesn't mean you aren't open to a differing opinion, but it's ok to "agree to disagree." I'll give a small example: when we ask where you want to go for dinner, have an opinion. It's irritating to hear, "I don't know, what do you want to do?" all the time. I'm sure you think the same thing; you'd rather hear our opinion, even if you disagree. Here's a clue: both men and women think that someone who knows what they want out of bed will also know what they want (and not be afraid to tell us) in bed, and that is sexy as hell.

**Related:** [Four Biggest Mistakes MEN Make in Bed](#)

**4. Make her laugh.** Even if it's at your expense once in awhile, the number one aphrodisiac for women is laughter. Think improv, not knock-knock jokes. Life is pretty funny all by itself, so you don't have to be cracking jokes all the time. Nice guys are great at self-deprecating humor, so just be careful not to overdo it. It's even ok to gently poke fun at her once in awhile, as long as it's not a joke about her personal appearance. Seriously guys, no matter how confident a woman is, jokes about her appearance are always taboo. Consider it our Achilles heel.

**5. When the time comes, be the sexual initiator.** I know you don't always want to be the one to initiate, but biologically women are hard-wired to expect men to initiate sex. Especially in the beginning, don't be afraid to grab your woman and plant a juicy kiss on her. See #1 on the list; confidence is a huge turn-on. You can look for clues about how you're doing without appearing too eager to please. Here's a clue: voice inflection is key. "Do you like that?" is wimpy; "Do you like that?" is not. The first implies she might not like anything you're doing, while the second (said with confidence) implies that she likes it all and that in particular.

---

# **Five Signs Your Relationship Won't Make It Until Valentine's Day**





By [Whitney Baker](#)

For many couples, the lead-up to Valentine's Day is an exciting time filled with promise and possibility. The cold weather offers an excuse to snuggle up, while the holidays are the perfect reason to shower each other with love and affection. Unfortunately, many relationships aren't so lucky.

According to a recent study in *Men's Health*, the time span from Christmas to Valentine's Day is one of the most common break-up times of the year.

Regardless of the month or season, when your relationship is over, you just *know*. But if you're still on the fence, unsure what to do about your love interest, here are five red flags you should watch for in your relationship. Otherwise, you probably won't make it to Valentine's Day:

**1. Too much fighting:** The holidays are a special time to share

with your significant other; they should be filled with fun, [food](#) and family, not fighting. If you find yourself unhappy more often than not, it may be time to [call it quits](#).

**Related:** [The Holidays: 8 Ways to Ruin Your Relationship](#)

**2. Finding other priorities:** New Year's Eve marks the start of a new year and the chance for a new beginning. That said, who better to kick things off with than the one you love? If you'd rather hang out with your friends or spend a low-key night with your family, you need to consider why. Spending time with your partner should be a priority, especially on such a fun holiday.

**3. No connection left:** Lack of similarity emerges over time, and these differences can either bring you closer together or tear you apart. You need to feel connected to your partner, and something as simple as an impersonal present or thoughtless holiday card can be enough to make you feel distant and misunderstood.

**Related:** [10 Holiday Gift Ideas for That Special Someone](#)

**4. Nothing to say:** When your relationship is new, you always have something to talk about, but as time goes on, conversation may become stale and forced. Remember that communication is key for every successful relationship. With nothing left to say, it may be time to start looking somewhere else for love.

**5. Making plans alone:** The beginning of January is typically a time to reflect on the year behind you and plan for the year ahead. If you and your partner have a strong and stable relationship, then the two of you will make plans *together*. Thinking about events, vacations and getaways that take you away from your significant other could mean you're ready for a fresh start in more ways than one.

**Cupid wants to know: How did you know when your relationship**

was over?

---

# The Ex Factor: What Taylor Swift and Demi Moore Have In Common



By [Charly Emery](#)

2011 served up some serious heartbreak for a multitude of our favorite celebrities. Off the court, Tony Parker messed up his shot at matrimonial bliss with Eva Longoria. Arnold Schwarzenegger mis-played his hand with Maria, while the Latin

heat known as Jennifer Lopez and Marc Anthony incinerated any enthusiasm for making their marriage work. Twitter gave us a glimpse behind the final curtain of Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore's six year production, and Taylor Swift kept us all armed with a plethora of musical angst-filled love memoirs – courtesy of her little black book of breakups.

So which “ex factor” do Taylor Swift and Demi Moore along with a host of other stars have in common?

They can all take advantage of the clean slate that this brand new year offers by using their “exes” to attract their best relationships ever – and so can you. Here are three tips out of my new dating handbook, *Thank Goodness You Dumped His Ass—Use Those Mr. Wrongs to Lead You Straight to Mr. Right*, for Taylor, Demi and anyone else who's ready to replace their chemistry experiments with a winning romantic concoction that lasts:

**Related:** [Demi Moore Proves There's Hope After Divorce](#)

1. Assess who you were in your previous relationship(s) and ask yourself why you chose him/her.

**Charlyism #5-1:** The worse your ex was, the more important it is for you to pinpoint why you chose him [or her] and invested the effort you made.

2. Re-define what comprises an A-list mate for you, along with what you wish to experience in “your ideal relationship” so you can determine if it's possible with those you're [dating](#).

**Related:** [Amy Spencer Talks About 'Meeting Your Half-Orange'](#)

**Charlyism #3-3:** Defining the necessary ingredients for the relationship you wish to consume will prevent you from living life with a bitter aftertaste.

3. Love yourself first by using your awareness of what you're

looking for to drive your choices so the love portfolios you invest in yield big dividends in satisfaction and fulfillment.

**Charlyism #3-10:** Make sure you love your [partner] more than the idea of being in love with him [or her] and **Charlyism #3-11:** Choose to be 100% of you and single over being less than your best with a man [or woman].

Cheers to your best relationship ever.

*Charly Emery*

*Personal Strategist | TV Personality | Author*



---

## 7 Ways to Flirt In a Web 2.0 World





By Jessica Smith

The World Wide Web offers us an unending sea of possibilities, and people aren't hesitating to take advantage of the dating scene that the Internet has to offer. Many of us lead busy and hectic lives, and it can seem impossible to meet someone worth dating on your own, so the convenience of dating sites can make finding "the one" easier. Of course, you can flirt with people online by sending smiley faces or winks, but all body language and human contact is lost. That said, even though you may not be able to charm your possible love interest physically, here are some ways to flirt online while simultaneously keeping your cool:

**1. Wit and humor:** The easiest way to break the ice is by making people laugh. If you can make someone break out into a fit of laughter or bring a smile to their face, you've already caught their interest and they're going to feel more comfortable to be themselves around you. The sooner the tension is broken, the sooner you'll be going out on real dates.

**2. Step by step:** When you're chatting online instead of in person, it's easy to reveal information you wouldn't normally be ready to reveal if you were face-to-face. Take things just as slow as you would if you were meeting in person. This will keep a little mystery alive in the relationship and keep them coming back for more.

**3. Honesty:** When you're communicating over the Internet, you can be whoever you want to be and say whatever you want to say. Your partner will be analyzing you the best he or she can, but if they find out later that you were dishonest, you've ruined your chance at love. Being truthful is a key ingredient to a successful relationship, so start it off right.

**4. Friendship:** Become friends before lovers. Get to know each other as much as you can virtually before you meet each other physically. You'll feel like you've known the person forever if you've both been honest with each other. This way, you already have an emotional attachment and all that's left is the physical attraction.

**5. Play hard to get:** The Internet is all around us. We have it at work, at home and even on our phones. That means you're available almost 24/7 to interact online. Play hard to get! Don't respond right away, or don't respond all day. The person on the other end will be checking their chat or email constantly to see if you've responded, and once you finally do, you'll have them hooked.

**6. Compliments:** Handing out compliments is an art. Over the web, you have to compliment each other without sounding creepy, and say something that will receive a positive response. You're probably not going to be the first guy or girl to tell them they're beautiful or handsome, so be creative. A well thought out and personalized compliment will lead to infatuation and potentially more conversation.

**7. Confidence:** Being confident without being cocky is a turn on. We all want someone who is sure of who they are and is always willing to be themselves in any situation. Don't pretend to be someone else, because more than likely your date will be able to see through that when you meet in person. If you can exude as much confidence as you do online in person, you just might seal the deal.

**What steps did you take to meet your partner while online dating? Share your comments below.**

---

## **The Psychology Behind Status Updates**







By Jennifer A. Powell-Lunder, Psy.D., GalTime.com

A few days ago a guy I was friendly with in college changed his status from 'single' to 'in a relationship.' The flurry of speculative phone calls that followed reached epic proportions. "I didn't even know he was divorced," cried one friend. "Who would marry him?," asked his ex-girlfriend from college.

There were a couple of real ironic things about this surge of interest; first, it reconnected me with college friends I had not spoken to in a while. As you can imagine, the conjecture-laden conversation turned from hypothesis about him, to catch-up about us. Secondly, while this gentleman was a good friend in college, time and distance weakened the bond between us.

In reality, none of my friends really spoke with him except through *Facebook* and even then contact was indirect (i.e. an occasional 'Like' regarding a posting he'd made).

**Related:** [New Study: Does Facebook Cause Stress!?](#)

"So," I wondered, "why all the interest?" I mean it was very

unlikely that any of us even knew his new love!

I think the answer lies in part in human nature. We are biologically programmed to be a curious bunch. Perhaps boredom contributes to our interest as well. We are all looking for a way to connect, to interact interpersonally. Status updates can break the hum-drum routine of daily living.

They offer us an excuse, an opportunity to reconnect and refocus. They may even provide us with an opportunity to live vicariously through other's life experiences and events.

For some reason, the lives of others can often sound more exciting and thrilling than our own. Status updates can however generate gossip, rumors and out right raucous lies. This can happen quickly.

**Related:** [Which Kinds of Posts on Facebook Are Most Popular?](#)

Posted comments can contribute to creating rumors as well. I remember not too long ago a friend of mine posted a sarcastic comment in response to one of my postings. I thought it was hilarious because it related to an inside joke we have.

What was surprising to me however, were the host of direct messages, and even a few phone calls assuming the posting was true. One friend suggested I was the victim of bullying!

While I understood where she was coming from, the thought had never crossed my mind as I knew the comment was not meant to be mean spirited. One seemingly innocent comment however, was enough to generate various reactions and assumptions. I think it was in that moment that I truly began to understand the power and potential of social networking. Another thing to keep in mind is that research indicates that neutral comments are often interpreted as hostile. What does that say about human nature?

**Some final thoughts:**

**Related:** [Are You an Oversharer?](#)

- If you post it they will talk! And some of the talk maybe downright ridiculous gossip!
- If you post it, or someone posts it about you, they will contact you. Hey, it's a great way to reconnect with friends you haven't talked to in a while.
- Be mindful about the comments you post about others. An inside joke or neutral comment can easily be misconstrued.
- If you are bored log on to a social networking site you are sure to be quickly amused. You may learn something interesting or exciting about a friend of a friend of a friend. The question is, do you really care?
- While you may be enthralled or even envious of the lives of your Facebook friends as read their postings and status updates, take a step back. The grass often seems greener on the other side. The reality: people's lives often sound more exciting than they really are. It's a good life, enjoy and appreciate it!

---

## **Heidi Klum and Seal: What Blew Up Their Marriage?**





By [Dr. Jane Greer](#): Marriage & Family Therapist, Author, Radio Host & *Shrink Wrap* Celebrity Commentator

After almost seven years of marriage, Heidi Klum and Seal have decided to part ways. Many people were surprised by their announcement, since they made such a point of telling the public how truly happy they were. For a time, they even seemed like a model couple, defying the odds with two high-powered careers and balancing that with their home life, which included four children, three together and one from Heidi's previous relationship whom Seal adopted. Now, however, it seems that the separation may have been in the works for sometime as they dealt with something more than their love, success and family: Seal's reported anger issues.

TMZ was the first to report that the pop singer has a "volcanic temper," and that his inability to control his anger has become too much for Heidi to take, in part because it is affecting their children. They may very well have been honest about their love for each other, but dealing with an angry spouse can take a toll on a marriage, even a seemingly strong one.

**Related:** [Three Tips to Enjoy Marriage Despite the Battles](#)

The reason couples can go on for so long in this situation is that the outbursts are often self-contained, and when they are over, they are over. Life goes back to normal. That is, until the next one. For a while you learn to live between the explosions in the land mines and focus on the good while you can. However, it eventually comes down to this: in an intimate relationship, everyone ultimately seeks a loving and safe shelter, a place where you can let down your guard and know someone is looking out for you. You want to be able to trust that your partner has your best interests at heart.

When one of the partners has frequent temper tantrums, that feeling of safety is slowly etched away. Over time, you lose the sense of sanctuary and begin to feel fearful and anxious knowing that at any time your spouse might blow up. If you aren't in physical harm's way, you are at the very least in emotional harm's way. When your spouse rages, you feel frightened and upset; you feel that you are being attacked, and often it is hard to understand what is behind that fury.

You feel like you are walking on egg shells, afraid that one wrong move can make your partner irascible. That pattern of behavior destroys the foundation of your mutual trust and commitment.

**Related:** [How to Dignify Your Relationship Daily](#)

Eventually, the question becomes: how long can you live that way? I can only speculate about the havoc Seal's volatility wreaked on he and Heidi's union, but I can tell you what I've learned over the years with my patients. The first thing to do is to put checks and balances in place so that you feel you can gain some control. Wait until the anger has dissipated so you can have a calm conversation. At that time, when things are more peaceful, suggest to your spouse that you put all of his or her complaints into a box, and then you can pull them out one by one and talk about them in a rational way. Even more important, though, would be to talk to your spouse about

getting outside help. This can be daunting, but necessary, because without that help you might skip from talking about getting support to learning how to handle conflict in a constructive way to talking instead about getting out of the marriage completely.

It is when your spouse refuses to seek help, or when he or she will get the help, but then flat out refuses to change, that you might reach the point of having to decide to take yourself out of the danger zone, as Heidi has done. All the renewed vows in the world won't fix that, but hopefully, with help, you can.

*Please tune in to "Let's Talk Sex" which streams live on HealthyLife.net every last Tuesday of the month at 2 p.m. EST, 11 a.m. PST. We look forward to listener call-in questions, dealing with relationships, intimacy, family, and friendships, at 1.800.555.5453.*

---

## **Heather Locklear: What Is She Running From?**





By [Dr. Jane Greer](#): Marriage & Family Therapist, Author, Radio Host & *Shrink Wrap* Celebrity Commentator

No matter how talented, beautiful, or rich you are, none of those things are sure antidotes for misery. Heather Locklear is a clear example of this. The Melrose Place actress was rushed to the hospital last week, reportedly because she mixed alcohol with prescription drugs, after her sister found her unconscious. This newest crisis follows years of trouble and heartbreak including two stays in rehab, an arrest for a DUI, two divorces, and her more recent break up with Melrose Place costar Jack Wagner. With all this in mind, it seems that Locklear's latest episode might be part of her attempt to outrun her unhappiness, but unfortunately she doesn't seem to be getting any traction.

There are many ways people try to escape their sadness. Alcohol is a big one. Illegal and prescription drugs are another way. Sometimes the two are mixed which can lead to dangerous consequences as we saw with Locklear. As a result, the substance abuse becomes the problem that is focused on, but what really needs to be looked at is what got her to the

place of needing to use it and what is it that she is unable to deal with.

**Related:** [Amy Wine House Sadly Joins the 27 Club](#)

Lots of times we see the troubled behaviors – drinking excessively, using prescription drugs, the rehab visits, the DUIs – as the issue when, in fact, they are the person's best effort to bury whatever is torturing them. It is in the core of that sorrow where the real complication that is holding them back from moving forward lies. Instead of focusing on what they are doing to block it out, it can be more helpful to look at what is underneath and when it started.

It is hard to know exactly when Locklear's depression began and what she is working so hard to avoid. With Wagner, it seemed that for a while she was trying to walk down the aisle but, for whatever reason, was unable to get there. Could she be considered a runaway bride even though she had been married before because she may be afraid to remarry after her two failed marriages? I do know that one of the awful things she had to deal with in her past was the betrayal of her second husband Bon Jovi guitarist Richie Sambora when he cheated on her with her best friend Denise Richards. In a situation like that not only are you reeling from the betrayal of your husband but from a best friend as well, leaving you confounded and wondering who can I trust? Sometimes these emotional assaults take their toll not just when they happen but in the future where they can rage on below the surface. As a therapist I see this every day, people soldiering on in the face of upheaval, be it an unfaithful partner or a broken marriage, and for many the aftermath of that event can become too much to handle. It has leveled their foundation, oftentimes destroying their ability to trust themselves let alone another person. In my book *How Could You Do This To Me? Learning To Trust After Betrayal*, I talk about how so many people get on with it, but they don't get over it. They try to leave their pain behind but it is always at their heels.



The broken trust becomes too much to bear and often they are left scarred. Consequently it feels almost impossible to trust again. Perhaps this is what is keeping Locklear from making another trip to the altar.

**Related:** [Keith Urban Says Wife Nicole Kidman Saved His Life](#)

In order to avoid the rollercoaster that Locklear and so many others have been on, it helps to appreciate the blow you sustained and not only give yourself time to get over it, but realize you have to take measures to come to terms with what happened and begin to fix the damage. With support you can do this so you can give yourself room to heal from broken trust.

This means redefining what you base your trust on, and learning what to look for so you can determine if someone is trustworthy. Then you can avoid jumping into a new relationship before you have gotten over your fear that you will get kicked in the teeth again, and feel safe to trust again.

For Locklear it may be that her fears of the past have become her fences of the present. Hopefully she will get the help she needs to be able to tackle the underlying problems, instead of trying to numb what she is feeling, so that perhaps she can finally be able to stop running. Sometimes the best thing to do is to stand still.

*Please tune in to "Let's Talk Sex" which streams live on HealthyLife.net every last Tuesday of the month at 2 p.m. EST, 11 a.m. PST. We look forward to listener call-in questions, dealing with relationships, intimacy, family, and friendships, at 1.800.555.5453.*

---

# Reduce Stress and Maximize Romance this Winter



By Lindsay Kriger

During the hectic holiday season, it's easy for stress levels to rise, which can sometimes equal the downfall of romance and intimacy.

To ensure you and your sweetie don't turn sour on each other, here are some of my personal tips for relaxation that you and your partner can practice to help keep you breathing easy this season:

- 1. Devote a little time to indulging in like-no-one's-watching fun.**

Newlyweds Nikki Reed and Paul McDonald are known for loving to hit the dance floor. They've been seen together at many a club cutting a rug. That said, it's time to take their lead and relax with your mate by going out dancing. You'll not only enjoy an intimate evening due to sensual physical contact, you'll also melt away stress and raise your serotonin levels with all that great exercise. And you'll burn lots of calories to boot – by shaking your booties!

## **2. Share spiked hot cocoa by a fireplace.**

If no fireplace is at the ready, light lots and lots of candles. Bring some blankets into the mix. A touch of quiet flame-lit togetherness will soothe your addled nerves, and it's has been known to seriously soften the mood.

**Related:** [Date Idea – Spend an Intimate Night Inside](#)

## **3. Get outdoors with your sweetheart.**

Take a cue from lovebirds Ryan Gosling and Eva Mendes, who were recently photographed strolling around Paris hand-in-hand. Even if Paris isn't in the cards this winter, getting outside and breathing in some chilly fresh air might be an invigorating and rejuvenating move. Leaving your phone at home, put on your coats, hold hands and walk together – even if it's just around your own neighborhood. It'll enable you to devote time to connecting, talking and truly listening to one another – all of which are essential steps to strengthening your bond.

**Related:** [First Date Outfit Ideas – Outdoor Festival](#)

## **4. If it's too cold to venture outside, stay in and cook together.**

Learn how to bake apple pie from scratch. Rolling and punching dough is fantastic stress relief – plus it's kind of sexy. Also, studies have shown vanilla and cinnamon to be

some of the ultimate aphrodisiac scents, so be sure to mix lots of these flavors into your recipe.

## **5. Take a hot bubble bath together.**

While you're at this indoor-activity stuff, since the weather is foul, climb in a hot bubbly bath together. Lots of delicious-smelling products and lots of physical intimacy are your ticket to a stress-free night. It's like a free couples' therapy session.

## **6. Do yoga – and strrrreettttttccchhh the stress out of your body.**

On your own, yoga is great for your mind and body and can really help reduce the anxieties of everyday life. Bringing your partner into the experience is great, too, as it adds in a touch of sensuality. After all, it's always wonderful to have the opportunity to touch and be touched by your partner.

As you each help the other to move your bodies in new ways, it might even give you new ideas for how to move your bodies once you're off that yoga mat. Yep, a few good downward-facing dogs and you may both find yourselves feeling refreshed and energized for romance in no time!

*Lindsay Kriger is a New York University grad with a B.A. in Psychology. She has trained with the PAX Mastership and Leadership Program, taught by internationally recognized Relationship Expert Alison Armstrong, and at 22 is the program's youngest trainee to date.*

---

# Celebrities Who Share Too Much PDA



By Katanya Royster

You're on the subway, and the couple next to you starts hooking up. By the third stop, she's sitting on his lap, and his hand suspiciously disappears into her gray cardigan. One of her crossed legs casually rests on yours. There you sit – an unwilling participant in a *ménage à trois*.

The truth is, a little PDA is part of any healthy relationship, and it's no different for our favorite celebrity couples. But, when PDA goes from “frisky” to all-out “foreplay,” couples should pull the curtains on the show and head indoors. While some Hollywood duos try to keep their lip-locking to a minimum in public, these celebrity couples

opted out of getting a room and gave their fans a VIP pass into their love life:

**1. Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez.** Since Bieber and Gomez took their relationship public, the PDA has been in full force. Earlier this year, the actress/singer was photographed straddling Bieber and kissing him in Hawaii, while her 17-year-old pop star beau's hands were spotted getting well acquainted with Gomez's backside.

**Related:** [Justin Bieber Tells Selena Gomez She's 'Very Beautiful'](#)

**2. Kelsey Grammer and Kayte Walsh.** Things got hot and steamy between this couple as they laid on top of each other during a make-out session in Miami Beach, Florida, last year. Perhaps the couple, who wed a few days after this PDA session, decided to take their honeymoon *before* the wedding?

**3. Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt.** Forget about holding hands or planting a kiss on her famous lips; Pitt grabbed a handful of Jolie's booty at the NYC premiere of *The Tourist*. The couple, who usually keeps it modest while in public, believes that romantic alone time in their relationship is crucial, even with six kids to look after.

**Related:** [Celebrity Couples Who Shy Away from the Spotlight](#)

**4. Madonna and Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera and her former back-up dancer.** How many girls can Madonna kiss for shock value before it's no longer shocking? Either way, the pop star's most infamous PDA moments leave us suspecting she has a very specific type – young and hot! Her most recent beau, Braham Zaibat, confirms those suspicions.

**5. LeAnn Rimes and Eddie Cibrian.** This pair's relationship started while they were both married to other people, resulting in a storm of negative press. However, bad

publicity didn't slowing down their PDA.

When do you think PDA has gone too far? Share your comments below.

---

## How to Dignify Your Relationship Daily



By [Donna Hicks, Ph.D.](#)

Why we can so quickly get into an argument with the one we [love](#)? What is it about intimate relationships that leave us all vulnerable to lashing out against the person we care about the most? Does it have something to do with dignity?

One of the common desires we all share as human beings is to be treated well. We all want to be seen, heard, acknowledged and understood. In short, we want our worth recognized, no matter what kind of relationship we are in. This desire becomes even stronger when our connection involves romance.

We have a hair-trigger sensitivity to when we are dismissed, ignored, criticized, judged or treated badly by our partners.

Add to it that the reactions we have to these insults to our dignity usually happen behind closed doors, and out of the public eye. As a result, the worst part of us can appear in a matter of seconds.

Assaults to our dignity create a fast track to our primal, self-defensive impulses, and we can turn into fighting men and women without even being fully aware of what is happening.

What's the result? We get locked into a never-ending cycle of indignity that is hard to break. We can say and do the cruelest things when it feels like our own worth is on the line.

**Related:** [Three Tips to Enjoy Marriage Despite the Battles](#)

My experience working with people all over the world tells me that most conflicts in intimate relationships, at their core, have underlying and unaddressed dignity issues that are keeping them from experiencing the deep love and connection for which everyone yearns.

**Related:** [How Happy Is Your Love Life?](#)

This is all easy to say, and we can agree that dignity is important in relationships, but what would it look like if we did honor the dignity of our loved ones on a daily basis, making it the glue that holds us together? Here would be some results:

**1. Vulnerability:** We would recognize how important dignity is and that we are all vulnerable to having it injured and react



positively when it's honored.

**2. Assumptions:** We would make a conscious decision to give our partners the benefit of the doubt, and to assume they have integrity.

**3. Responsibility:** We would acknowledge when we have done something hurtful and not assume we are the innocent victims when the relationship breaks down.

**4. Viewpoints:** We will switch our default setting. Instead of focusing on all the things that our partner has done wrong, we will ask ourselves, "What might I be doing that has contributed to this conflict? What am I doing that could be violating the dignity of my partner?"

**5. Constructive criticism:** We will ask our partners to let us know the ways in which we might be violating them, and we will listen instead of getting defensive.

**6. Congratulations:** We will ask our partners to let us know when they feel we have honored their dignity, and then do more of it!

Feeling listened to, heard, responded to and taken seriously is what we all want. It communicates to our partners that what they say and how they feel matters. We all have to work at it and make conscious decisions about the way we want to treat others and how we want to be treated. After all, what is love if not a mutual honoring of each other's dignity? It is far more than just saying "I love you." We need to act like it.

*Donna Hicks, PhD, psychologist and Associate at Weatherhead Center for International affairs at Harvard University is the author of DIGNITY: The Essential Role It Plays in Resolving Conflict.*

---

# Five Conversations to Avoid on the First Date



By Steven Zangrillo

Here it is, your huge, nerve wracking first date. After obsessively digging through the mountain range of shoes, dresses, belts and bags in your closet, you've nailed down the perfect outfit. Your hair looks good and you've even managed not to overdo your make-up. All signs point toward success.

Lest we forget, as great as you may look, you must "wow" him or her with your intellectual acumen. That is, don't say

anything that'll earn you a trip back to Match.com. We've outlined a few conversational situations to steer away from, should you find yourself talking yourself ... into a corner.

**1. Avoid Talking About Your Ex:** You'd think that people follow this rule to a tee with ardent discipline. In truth, it happens a little bit more than you think. It's easy, as well as unfair, to overtly express comparisons between your new potential mate and past flames. The important thing to remember is that the person you are considering is *not* guilty of the romance crimes your ex committed. Show this person you're interested in them, not how they stack up to someone else.

**Related:** [Kim K's Divorce – A Reminder About Relationship Mistakes to Avoid](#)

**2. Avoid Talking About Things You Dislike:** No one cares that you don't like movies, spinach or *Harry Potter*. Do you know why? Ask yourself if you've ever been told to list your "disinterests" or "dislikes." Your date wants to know what you *like* so they can treat you to those things. Tell them how you like the theatre or going to football games. This way, you can determine what you have in common. Discussing the positive things will lead to a second date, and that's the goal.

**Related:** [Ashton Kutcher Describes What He Doesn't Like in a Woman](#)

**3. Avoid Talking Too Much:** While not a conversational topic per se, talking too much is a dangerous proposition. While there's no doubt that your new potential partner will want to find out as much as they can about you, they probably want to talk about themselves a little bit, too. After all, they're just as invested in the conversation as you are and they're just as nervous. There's no harm in sipping your wine, while listening to them talk about whatever they want. Being a good

listener is an integral pillar in the foundation of a strong relationship and shows you have communication skills. That's a huge turn on.

**4. Avoid Talking About How Much Money You (or They) Make:** Your careers will be a huge topic on the first date. "What do you do?" is a classic and predictable first date query.

Generally, you'll be able to determine how much money this person is making when they tell you they're a doctor, public relations professional, lawyer, fry cook or waiter. If you don't feel that you're of equal pay grade, don't embarrass them and don't embarrass yourself. While "it's not about money," both of you should be in stable professional situations. Don't be unfair and make anyone feel awkward though; you can figure this information out for yourself.

**5. Avoid Talking About Your Physical Relationships:** Don't tell your date your "number." You will be judged with subdued harshness. No matter what *anyone* says, don't let this conversation happen. You're on this first date for the purposes of getting to know each other and to have some fun.

You are, in a sense, auditioning to be in each other's lives. Don't screw this up by trying to figure out which one of you is more promiscuous. This conversation will happen eventually, so don't be in a rush to have an awkward conversation with someone you don't know very well.

**What conversations are important to discuss on the first date? Share your suggestions below.**

---

## How to Deal with Online

# Dating Rejection



By Debbie Lamedman

When you're dating online, you never know to whom you're talking. It's a voice in the dark. All you see is someone's profile and a picture, and if you contact them and there's no response, you move on. It's a rejection, but there's no reason to take it personally. How can you when the person you've attempted to contact doesn't even know you? Well, that's easier said than done.

Britney Spears recently got engaged again, this time to Jason Trawick. You can bet that she dealt with rejection upon the termination of all of her previous relationships, but she is persevering. People get rejected right and left, especially when they date online. If you start to let it get to you, it will take a toll. It becomes more difficult when you've

actually made contact with the person and suddenly that contact between you ceases. This happens often, and there is logical reason for it. You can make up stories about why the person stopped returning your emails after many lively conversations, but you will never know the real reason unless they reappear in your inbox. You never know what's going on in someone else's life, and you never know what someone's motivation is for starting to date online. That said, there are definitely ways to deal with rejection.

Unfortunately, we saw Spears' downfall and witnessed her reactions to rejection from many people in her life. To avoid crashing into depression, you must learn to maintain a certain level of detachment while your online relationship evolves. This may sound harsh, but people take off as often as they stick around, so protect yourself, your heart and your self-esteem.

No one likes feeling rejected. If you've never met your date in person, you can't take their rejection personally. Unfortunately, people tend to judge others for the smallest things. If it was something about the way you looked in your photo, or something you said in your profile that turned the other person off, so be it. You can't please everyone.

**Related:** [Julie Spira Discusses 'The Perils of Cyber-Dating'](#)

Take online dating rejection lightly, and move on. After all, there are plenty more matches where they came from. People you meet online will fall by the wayside, leaving you with the room and opportunity to meet quality people who deserve your time and attention. If you've met your online date in person and things don't work out, there's no reason to take that to heart either. Just go back online, and keep hunting!

---

# Is Facebook Destroying Your Love Life?



By Jennifer Harrington

Popular social networking sites, such as Facebook, are great for many things. Re-connecting with old classmates, checking out your best friend's vacation photos and sharing the news that you had an exciting celebrity sighting, are some of the best reasons to log on. But when it comes to your love life, is Facebook your friend... or foe?

Social media provides access to all of the key information about the object of your affection. Status updates revealing

their whereabouts, wall posts indicating updates from their friends and photos that can point to previous romantic partners, offer you a glimpse into their private world. If relationships are about getting to know the other person better, it's easy to see how checking your better half's page many times per day might be justified.

With newspapers like *The New York Times* dedicating articles to teaching kids how to break-up nicely online, it is apparent Facebook has changed how we interact with each other. Therefore, Cupid advises you that when it comes to Facebook and your love life, Facebook is a relationship mine field that must be navigated carefully. So, before you hit the "refresh" button on your sweetie's page again, ask yourself a few questions to figure out if Facebook is destroying your love life:

### **Are you using Facebook as a window into another person's life?**

If so, get off the computer immediately. Pick up the phone to chat with your special someone, or make a date to catch up over coffee. Nothing takes the place of live interaction when building and maintaining a relationship.

**Related:** [5 Ways Technology Is Ruining Your Dating Life](#)

### **Do you get upset about things you see on Facebook?**

There's a lot of room for misunderstanding; from old pictures being posted to comments from friends taken out of context. If you see something that upsets you, take the time to talk it through with the other person. Don't draw conclusions solely based upon what you've seen online.

### **Does your honey know you are stalking their page?**

If you have found yourself slipping and mentioning to your significant other things you've noticed on their page, this is a warning sign. People like to be noticed, but not stalked



online. If your partner knows you are snooping, it may make them feel like you don't trust them.

**Have you de-friended your significant other (or their friends) out of anger?**

Always avoid de-friending in a moment of fury. Reports suggest that *The Jersey Shore's* Sammi "Sweetheart" Giancola has de-friended her on-again, off-again boyfriend, Ronnie Ortiz Magro's friends in moments of rage – and everybody knows that is not a model relationship.

**Related:** [Are Jersey Shore's Sammi and Ronnie Back Together?](#)

While it's hard to imagine life without Facebook, don't lose sight of the fact that relationships are built on love and trust and not what appears on Timeline. If you're interested in learning more about maintaining healthy relationships both online and offline, check out a recent article from The Huffington Post titled "6 Tips for Healthy Relationships" which highlights relationship advice from experts including Dr. Drew and Dr. Phil.

**Has Facebook destroyed your love life? Share your stories below.**

---

## **Newlywed 911: Protecting Young Marriages**





By Malia Karlinsky, GalTime Love/Sex Editor

Sad news about one of Hollywood's hottest couples—Russell Brand has filed for divorce from wife Katy Perry. The news about the break-up does not come as a complete surprise. Celebrity gossip columnists have been buzzing about a rift between pop music princess Katy Perry and her actor/comedian hubby Russell Brand. Married for just 14 months, the often lovey-dovey pair reportedly spent this past Christmas miles apart (two-thousand miles to be exact). Photos showed Perry splashing around on a Hawaiian beach (without her wedding ring), while Brand was also snapped on a beach— in Cornwall, England— sans Perry.

What broke this celeb couple up? We may never know for sure, but Us Weekly recently reported that Brand's lack of respect for Perry's parents' Christian beliefs as the cause of some tension.

If that's the case— the problems of this glamorous newlywed couple are quite common.

Jeanine and Mark Earnhart, spouses who co-authored a book titled *Marriage Works*, cite the in-laws as one of the biggest issues that cause problems in new marriages. According to the Earnharts, there are some very predictable problems that plague the newly married.

**Related:** [Delve Into a Modern Day Marriage With 'The New I Do'](#)

## Top 5 Issues Newlyweds Face

1. In-law issues
2. Finances
3. Sex
4. Time spent with friends (without the spouse)
5. Household chores.

Jeanine Earnhart suggest communication as way to get over these newlywed “speed bumps” on the road to a happy marriage. “It may seem like a simple answer, but it works for every one of these problems,” she explains. “If a couple gets their communication skills down right from the start, they can talk about anything and solve most problems.”

Tina B. Tessina, PhD, (aka “Dr. Romance”) a psychotherapist and author of *Money, Sex and Kids: Stop Fighting about the Three Things That Can Ruin Your Marriage*, suggests putting some work into the relationship before *putting a ring on it*.

Tessina shares that there are several questions every couple should consider **before** moving in together or making joint financial commitments.

**Related:** [Cupid's Weekly Round-Up: Rushing into Marriage](#)

## 7 Questions Every Couple Should Talk About

**1. What is your definition of commitment?** If you don't know what your relationship means to the both of you, you risk repeating past mistakes, getting stuck in uncomfortable roles, or fighting about what a healthy relationship is.

**2. Have you discussed finances?** Different financial habits (one likes to save, the other spends more, or doesn't keep track) can become a source of argument.

**3. What about household responsibilities?** If you're not yet living together, take a tour of each other's homes. Drastically different decorating styles, neatness, and organization levels can become sources of argument, and so can housekeeping and chores.

**4. How close are you to family or friends?** If one of you has a lot of family or friends, and the other does not, find out what those relationships mean. Where will you spend holidays? If there are family members who have problems, such as addiction or mental illness, how much will that impact your relationship?

**5. How do you handle anger and other emotions?** We all get upset from time to time. If you are usually good at diffusing each other's anger, and being supportive through times of grief or pain, your emotional bond will deepen as time goes on.

**6. How do you show love to each other?** Sharing what actions and words mean love to you may be surprising. Even if it's a struggle, discussing how you give and receive love will improve your relationship.

**7. How well did you discuss these very questions?** Asking yourselves these questions are excellent tests of your ability to define and work out problems. Constructive discussion that leads to a mutually satisfactory solution means you know how to solve problems in your relationship. If not, get counseling before going further.

So how can bickering newlyweds resolve their issues— and create a stronger relationship? Tessina suggests some simple steps.

**Related:** [Pamela Anderson Says 'Marriage Has Its Ups to Downs'](#)

## Simple Steps to Create a Successful Marriage

- **Talk frequently and honestly to each other:** Discuss everything from your frustrations to your appreciation of each other.
- **Strive to work together to solve anything that comes up:** Don't get stuck on who's right or wrong, focus on solving the problem.
- **Keep your connection going:** Connect through communication, sex, affection, understanding and concern for each other.
- **Have a sense of humor, give the benefit of the doubt, care about each other.**

Our hearts go out to Katy and Russell.

---

## Ten Signs You're Dating A Jerk





By Che Blackwood

Valentine's Day is a great excuse to strap on your tallest heels and reserve a window seat at a chic lounge for some champagne and brie. Or, for the more traditional lady, there's no greater treat than spending an evening enjoying red wine and dark chocolate with your love, be it your soul mate or your best friend. The only wrong way to spend this special day is with a jerk. Sometimes hard to spot, these heartbreakers have a pension for making their dates feel awful and are experts in keeping a relationship miserable.

Fortunately, enough women have been there before you and there are now many easy to spot red flags. Keeping a lookout for these top ten signs you're with a jerk is the first step to ensuring you won't have a Valentine's Day to regret:

**1. He talks down to you:** If he talks to you as if you're a child, or incapable of making smart decisions, you deserve better. The same goes if he acts like you're unable to live a productive life without him, speaks poorly of you in front of his friends, or treats you like a servant. There's nothing funny about a man talking to his girlfriend as though she's

less than he is.

**2. He doesn't support you:** So you want to be a famous ballerina who sells diamond encrusted dog collars on the side? Fine, your best friends support you and so should your man. If your beau acts like your dreams are unattainable or stupid, or if he refuses to encourage you at all, forget him. Everyone needs a support system and if he can't believe in your dreams, he certainly shouldn't reap the benefits of your eventual success.

**3. He tries to make you jealous:** If he talks too fondly about his [ex](#), still excitedly mentions his single hook-ups or reminds you of the tanned, muscular legs on your best friend, he's trying to make you jealous. He's probably insecure, and the worse you feel the more confident he becomes, meaning this behavior is never going to end. Move on and make a brighter future for yourself while he's stuck daydreaming about the past.

**4. He makes you feel second best:** We all deserve to spend a guilt-free night out with our friends and sometimes work and other real world obligations demand our immediate attention. That said, if your man is constantly canceling dates to grab a beer with the guys or to score some overtime at the office, then the last thing on his priority list is you and that's not OK.

**5. He forgets your anniversary:** It's not difficult to remember the dates that are important to us. Think of it this way – has your man ever forgotten his own birthday? If he can't find the time to recall your wedding anniversary or the night the two of you became official, then it's not important enough to him.

**Related:** [Dave and Odette Annable Celebrate Anniversary at Wedding](#)

**6. He doesn't make you feel beautiful:** Whether it's waking up

on the wrong side of the bed or forgetting to tweeze the brows, no one can constantly look perfect. But, if your date is *always* bringing up your curves, wrinkles and bad hair days without once mentioning your great attributes, it's time to find someone new.

**7. He never pays:** Most partners know that their sweethearts can't afford extravagant dinners or weekend getaways more than a few times a year. However, if your honey refuses to ever foot the bill, then there's a good chance he isn't taking your feelings seriously. It doesn't cost a lot to treat you to a movie or to share a few appetizers at your favorite restaurant and he should love seeing the look of appreciation on your face when he does.

**Related:** [Five Ways to Cut Down on Dating Costs](#)

**8. He doesn't fight well:** One of the greatest tests of a relationship is seeing how your partner reacts during an argument. If he is quick to raise his voice, insult you or, even worse, hit you, then he's a certifiable jerk. If he loses his cool completely during an argument, then he is losing sight of the relationship all together.

**9. He won't forgive you:** We *all* make mistakes, but being bold enough to acknowledge your wrong doings and apologize is an attribute your date should appreciate. However, if your man refuses to accept your apologies, or if he constantly holds your past missteps over your head, then he's too immature and petty for a woman of your caliber.

**10. He cheats on you:** If your man is willing to disrespect you and disregard your feelings enough to become intimate with another woman, whether physically or emotionally, you need to drop him today. Every woman should require a partner that loves, respects and cherishes them.

**How did you know you were dating a jerk? Share your experiences below.**



---

# How to Get Back Into the Dating Scene After Divorce



By Nicola Winters

Divorce is on the rise. We all know it and we all, at some point in our lives, have been a part of it. But whilst Kim Kardashian may not be able to relate to the below experience, maybe you will.

After a lengthy marriage, a person's confidence is lacking and the thought of getting back out onto the dating scene is daunting. It might not be so hard for Kim Kardashian or Jennifer Lopez to find themselves a new man after the ordeal

of a divorce, but it's not so easy for the likes of us non-celebrities. 72 days has nothing on 30 years, four children and a mortgage, and that's not to mention the few extra pounds you may have gained along the way.

We all don't want to be gossiped about like former singleton Jennifer Anniston, so to ensure that doesn't happen, follow these steps to restore your confidence in both yourself and the opposite sex:

**It's important to take care of yourself:** Now is your chance to look after number one. Join a gym or exercise class. Not only will you meet new friends, but you will also feel better about yourself, inside and out.

**Develop new hobbies:** Engage in activities that you never had chance to before. By developing a new hobby, you will automatically find that you have something new to talk about and new people to discuss it with. However, if new isn't really you, and you aren't that susceptible to change, then why not re-visit an old hobby? Work, home and family commitments can get in the way of enjoyment. Now is the chance to re-kindle that special love with a particular activity or past time.

**Be true to yourself:** Remember that you are more likely to meet someone special at a place of genuine interest. Ever wondered why actors are dating actresses, models are dating designers and footballers are dating...well...whoever really? You're not going to find the man of your dreams on the dance floor of a packed nightclub if clubbing really isn't your thing.

**Related:** [Five Reasons Why Opposites Attract](#)

**Don't rush things.** Finally, and probably the most important point of all, is to take your time. Don't expect to jump into another long-term relationship immediately. Take the time to learn about yourself before committing to another. It's

almost too easy to rely on another person and sometimes even string them along. Cheryl Cole was never really serious about Derek Hough; she was simply grieving for a past love. Not only is it unfair on them, but on you as well.

Divorce can be a really awful experience for any person (including celebrities). But back here in the real world, we can't rely on lavish parties, celebrities' ceremonies and movie premieres to get us back out again. We have to rely on ourselves. So keep busy, look after yourself and make the most of the support network you already have.

*This is a guest post by Nicola Winters on behalf of Panonne, the divorce specialists.*