

# Best Celebrity-Couple Costumes for Halloween



By Whitney Baker

There are so many fun factors about Halloween. First, there are the pumpkins: pumpkin carving, pumpkin patches, pumpkin pie – and an annual viewing of the TV show, *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*. Next, you can't forget candy, like Brach's candy corn, which are only available seasonally in the autumn, making them a particularly delicious and coveted treat. Then, there's all that scary stuff: haunted houses, witches, goblins and ghouls – boo! And finally, perhaps the best part is the costumes – for one day out of the year, you get to be anyone you want to be, celebrities included.

For anyone looking for a little romance on a holiday that's

typically filled with fright, you're in luck! Here's a list of celebrity couples whose looks can be transformed into costumes. One of them may be the perfect fit for you and your partner.

**1. Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez:** For the teeny-boppers out there – or anyone hoping to feel a bit younger for an evening – the prince and princess of pop make a very suitable duo. For Bieber, any guy with longer locks can sweep his bangs to the side, and any boy with a shorter 'do can simply throw on a sideways Yankees hat. Add a pair of Ray-Ban Wayfarers (dark lenses not necessary), jeans, and a hoodie, and you're set! For Gomez, you can rock a casual but glam look: skinny jeans, a flowing tank top, flats, hoop earrings, and wavy hair. If you really want to channel these two lovebirds, PDA is highly encouraged.

**Related Link:** [Justin Bieber Plans 'Titantic' Date For Girlfriend Selena Gomez](#)

**2. Katy Perry and Russell Brand:** This eccentric and oh-so-in-love couple is an ideal choice for anyone looking to get a little crazy this Halloween. Perry has donned a number of hair colors and styles over the years, so take your pick: bubble-gum pink or bright blue, jet black, or her most recent, honey-hued blonde. As for outfits, anything is fair game, even that sassy and sparkly Smurfette dress that's hiding in your closet. For Brand, the look is quite low-key: a pair of skinny jeans and a tight (and low-cut) t-shirt, along with unbrushed and knotted hair, some stubble, and a bit of guyliner. Oh, and don't forget the British accent.

**3. Prince William and Princess Catherine:** Their wedding may have been months ago, but people are still talking about these newlyweds, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. Princess Catherine has taken the fashion world by storm with her chic and totally relatable style, making her the ultimate princess

to emulate on this costume-filled holiday. To truly stand out, opt for their wedding look: your man can wear an outfit that resembles Prince William's Irish Guards' red military uniform, while you can get glamorous in a lacy and flowing white gown, a beautiful sapphire (faux) engagement ring, and a bouquet of flowers. Complete the look with a tiara, of course.

**Related Link:** [Prince William Discusses Queen Elizabeth's Wedding Advice](#)

**4. Blair Waldorf and Chuck Bass:** Okay, okay – so they may not be a *real* celebrity couple, but they've certainly made their mark as the "it couple" in the *Gossip Girl*-*World* of the Upper East Side. To imitate this high-society pair, girls should pull together their most designer-drenched look. Choose from high school Waldorf, who wouldn't have been caught dead without her preppy headband, or the now college-aged fashionista, who has adopted a more grown-up dress code – just be sure to accessorize accordingly. As for Bass, a guy only needs a three-piece suit, bow tie, pocket square, and all the charm that he can muster.

**Cupid wants to know: Who do you want to be for Halloween?**

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## How to Pursue Your Man Like Naomi Watts





By Brea Gunn

Everyone knows the formula: boy meets girl, boy flirts with girl, boy asks girl out and boy and girl become an item. But what happens when *girl* meets boy and *girl* pursues said boy?

While it's not unheard of for a woman to have a crush, it's becoming more fashionable for her to be the pursuer, rather than the pursued. Take Naomi Watts and Liev Schreiber, for example. The pair met at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Ball, and the rest is history, as they say. Or, actually, it's HERstory.

The thing is, unlike other couples, Naomi actually persued Liev. That's right. The actress made up an excuse, flew to New York and now the couple have two beautiful children. A woman pursuing a man isn't necessarily a new phenomenon in Hollywood, though. In fact, it's starting to feel like the norm.

For example, Rachel Weisz married Daniel Craig after meeting the super-hunk on the set of their new movie. LeAnn Rimes and

Eddie Cibrian couldn't keep their hands off each other (their very married hands!) when they met. Jessica Alba thought Cash Warren was a stud, and now they've got a beautiful family.

And sometimes life even imitates art...or art imitates life.

Even Anna Paquin couldn't keep her eyes off of costar Stephen Moyer. And ironically, Sookie, her character on their show, *True Blood*, pursued his character, Bill.

So what's a woman to do? Here are some tips:

**1. Make the first move:** Go talk to him. Compliment his awesome dancing ability. Hey, it worked for Naomi Watts!

**2. Set up the next date:** Take a lesson from Anna Paquin, and tell him when you want to see him again. Don't wait the obligatory 48 hours to text and/or call.

**3. Don't be shy:** Even if you tend to be on the quieter sell, go outside of your comfort zone and show your outgoing side. There's no place for hesitation when you're going after a man.

So, next time you're out with your girlfriends and you see a cute guy across the room, channel Naomi, Rachel, Leann and Anna ... and send him a drink.

*Brea Gunn is a monthly contributor for Cupid's Pulse and also writes about the best Westchester wedding venues. Check out what these wedding business marketing insiders have to share.*

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## Going from 'It's Complicated'



# to Monogamy: 5 Tips Every Woman Should Know



By Melissa Caballero

The status of our relationships in this modern day dating world have become much more complex than they used to be. Many couples go through multiple stages until they're officially declared an item. From 'single' to 'it's complicated' to 'in a relationship,' the situation can get blurry. Although the beginning of a relationship can be exciting, it doesn't always end that way. Some people date for several months without a label, and then the painstaking question "Are we exclusive?" is asked and the relationship abruptly ends with no warning. It may not make sense, or seem even fair that one question can stir so much confusion or controversy. So, many women have learned to keep mum and stay in the 'it's complicated' stage

instead of turning their status back to single. But, instead of going backwards how do we proceed forwards to the comfort zone of monogamy? We spoke to psychologist, professor, relationship expert and author, Dr. Karin Anderson and she offered five ways woman can navigate through:

1. **Play it cool.** Of course you're going nuts with the nebulous nature of your relationship and of course you're looking for a more definitive understanding as to what sort of connection you and your "friend with benefits/booty call/boyfriend(?)" actually have. But the #1 way to keep things complicated is to push the issue by having one of those, "I really need to know where this relationship is headed" conversations. Play it cool. Psychologists who study couples speak of *The Law of Least Interest*—whoever is *least* interested in maintaining the relationship holds the *most* power. Every time you bring up an issue, you lose power. And until your relationship has more concrete structure, you don't want to lose any power.

2. **Was it ever *not* complicated?** A good question to ask yourself is, "Was this *relationship* ever not complicated?" Meaning—did you ever know where you stood with your man? If not, you probably have more information than you realize. This may be hard to hear, but if this guy has known you for some time, has enjoyed having sex with you regularly, has never wanted to legitimately establish himself as your partner, then it's likely he's *never* going to go in that direction.

3. **Make him want to commit.** Naturally, we can't *make* anyone want to do anything, but we can certainly sweeten the pot. For example, when you're together, demonstrate your affection in ways men respond to (e.g, a fridge stocked with his favorite beer, a TV tuned to his NFL and college teams' games). When you're away from each other, resist the temptation to be too available (i.e, absolutely **no booty calls**). You want him to recognize how great you and he are

together, but those benefits can't be his 24/7 until you guys are an official couple. It'll keep him wanting you.

4. **You may need to pull all the way back.** If the above suggestions aren't working, you may need to create some space. Skip the drama of an ultimatum (remember, most guys think women are a little crazy because our emotions tend to run more intensely than theirs); let your behavior get your point across. If he reaches out with, "What's up with you? Where have you been?" you can reply, "I've been super busy with work and friends and I have to get my priorities straight. As much as I love hanging out with you, I need to focus my energy on aspects of my life that are more clearly defined." Leave it at that. Again, **no drama!** Just state the facts and see what he does with them.

5. **Be honest with yourself. Is this *really* what you want?** Ultimately, there's no magic formula for moving from 'it's complicated' to monogamy. But more importantly you need to ask yourself why you want this person. Hasn't it been a drag walking on egg shells, trying not to scare him off with your desire for a *real* relationship? Don't you hate the insecurity that comes with not knowing your place in his life? The reality is, most guys go for what they want—chalk it up to their DNA or the thrill of the chase or whatever, but most men will claim you if they want you. What does it say when we want a man who doesn't want us?

If none of the above works, maybe the best answer for moving forward is to let the whole thing go and find someone who's interested in the same sort of relationship that you are.

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# Three Tips to Enjoy Marriage Despite the Battles



By Patty Newbold, author of the award-winning marriage blog, [AssumeLove.com](http://AssumeLove.com)

It can't be easy marrying into a reality TV show, as Kris Humphries recently did. Kim Kardashian and her family speak their minds, and it's all caught on camera. Kris already gets his share of it from her siblings, and it can't be long before he catches angry words or insults from his new wife Kim, too.

## **It's the Ratio, Not the Number**

Let's hope Kim's already figured this out, but fighting words do not kill a relationship. Marriages fail when the nastygrams are not matched with at least five times as many

respectful, loving and encouraging words and gestures.  
Remember: Five times. Or more.

That's what psychologist John Gottman's research found. He uses it to predict, in just a few minutes, which marriages will last and which will not. It doesn't matter how many or how few unloving words, eye rolls, or shrugs are used in a relationship; only whether the good stuff happens at least five times as often as the bad.

### **It Won't Be What You Expected**

Here's a tip for Kris. There is only one thing you should expect when you marry: love. We all show up to our weddings with a boatload of expectations, and many of them will be dashed. Your marriage will not go the way you thought it would, and you'll make yourself miserable if you tell yourself this means you are not loved or respected. Kim, like any wife or husband, will love you her own way.

Therefore, due to the unique ways we all choose to show our love, it's important to stop yourself when you hear yourself thinking, "If she loved me..." Unless she is actually doing you harm, she loves you, and you are missing it. You will make a mess of your marriage by getting angry when it's not what you expected, not what someone else you know might do. That's exactly what I did the first time around, and I could not see how much love I had overlooked until after my husband's sudden death at the age of 35.

### **Never Compromise**

Just about now, Mr. and Mrs. Humphries are probably discovering that they disagree about things like where shoe polish should be stored and which family events cannot be missed. Well, there are never just two options for a resolution. Instead of disagreeing and eventually compromising, look for a third alternative to the problem that

both makes you happy and also delights your mate.

Disagreeing is inevitable in any relationship, and if you're not doing it, there's probably something wrong. That said, it's important to outweigh those fighting words with words full of love, kindness and respect. If you do, your relationship will thrive.

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## 5 of the Sweetest Movie Moments



By Tanni Deb

Whether we admit it or not, we all enjoy a good love story –

the ones that make our hearts beat, our pulses race, and the tears flow. We love getting caught up in the magical moments and gushing over romantic scenes. You probably have your own top Sweetest Movie Moments, but join us as we count down some of ours:

**5. A Walk to Remember:** If you're a hopeless romantic, this movie and its leading characters, Landon Carter (Shane West) and Jamie Sullivan (Mandy Moore), will leave you sobbing at the end. After a dangerous dare goes badly wrong, rebellious Landon is made to do community service, where he seeks help from bookish and religious Jamie – the girl he eventually learns to love. When he discovers the secret she's been carrying for two years, he plans a date at night to star gaze. He asks her to search for a specific star, and when she questions him about it, he says he had it named after her. The scene is sealed with a kiss.

**4. 50 First Dates:** When Henry Roth (Adam Sandler) meets Lucy Whitmore (Drew Barrymore) in a café, they decide to meet again the following day. However, when Henry returns, Lucy doesn't have a memory of him, or their previous meeting. When he's told that since the day she got into a car accident she's been unable to retain new information, he devises new ways to meet her every day, hoping that one day she'll remember him and will return his feelings. The sweetest – and most powerful – scene in the film comes when Henry discovers that Lucy has been singing, and she might remember who he is. He runs to the hospital and asks her if she recognizes him. She says "no," but explains that she has been dreaming of him every day. When she leads him into her studio, it is filled with paintings she drew of him! Believing that this is proof of their love, they reunite.

**3. You've Got Mail:** If you think you can't find love online, then this is the movie to watch. Joe Fox (Tom Hanks) and Kathleen Kelly (Meg Ryan) are business rivals who began writing emails back and forth, without knowing each other's identities. Over time, romantic feelings develop, and Joe later realizes that the person he's been writing to the entire time has been Kathleen. At the end, they decide to meet, and Kathleen is not only shocked, but also excited to know that her cyber friend was him all along. She admits that she was hoping it was him, and the two passionately kiss.

**2. The Notebook:** This love story is one you'll watch repeatedly with a box of Kleenex next to you. It's the tale of small-town boy, Noah Calhoun (Ryan Gosling), who falls in love with rich and beautiful Allie Hamilton (Rachel McAdams). Even after Allie is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and fails to recognize her family, or him, he never leaves her side. Instead, he decides to grow old with her in a nursing home and attempts to bring her memories back. Sure, this romantic film has many sweet moments, but perhaps the scene that makes you realize how much he truly loves her is when, many years later, his children ask him to leave the rest home and return home with them. He says, "Look guys, that's my sweetheart in there. I'm not leaving her. This is my home now. Your mother is my home." Quick, pass me one of those Kleenexes.

**1. The Wedding Singer:** This is another romantic comedy film, once again teaming Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore together, who always manage to create some of the most romantic movie scenes. In this film, Sandler is a wedding singer who falls in love with Barrymore – a waitress. When he discovers that her fiancé is cheating on her and doesn't plan on stopping after marriage, he attempts to pursue her. There are plenty of sweet moments in this movie, but the one that will make your heart melt is at the end, when Sandler sings a song for Barrymore on an airplane. Who wouldn't fall for a man like that?

If one of your favorite sweetest movie moments didn't make it onto our list, let us know in a comment below! In the meantime, make sure to check out the movies mentioned above and let us know what you thought about them.

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# How Disney Messed Up Your Romance



By Tiffani Azani

“There are over 100 million single adults over the age of 25 in our country, and for most of them, the thought of being single and dating is analogous to having a red hot poker



## **jammed into their eye.” – Dating coach, Jo Amoia**

Let's face it: 100 million is a lot of singles out there, and it makes us wonder why those people can't find mates. A new theory called the Disney Myth has recently been brought to light by Dr. Joe Amoia, D.O. and professional relationship coach. It turns out that Disney movies aren't quite as perfect as you had once imagined, because, according to the theory, when a woman goes out with a man and he doesn't treat her like Prince Charming treated Cinderella, she becomes disillusioned. She becomes bitter about the whole dating process, because it's not at all like she'd expected.

The thing is, most people tend to place all of the blame on women for having false expectations and vain imaginations about romance. But women aren't the only ones who are being affected by the Disney Myth. Men, too, are putting on a Prince Charming act in order to capture the attention of a girl. Dr. J.R. Burns, M.D., psychiatrist and author of *The Tiger Woods Syndrome* says, "It is unfair to blame women for "foolish choices" when even the kindest, most religious and moral young men are using the same deceptive technique to woo and win women as the worst misogynist."

When it comes down to it, the best policy is to always be yourself. Don't expect fireworks on your first kiss or butterflies in your stomach each time your love interest walks into a room. If you do, you'll be disappointed and disillusioned every time. Sure, these things can happen on occasion under the right circumstances, but they're exceptions and not the norm. Surely every evening in Prince Charming and Cinderella's home wasn't as joyfully starlit and romantic as their first meeting at the ball. In fact, the sequel to Cinderella dealt with some of those very things. You'll have to watch it for yourself to find out how Cinderella had to learn to adjust to the day-to-day activities of a high-class lifestyle.

So maybe Disney can't be blamed for bad romances, after all.

*Tiffani Azani is a freelance writer for My Colleges and Careers. Mycollegesandcareers.com helps prospective students determine if an online education is right for them and helps them understand how they can find the best online colleges to fulfill their goals.*

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## The Best Relationship Advice Came From Steve Jobs



“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle. As with all matters of the heart, you’ll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don’t settle.”

–*Steve Jobs (1955 – 2011)*

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## 3 Ways to Become the Strong Man Women Love



By Elliott Katz

It's official! Jennifer Aniston has finally found a man to make her happy, as she recently moved in with new beau, Justin Theroux. This begs the question, what makes him different from all of the others she's dated? I think it has something to do with the fact that he's a solid man who shows leadership and makes decisions in their relationship. These days, it's hard to find men who are powerful, which may be why it took so long for Jen to find her man.

Women universally love and respect men who are strong. While researching my book, *Being the Strong Man a Woman Wants*, one of the biggest complaints I heard from women is that today's men don't show initiative and lack grit. They say that men seem oblivious to problems and wait for women to tell them what to do. Even when they're asked for input about something, men will say, "you decide."

Single women told me that when they go out for coffee with a man, instead of taking the lead and selecting the place to go, he wants her to choose. And when they finally get somewhere, he wants her to pick the table.

To avoid accusations of being controlling, many men have now gone to the opposite extreme by completely avoiding being assertive. They think they're showing that they're non-controlling nice guys and can't understand why women are frustrated and lose respect for them.

Here are three key ways to become a self-assured man any woman would love:

### **Show Leadership**

When a man sees a situation that needs to be dealt with, he should step forward and handle it. Women admire men who are willing to step up, instead of waiting for others to solve the

problem.

## **Make Decisions**

A man needs to make his share of decisions (like picking a restaurant and/or a table) and take ownership for the outcome, instead of blaming it on someone else. To many women, a man who avoids being decisive is shirking his responsibilities.

## **Take Responsibility**

Refrain from attacking someone about a situation, and instead make an effort to improve it. There is little sympathy for a man who blames a woman for making a bad choice— even when he thinks she pushed him into it. As the man, it's your lot to skillfully manage and salvage unfortunate circumstances, as well as seek to attain ideal ones.

Despite these tips, it's important to get to know your mate in order to get a feel for what she wants. Ask specific questions based on the above suggestions. You may be surprised by her response. Remember that by being confident, Justin Theroux ended up dating one of America's sweethearts, Jennifer Aniston.

*Elliott Katz is the author of Being the Strong Man a Woman Wants: Timeless Wisdom on Being a Man, which is being translated into 21 languages in Europe, Asia and Latin America. Women give the book to husbands, boyfriends and sons. Divorced women say if their husbands had understood these insights, their marriages would not have disintegrated. It's available online from Amazon.com and bookstores.*

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# 8 Tips Smart Women Know about Living “Happily Ever After”



By Amanda Martin

While most of us want to believe in the happily ever after ending, it sometimes takes a lot of work and effort to get there. With the news media feeding us frequent stories of celebrities who can't seem to make their relationships work, it's no wonder everyday couples who don't have an abundance of money or fame are struggling to keep their marriage alive.

With the national statistic for divorce in the United States still holding at 50 percent, we don't have reason to believe that fairytale endings exist anymore. So, what do the couples who stay married know, and why are they hiding it from the rest of the world? Best-selling author Iris Krasnow shares the secret to staying married forever in her new book “The



Secret Lives of Wives.” Check out eight of her tips below for achieving your happily ever after:

**1. It's okay, even healthy, to have secrets:** It's your relationship, not anyone else's, and there is no gold standard marriage. Everyone has issues, problems, and most importantly, their own secrets, so don't worry that your marriage isn't measuring up. No one knows what's really going on in a marriage except the two people in it. That gives each of us the freedom to write our own rules and keep our own secrets.

**2. You don't get it all in one place.** Staying married takes bold creativity, a variety of sideline adventures. If you depend on one person in a house to sustain you until death do you part, that's a ticket to divorce. A marriage that runs on multiple tracks makes for a happier wife who gets to have it both ways – a committed marriage and adventures in uncharted territory.

**3. Resurrect childhood passions.** Those hobbies and sports you loved to do, and excelled at, as a child bring raw primal energy and invigorated self-esteem. Take up surfing again, become a potter, get back on a horse, go back to school. Too often those hobbies of childhood get left behind as we sit on benches and watch our children race around playing fields and accrue academic kudos. Getting back out there yourself and re-engaging with the best of the old brings on a re-birth of youthful optimism and vigor.

**4. Hang out with outrageous girlfriends:** The wives with the highest marital satisfaction have a tight circle of wild and warm women friends with whom to drink, travel and vent. With women in their early 90s comprising the fastest growing segment of the aging population, and many marriages lasting more than 50 years, we're going to need all the laughs and support we can get! Our girlfriends, ever-forgiving and always empathetic, provide the escape hatch from the inevitable storms and challenges that come with long marriages.

**5. Take Separate Vacations – or Separate Summers:** You like to camp and your husband likes to golf? Spend a month in the Adirondacks while he goes with his buddies to Scottsdale or better yet, Scotland. After some weeks apart from each other, removed from the grind of ordinary life, marriage seems way hotter than the tepid state in which you left each other in. Couples who allow each other to grow separately are the ones with the best chance of growing together and staying together.

**6. Indulge in boy-best-friendships:** Platonic friendships are a sexy pick-me-up without the complications of adultery. Women who love the company of men shouldn't have to eliminate male friends from their lives; these extra-marital males who always think we're smart and beautiful (because they don't live with us) are actually a relief for any smart husband. Benign boyfriends that offer manly insights and advice means less work for the man you are married to.

**7. Lower your expectations:** It's a dangerous fantasy to think marriage really means happily ever after. Expecting perfection in a marriage or a mate is a fast ticket to divorce. This realization forces women in aging marriages to be urgent about creating their own purpose and passions outside of their relationships. Marital bliss is possible if each partner is blissful without the other.

**8. Be grateful:** In between wifely gallivants and self-exploration, remember to love the guy you're with – kiss him hello and goodbye, and make time for conversation and intimacy, no matter how crammed your schedules are. Remember to thank the confident and flexible husband that allows you to have an independent and fulfilling life beyond your marriage. Don't try to win every fight; give in, surrender and say "I'm sorry" (even if you're not sorry one bit) instead of holding onto snarly anger that forms toxic wedges over time. Demonstrating ongoing vulnerability and compassion definitely makes spouses behave better. And the ability to bounce back from strife and arguments is the real secret that makes

marriages last forever.

For more tips on staying happily married, check out Iris Krasnow's new book "The Secret Lives of Wives" at Amazon.

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## Why Amazing Confident Women Remain Single



By Amber Soletti

As a dating expert and resident NYC single gal who runs speed dating and singles events, I've always found it interesting that the majority of my super attractive, sexually confident and financially independent single girlfriends are those who

seem to remain forever single.

I've always wondered why guys wouldn't want to be with these women, and after years of thinking about it, I think I've finally figured it out:

### **The "Good Girl" Phenomenon**

Some common complaints from my guy friends are that they've "never dated a girl with money," or that "they never have sex because their girlfriend never wants to." When I ask why they're with their girlfriends, they almost always say she's "nice" or "a good girl."

Upon meeting these lovely females, they always strike me as your average, "girl next door" type chicks that are usually not working, or have a modest career at best. Personally speaking, they're pretty darn boring. I've never understood why my friends would choose to be with these women, especially when they confide in me about what their relationships are really like.

### **The Revelation**

It took a while to figure it out, but I have finally come to the conclusion that men by nature are often insecure, whether it's sparked by penis size, athletic/sexual prowess, finances or height. Many men are full of self-doubt, which I believe can drive them to cheat in relationships.

They constantly have to re-assure themselves that they've "still got it" and are desired by other women. They make the decision to be with "good girls," because they don't have to worry about being cheated on, but at the same time the women they're with won't satisfy their needs in the bedroom. It's messed up.

Due to their insecure nature, these men could NEVER be with what I call, the "crazy, sexy, cool" girls. Why? Because she

doesn't "need them" for *anything*.

## **The Dilemma**

Are we in high school or are we adults? If two adults get together and really enjoy each other's company, what does it matter if they hook-up on the first date or the fifth? It shouldn't, but for all of these insecure men out there, they rationalize, "If she slept with me on the first date, she's sleeping with everyone on the first date and I know this girl goes out with a lot of dudes."

These girls are instantly being deemed the CSC girls and NOT girlfriend material.

## **The Answer**

Should you tone it down, dress more conservatively, play the nice girl role and avoid making out with a guy on the first date? Should you wait a few dates before you have sex?

Yes, ladies, that's exactly what you should do...if you're cool with being in a relationship with one of these "insecure" guys who will most likely end up cheating on you.

I don't have all of the answers, but at least I've realized the problem. And for the record, I do know of CSC girls that have eventually found love.

To wrap it up, here's my dating advice: with all of the 'smoke and mirrors' that men put out, it's hard to say if we're ever seeing things clearly, but at the end of the day I truly believe that knowing is half the battle. The quicker you can see things for what they are, the less likely you are to be disappointed, hurt or wasting valuable time. Be aware of your male surroundings at all times, always try to know where you stand and NEVER settle. The good news is that timing really is everything, and all it takes is one good guy!

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# Celebrity Couples Who Reconciled For the Summer



By Tanni Deb

Celebrity couples are breaking up, getting back together, moving on, finding new love and embracing the single life on any given day. In fact, many of them are experts at being indecisive and unstable when it comes to relationships. It's not exactly a lifestyle to strive toward, but that doesn't mean it doesn't make us smile when a sweet pair of our favorite stars decides to get back together after previously calling it quits. Here are some notable duos that elected to give it another shot this summer:



**1. Lady Gaga and Luc Carl:** Gaga told *Rolling Stone* last year that she had never loved anyone like [Luc Carl] before. She was even quoted as saying, "That relationship really shaped me." Despite these words, it was reported in May that the *Bad Romance* singer ended their "few year relationship." It was short-lived because by June the couple appeared to be together again. A source told [UsMagazine.com](http://UsMagazine.com), "They had a little fight. I think the break-up lasted a week or two. They are totally back together now." Sounds like this one may have been the shortest breakup in celebrity history.

**2. Rachel Bilson and Hayden Christensen:** The on-again off-again duo met on the set of *Jumper* in 2007 and was engaged a year later. They struggled through many ups and down and finally called things off, splitting for good, in March 2011. Following the breakup, a source close to Bilson said, "They're done this time. [The] engagement is over, relationship's over. She's really had it." I guess the source was wrong given that the *Hart of Dixie* star reunited with her ex about a month later. Most recently, the couple has been seen traveling and spending time together. Hopefully by the time we print this they'll still be together.

**3. Sammi (Sweetheart) Giancola and Ronnie Ortiz-Magro:** Remember back in January when the *Jersey Shore* couple split after dating at irregular intervals for three seasons? The ex-couple must have had time to reunite (again) this summer during their shooting in Florence, Italy. With Sammi and Ronnie, one can never tell if their on or off. Right now it seems like they are lovey-dovey, kissing, hugging and holding hands, but sometimes their fighting looks like that way, too.

**4. Jamie Lynn Spears and Casey Aldridge:** Spears was engaged to her boyfriend, Aldridge, when she announced at the age of sixteen that she was pregnant with his child. The couple ended things before deciding to tie the knot; a baby wasn't enough to keep this relationship together. Then, in August of last

year, [People](#) reported that the former Nickelodeon star and her beau were working things out and most recently, Spears tweeted that she and her daughter's father are back together.

**5. Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth:** Looks like the *Hannah Montana* star and her ex-boyfriend didn't sing their last song. In June, Cyrus's brother Trace told *UsMagazine.com* that his sister and Hemsworth had rekindled their romance. The couple fell for each other in 2009 while filming *The Last Song*, but split the following August. When Miley's father, Billy Ray Cyrus was asked during an interview what he thought of the Australian hunk getting back together with his daughter, he said that he approved of their relationship. "He's a great guy. He's solid. He's got great character." Well, if it doesn't work out this time, Hemsworth can always hang out with Miley's dad.

**What do you think about all this on-again off-again dating?**  
Tell us below.

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## Make Your Romance a Home Run





By Diamon Hall

Baseball season is winding down, but there's a lot couples can learn from the game to help keep their romance alive. In the beginning of a relationship, hardly anybody complains about romance, since you're still on Cloud 9. And if you don't know how to keep things flowing, it can eventually start to die down the longer you're together. Here are five tips to rejuvenate and enhance you and your honey's relationship and keep it as romantic as possible:

**1. Relive your first date:** Go back to where you started. Have dinner at the very spot you had your first date and relive that moment. Talk about the memories and the feelings you had at that point. This is always a sweet way to score a home run with your honey.

**2. Be your relationship's biggest fan:** You can never go wrong with pouring out your heart to the one you love. Your partner will fall for you all over again every single time if you just remind him or her how much they truly mean to you. Join your significant other's booster club and watch your relationship

soar!

**3. Announce it on the Jumbotron:** Not only is it a good idea to let your partner know how you feel, but it's also a plus if you let everyone else know. People will have a brand new outlook on your relationship when you display your love to the world. Plus, if the world knows about it, then it's definitely true love.

**4. 7th Inning Stretch – Renew your vows:** Whether married or not, renewal of vows is a commitment on both ends. You don't necessarily have to be married to do this. It can simply consist of a few words, letting him or her know that you are theirs and they are yours and nothing should be able to come between your bond.

**5. Show up to every game:** There is just no easier way to turn up the romance in a relationship than through three simple words. You guessed it: "I love you." Who doesn't want to hear those words everyday from his or her significant other? They are the "Grand Slam" of one-liners.

If you follow these tips, you and your lover can be sure to have one of the highest-scoring relationships ever. What tips do you have to keep your romance alive? Share your ideas below.

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## Find Out Why You're Single





By Dr. Karin Anderson, Ph.D.

## **The Question**

You're single. You'd like to be in a relationship. So, what's the problem?

## **The Myth**

Well, if you ask around, you'll get plenty of input as to what you're doing wrong. Your friends insist you need to "get out there" more. Your mother complains that you're too picky. Your coworker swears that if you just get online, you'll meet "The One" in no time.

Or in some cases, your family and friends take it a step further. While conducting a little arm chair psychoanalysis, they determine that the core issue keeping you lonely on Saturday nights is YOU. You're flawed, damaged—a dating disaster zone. They say you're alone because you keep messing up your relationships. You're too controlling or too passive; too intimidating or too low-key. Too opinionated or too boring.

And even if your friends and family hold their tongues, the rest of society doesn't. Bookstores' self-help sections preach the same rhetoric with titles like, *Getting Married After 30: You Won't Unless You Change* and *Ten Things to Fix Today to Meet "The One" Tomorrow*. Clearly, single people need to shape up or expect to live alone forever.

Really?

## **The Break Down**

Let's dig deeper. If I'm single and un-datable due to annoying personality traits and relationship-destroying habits, then how is it that plenty of annoying people with relationship-destroying habits are happily coupled-up? Of course many single people have issues they need to address, too, and working through these concerns might help them cultivate healthier, more functional connections. But what about married people? Just because they've got a partner doesn't mean they have it all together. In fact, the very reason they got married in the first place may reveal their dysfunction. Where's the self-help for them? Books with titles like, *Why Did You Settle for That Loser?* and *You Were Too Much of a Wimp to Live Solo so You Married the First Person Who Came Your Way* are potential titles.

## **The Reality**

Here's how it works. Despite what most self-help authors claim, there is no formula for the perfect match. Every happy couple consists of two flawed individuals with a unique union that works for them. All guys aren't out there looking for the same type of woman and all women aren't searching for the exact same kind of guys. Forget all of the nonsense about figuring out what you need to change about yourself, because somebody out there wants exactly what you have to offer.

## **It Just Hasn't Happened Yet**



So, if you're too "controlling", then great. Someone wants you to tell them what needs to be done so they can do it. If you're too "boring", then fantastic. Your perfect match has just sworn off drama queens and is praying for a low key partner. If you're too "opinionated", then wonderful. You'll find someone who can't take a stance on anything and is happy to have someone else make decisions about where to eat and where to go on vacation. It's really as simple as that. Hang in there. Be yourself. It just hasn't happened yet!

*Dr. Karin Anderson is an associate professor of psychology and counselor education at Concordia University Chicago. She has a doctorate in developmental psychology, a track record of well-received presentations at national and international psychology conferences, and a speaking platform focusing on women's identity construction and cultivation. She's also the author of the book, It Just Hasn't Happened Yet.*

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## Celebrity Couples You Just Might See at a Sporting Game





By Whitney Baker

Spending a lazy afternoon at a ball game can be the perfect casual date – and celebrity couples seem to think so, too. Sometimes, celeb sightings at a sporting event can be as entertaining at the game itself. There may even be as much action off the court as there is on it.

So the next time you attend a sporting event – whether it be hockey, basketball or baseball – keep your eyes open for the famous duos below:

**1. Carrie Underwood and Mike Fisher:** In February, Underwood's hockey-playing hubby was traded from the Ottawa Senators to the Nashville Predators. Shortly after, Fisher moved into his wife's Brentwood, CA, home (and into her closet), and for the first time during their marriage, the newlyweds settled in the same city. Fans can rest assured that, once the hockey season starts up again in October, Underwood will be at as many home games as her hectic schedule allows.

**2. Beyoncé and Jay-Z:** This musical duo share more than just

their choice of career: they also share a love of basketball. The glamorous couple – with Beyoncé wearing heels, no less – is often on hand to cheer for the New Jersey Nets. Spotted at home and away games in cities such as Newark, Dallas, and Los Angeles, their frequent sightings make perfect sense; after all, Jay-Z is a part-owner of the team.

**3. Minka Kelly and Derek Jeter:** Kelly is a fixture at Yankee Stadium, cheering on her boyfriend of three years from a luxury box, along with his family and friends. Recently, she was on-hand to celebrate Jeter's 3,000<sup>th</sup> career hit. Beyond attending his games, Kelly and her New York Yankees captain-beau often work out together, proving that the couple that stays fit together, stays together.

**4. Hilary Duff and Mike Comrie:** Duff has followed Comrie's hockey career as he has been transferred from the New York Islanders to the Edmonton Oilers to the Ottawa Senators. Comrie is now playing for the Pittsburgh Penguins, and the couple has settled into a newlywed life filled with a lot of cross-country traveling between their homes in Pittsburgh and Los Angeles. With her husband in the rink, she may bring along another celebrity couple to keep her company: sister Haylie Duff and her longtime beau, Nick Zano.

**5. Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries:** This reality star can often be found sitting courtside as she roots for her love, New Jersey Nets forward, Kris Humphries. With the couple house-hunting in New Jersey and New York, chances are high that Kardashian will be making her mark as one of the team's celebrity fans. Kardashian is following in her younger sister's footsteps in more ways than one: after Khloé Kardashian's own whirlwind romance, she wed Los Angeles Lakers forward, Lamar Odom, in 2009.

**Who is your favorite sporty celebrity couple? Share your thoughts below!**

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# Are Women Only Into Good Looking Guys?



By Danielle Devorah of GalTime.com

When it comes to looks, women are typically more forgiving than men. I tend to believe that the first thing that attracts a man to a woman is her looks. On the other hand, a woman wants a man who comes off as intelligent, powerful, and strong. That does not necessarily equate to “good looking”. I remember dating a guy several years ago who was a very well known male model. On a scale of 1-10 this guy was an 11, for sure! He was tall, had a chiseled facial structure, strong arms. I remember taking him to parties with me and even my

male friends said, "Wow, he's a good looking dude". But, he was, well, dumb as a rock. After a couple dates and many ridiculous conversations with him, I dumped him. I no longer saw how gorgeous he was and just imagined him as an immature 15-year-old boy. Years later, he actually married a very famous actress and ironically she's very smart. I guess she didn't need someone on her level and enjoyed the arm candy.

As for me, I began gravitating to more intelligent guys that had charisma. I actually found their minds to be sexy over their appearance. One guy I dated was an inch shorter and even bald (but I'm 6' 2" with heels so I need to be fair). I cried over this one and totally fell for his personality. Bottom line: you don't need to look like a movie star or male model to land a quality girl. In fact, most of the men I was crazy about were not so great looking at all. But they were always in shape and well put together, and most importantly—confident.

I look at a couple of things when I meet a guy for the first time. Does he appear confident, what does his posture say, how is he dressed, does he have too much gel in his hair, is he overweight? If his shirt is open, I don't want to see chest hair! I also notice his watch and shoes, believe it or not. And trust me I'm not the only woman who pays attention to that stuff.

I know all of these things can come across as shallow, but at the end of the day these small details can make a difference in whether or not the guy gets the girl to say "yes" to the first date.

Learn about Jcoach Image Consultant Danielle Devorah and set up an appointment to get your special Jcoach discounted rate.

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# What Does Your Date's Drink Say About Him?



By Deana Meccariello

Whether you're out at a bar for the night or on a date, a man's drink can tell you a great deal about him. Whether he orders an ice-cold brewski, a glass of fine wine, or a shot of hard liquor, we pulled together some interesting theories on what his drink just may say about his current mood and intentions. So, next time your date takes a sip of one of these libations, keep our tell-tale clues in mind:

**Beer:** When a man orders a beer, it can mean many different



things. It really depends on the type of beer he orders. Generally, however, a man who orders a beer is out to loosen up and have a good time with friends.

**Wine.** A man drinking wine exudes class. Details are probably very important to him. If he takes his time selecting the perfect wine, he will take the time and care to impress you as well.

**Hard Liquor (Bourbon, Whiskey, Scotch, etc.).** A man who prefers hard liquor wants everyone to know he's classy (whether he actually is or not is another story). In any case, this is a high-maintenance man.

**Cocktails (Tequila, Vodka, Rum, Gin, etc.).** It is said that men who order cocktails may be a little feminine. This stereotype came about due to the playful garnishes that are served with these drinks, such as limes, cherries, and miniature onions. However, in a group setting, it is acceptable for a man to indulge in a few cocktails to have a good time.

**Shots.** A man knocking back the shots at the bar is out for one of two things: Either he is extremely emotional and trying to forget something bad that has happened to him, like a break-up or a losing a job; or he is out to party. Shots are a red flag. It means he is not taking anything seriously and is looking to alter his state of mind considerably. According to a professional in the field of mental health, and a qualified Counselor with certificates in Neuro-Linguistic-Programming, Bridget Webber states, "When indulging in shots, it is so he can get drunk quickly and obliterate any worries and problems. A man drinking [shots] on his own, then, is to be avoided, unless you want to hear about how his wife doesn't understand him." So there you have it! Steer clear of a man throwing back one too many Jamesons.

**Frozen Drinks (Margarita, Pina Colada, etc.).** Another major

red flag, a little colorful umbrella is a warning to stay away. The man who consistently orders these tropical drinks is someone who wants to seem like he is forever on vacation. He will try to impress you in many ridiculous ways, but being a smart woman, you will see right through him.

Some people believe that regardless of the beverage he chooses for himself, it is the drink he orders for you that really makes a statement. Head instructor at New York Bartending School, Ryan Yonskie, believes just that. "When someone is looking for physical intimacy, they order stereotypical drinks for the opposite sex. Men always send sweet, colorful drinks to women, such as a Cosmo, and women always send men shots."

**Tell us what you think. What is more telling of a man's behavior and intentions: What he drinks himself, or what he orders for you?**

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## Three Ways to Find Love in School





By Lindsey P.

As challenging as the college-dating scene may seem, many people do meet and enter into a long-term relationship during their college years. We all know the story of how Kate Middleton lucked out when she met her future husband, Prince William, in college. Their relationship stayed strong throughout school and resulted in one of the most talked about weddings of the decade.

Of course, not everyone finds their Prince Charming on campus, but there are plenty of ways to leverage your chances of meeting the right guy while you're busy shuffling off to class, eating a bowl of cereal in the cafeteria or watching the school's basketball team take it to the finals.

Here are a few tips to study up on:

### **Discovering Non-Intimidating Techniques**

If there's someone in your class or on your campus that you're interested in, find natural ways to let them know. There's more to introducing yourself than a simple "hello." Strike up

a conversation about your class assignment or homework, and once the discussion gets rolling, ask if they want to get together for a study session. Be specific about making plans; don't just say it rhetorically. Ask them to get together that night or the following night. For young women who aren't used to being assertive in dating situations, this technique is a non-intimidating way to get to know someone.

## **Sending Clear Messages**

Many college students date more than one person at a time. In fact, it's a part of the college experience for many young people. When you're dating a guy at school, make sure there's open communication about what he wants, what you want and where the relationship is headed. Many women tend to avoid "the talk" out of fear that the relationship will end if they say anything. But a person's intentions are usually staring us in the face; it's just a matter of whether or not we choose to accept them. By being clear with the person you're dating, it can save a lot of wasted time with the wrong person and open the door for someone new and serious to come into your life. If you're not sure what you want, that's okay. Just know that if you're open and honest with the guy that you're dating, it'll save you headaches and maybe a broken heart later.

## **Setting Priorities**

Of course, you're in college to earn your degree, so that should be your first priority. However, learning to balance a relationship with your school work can actually make you better at work/life balance once you leave college. For now, concentrating on your classes should be at the top of your list, so if you're in a situation where your relationship or dating life is monopolizing your time, it's probably best to step back a bit and reassess things.

Dating while you're in school can be a lot of fun and can be a

chance to meet new people and decide what you want in a long-term relationship for the future.

*Lindsey P. is a freelance writer and editor from the Midwest. She writes on behalf of Colorado Technical University.*

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# 5 Ways Technology is Ruining Your Dating Life



By Melissa Tierney

There's no denying we are a society addicted to technology. While this fact may not necessarily be a bad thing when it comes to your day-to-day life, our technological

habits may be making it impossible to form 'real' relationships with the targets of our affection. It seems that the days of in-person or over-the-phone conversations are gone, and instead we are left with e-mail, texting, or social networking sites as the normal way of communicating, normally in 140 characters or less. So although technology may make it easier to meet someone, does it really help nurture a relationship?

**1. Tuning Out the World Around You:** It's become a part of life to have our Blackberry stuck to our ear whether we are at work, running errands or even out with friends, but what does this say about us? Experts agree, when people are glued to their phones it's a sign that they aren't open to meeting new people. This is the complete opposite message you want to be sending if you are indeed "on the market." If you seem preoccupied and uninterested, no one is going to approach you in order to get to know you, let alone ask you out. Whether you're out alone or with your friends, take some helpful advice and put the phone down – you never know who may be watching you, waiting to make his or her move.

**2. More Likely to Cheat:** Studies have proven that people who are addicted to technology and social networking are more likely to cheat. Since they are constantly 'meeting' new people every day, and communicating with them via the Internet, it is more likely to turn a friendly conversation into flirting. The worst part of this is that others don't even consider what they are doing as 'cheating' or 'flirting'.

By being able to meet someone with the click of a mouse, it makes people appreciate less what they already have.

**3. Cyberstalking:** With sites like Facebook, Twitter and Four Square, people are now able to track down their partner's whereabouts without being caught. By engaging in this kind of behavior, you can ruin an existing or new relationship. When you cyber-stalk your honey, you're going to over-analyze



everything they do: who they are talking to; who they have pictures with; and where they are going. This may indicate a trust issue in the relationship. While you may be tempted to cyber-stalk your beau, don't do it – it will cause nothing, but problems.

**4. Not Paying Attention:** How annoying is it to go on a date with someone who won't turn their phone off and focus his attention on you? Just because you have your phone with you, that doesn't mean you should be responding to a text, e-mail, or call. When you're on a date, you should be focusing your attention on the other person and what he or she is saying.

How are you supposed to get to know someone who you might possibly have a future with if you can't even focus and pay attention in the present?

**5. It's Not Official Until It's On the Internet:** Apparently relationships are no longer 'official' until they're spread all over the internet, which makes many people feel uncomfortable. So it begs the question – is it necessary to plaster your relationship status all over Facebook? On the one hand, some believe that unless you have something to hide, you and your beau should both change your relationship status on Facebook as well as indicate who you are in a relationship with to show you are both 'off limits'. Conversely, others believe that your 'status' shouldn't be broadcast on a website and that it isn't anyone else's business. Either way, 5 years ago this situation wasn't something we had to deal with and it's another reason why technology may be ruining your dating life.

**What other examples can you think of that demonstrate technology is taking a toll on your dating life? Share your thoughts below!**

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# What to Wear on a First Date



By Maggie T.

First dates can be stressful enough without having to worry about what to wear and how to accessorize for the occasion. By sticking with classic fashion that never goes out of style and wearing clothes that are comfortable, you can keep your anxiety level to a minimum. Here are a few stylish yet comfortable clothing suggestions to fit three of the most common first date experiences:

## Lunch Date

A lunch date is a bit more casual if it happens during the

weekday, as you will both be dressed in business casual or work attire. There's not much you can do there. However, if your lunch date takes place on the weekend, then you will have a few more options. Whether it's a picnic in the park, dining on an outdoor restaurant deck or at a local coffee house, lunch dates can be an invigorating way to start the day.



1. printed scarf
2. cuffed shorts
3. woven top
4. sandals
5. mini messenger bag
6. aviator sunglasses

The key to this type of date is to keep it casual. A light-colored, button down shirt and a pair of cuffed shorts looks clean and classic when paired with strappy sandals. You can accessorize the look with a scarf to make it a bit trendy as well. It comes in handy if you get chilly, and it's an easy way to spice up an outfit. If the date is outside, a great pair of sunglasses is a must. You'll also need a go-to purse. This cross-the-body messenger bag isn't too small, and it will keep your hands free. Neutral and earth-toned jewelry and make-up will complete this polished-looking ensemble.

## **Casual Dinner Date**

Are you going to dinner and a movie on your first date?

Movies typically aren't a great first date experience because not much talking can be done while you are watching the screen in silence among hundreds of other film-goers. However, if your date tops it off with dinner, then a movie can be a great icebreaker because it gives you something to discuss later on.

You may even get bonus points if you bring a large purse and fill it with your favorite candy to share. If a movie isn't on the agenda but a casual meal is, try not to pick a place that's too loud; it can be hard to keep the flow of conversation going if you're yelling back and forth.



1. printed scarf
2. green handbag
3. black heels
4. green flats
5. skinny jeans
6. grey sweater

Skinny jeans and a cute top make are a great look for a dinner date. You can dress this outfit up or down in a number of ways. For example, you can pair it with heels for a sophisticated look or flats if you want to keep it casual. Either way, it works. Similar to the above suggestion, bring along a scarf to tie the outfit together. It's always colder indoors, and scarves are much less bulky than jackets. When you warm up, you can just stash the scarf in your purse.

### **Formal Date**

The guy you've been admiring for weeks finally asks you out on a date. He mentions a restaurant that you know is extremely formal. What do you wear? Whether it's a fancy restaurant, a special event or the theater, there are only two words to describe this date: lucky you! Don't sweat because now is your time to shine and look fabulous. Play up your best qualities and embrace your feminine side. If you're heading somewhere classy, you should absolutely wear a dress. Don't wear anything too short or too low-cut. You don't need to give away all the goods on the first date. Play with fabrics and patterns, and create a look that leaves him imagining more and begging for a second date.



1. sleeveless dress
2. evening scarf
3. teardrop earrings
4. dark nail polish
5. black strappy heels
6. heart pendant
7. lace clutch

A pretty dress is an essential wardrobe piece in any woman's closet – it can be dressed up or down, and it can be used for

many different occasions. This crÃ“me dress from H&M can be worn on a date, at work, or anywhere you need to look nice.

I've paired it with a black sequined scarf, but you could just as easily pair it with a black blazer or cardigan. Keeping with the theme of dark accessories, break out a pair of black heels and a black lace clutch. Don't be afraid of dark nail polish either (it's not goth!). Dark colors work really well if the manicure is fresh.

Whether you choose to keep it casual on your first date or your special someone wants to make it fancy and special, it's important that you feel comfortable with what you're wearing.

The more relaxed you feel about your outfit, the more you can focus on the handsome suitor by your side. Using these tips, your date will have no choice but to ask you out again.

*Author Bio: During the day, Maggie works for ReadingGlassesShopper.com, where she makes wearing reading glasses fashionable. On her down time, she enjoys listening to music, trying new recipes, and traveling.*

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## The Big Merge: 3 Tips for Moving In Together





By GalTime Dating Diva Jennifer Oikle, Ph.D.

It's time for the big MERGE! You finally found The One and you are moving in together or getting married. Exciting, thrilling and... bumpy? When two adults decide to come together to create one life, there can be a few bumps along the way.

Even the most compatible partners will still have differences when it comes to habits, interests, and yes, even decorating taste. Now that you share a bathroom, how do you negotiate those small and sometimes ugly discrepancies while keeping your bond strong? It's easy when you keep in mind your UNIFYING VISION.

Here's a secret. Most couples create damage to their union when they forget the big picture and, instead, focus on nitty-gritty details. Before long, you can ruin an entire weekend shouting about who takes out the garbage, whether his ugly old lamp gets to stay, and if you can read in bed while the other person tries to go to sleep.

So, how do you find the right compromise on all of the little



differences that threaten to weaken your love? Remember, it's never really about the little things. When we argue about the small things, it's really the big hidden issues that we are playing tug of war over, such as feeling loved, trusted or respected.

The solution: Identify the underlying issue and bring your focus back to your Unifying Vision for your relationship.

Let's take a peek into how to make this happen.

## **Step 1: Create Your Unifying Vision**

When you set up house together it's the perfect time to explicitly commit to the vision you have for your lives together. Sit down and take some notes on the biggest question of all: What do we really want our life together to look like?

Brainstorm on such topics as:

- What are the 5 top values or attributes that guide the way we want to interact with each other? For example: loving, trustworthy, respectful, honest, reliable...
- What are the 3 most important qualities we want our free time together/activities to embody? For example: novelty, adventure, relaxation, intellectual stimulation...
- What characteristics do we want our home/living space and routines to embody to support our bond? For example: organized, cozy, bright, romantic...

Once you have the big picture in mind, little disputes become much easier to resolve by referring back to what you agreed *really* matters.

## **Step 2: Identify the Underlying Concern**

When a conflict crops up, before you get embroiled in your stances, take a deep breathe and step back. Ask yourself or

each other: What is really bothering me here? Which of my deepest held values or needs is being triggered by this situation?

It could be that your argument about him leaving the toothpaste cap off is really about not feeling heard. Or maybe his need to be on time is rubbing your more care-free nature the wrong way.

### **Step 3: Decide Based on your Unifying Vision**

Once you know what is really going on, go back to the big picture: the vision you and your partner have for your lives. Based on what's most important to you both, the things you do agree on – has something shifted in the way you feel about this difference?

Typically, once you truly understand what makes your partner tick, the solution comes easily. For example, once you know that your partner values reliability over all else – you'll be able to commit to being on time regularly. Or, if your partner knows how important it is for you to feel supported, it'll be easier for him to take out the trash without being hounded.

By always stepping back from any perceived difference, you can usually find what you both have in common. And once you step back onto the same team with the same goals, winning happens naturally!

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## **Love Lessons We Can Learn**

# From the Classroom



By Vince Scebbi

Now that school's out and has become a distant memory, you may be tempted to forget the important lessons you learned while sitting at your desk in math class, such as adding one to one makes two, that all right triangles equal 180 degrees, and, more importantly, how to subtly check out the girl two rows over, who vaguely reminds you of Emma Watson.

Everyone knows that students are not only absorbing what's written on the chalk board, but also the world around them...and that includes the dating realm.

So now that those days of puberty, driver's education, and prom are in the rear view mirror, true students of the dating game know how to take their classroom lessons and apply them

to their current adult relationships. A big part of this process involves self-reflection on your past mistakes, while at the same time realizing that making wrong moves is how you improve your game.

Let's be honest – everyone learned lessons about “love” in health class, and I'm not talking about the physically taxing kind, but rather the lessons of your heart. Here are some worth remembering:

**1. “Don't let the drama bring you down”:** It doesn't matter how old you are, because drama will always find a way back into your life. Of course, there's no easy way to cope with unwanted drama– you just need to accept that it's there, and keep your distance from those who cause it. Chances are that those who cause problems will end up with issues of their own.

**2. “It's the subtlety of sexiness”:** One of the most important lessons you learned in school was how to interact socially. In relationships, this plays a huge factor at events, such as making the first move when approaching that Emma-Watson-look-a-like. In high school, a conversation could easily begin with a discussion about homework. Now that you're older, don't over think it. Find common ground with your potential love interest, and hopefully both a discussion and a future date will result.

**3. “Love is a reaction”:** With each relationship you make and break, you take a step closer to finding true love. Most likely starting in school, you began discovering what love meant to you, and how a solid relationship worked. Now, you can analyze your successes and failures, what you liked versus what annoyed you, and why you were attracted to someone in the first place. Chemistry class taught you what didn't work: some couples were like ionic bonds – one atom giving, and the other taking. Although the theory seemed simple, that scenario rarely worked effectively, as sometimes other atoms were

thrown into the mix (or, other people). The lesson you took with you is that the strongest relationships are the ones that tend to share and compromise.

**4. “Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again”:** Shakespeare knows best! Whether you dated someone for four hours or four years, break-ups hurt – and in high school, it always seemed to hurt worse. Between the first love experience, the drama that comes in the aftermath, or perhaps the idealistic view of relationships we have when we’re young, it’s just something we get through and learn from in order to grow up.

Similar to graduation, what we learned in school were the basic love lessons we carried into the adult world. But the work is never over when it comes to learning about love and relationships. It’s an ongoing process that we’re sure to get better and better at as time goes on.

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## How to Size Someone Up For the Long Run





By Dr. Samuel Barondes, author of *Making Sense of People*

When we meet someone new, we immediately form a tentative picture of his or her personality. We generate this first impression in a matter of seconds, because we need it to guide our initial give and take.

Our amazing ability to rapidly size people up works so well that we continue to rely on it as we get to know the person better. In doing so, we keep building a more elaborate intuitive impression—an impression that we rarely bother to consciously examine. Although we may spend hours methodically assessing a new smartphone before deciding what we think of it, our assessment of someone's personality keeps being made by the seat of our pants.

There are times, though, when we want to consciously think over what we've observed. We may, for example, want to figure out if a person we are dating has the right stuff for a permanent relationship by discussing it with our friends. But these conversations are often uninformative because few of us have been taught a systematic way to assess personalities.

This limits our ability to come up with a thoughtful



appraisal of the person we have in mind, even with the assistance of those who are eager to help us.

I have a system for going beyond a first impression by consciously assessing the personality of someone who interests you. With this system, you and your friends can discuss the many observations you've made, and come up with a clearer and more useful picture. It begins by showing you how to thoughtfully assess basic characteristics such as sociability, warmth, competence and emotional stability. This will help you decide how much it matters to you that the person is shy or outgoing, warm or cold, reliable or unreliable, and content or easily upset.

You will then be ready to look for signs of troublesome patterns such as compulsiveness, narcissism, sociopathy and paranoia, and to consider how this might affect you. Having clarified these matters will put you into a position to make a moral appraisal of the person's character, using your own personal standards. You'll also learn how to put this all together with what you know about the person's view of who he or she really is, a sense of identity that includes goals, ideals, and a life plan.

Making sense of someone in this systematic way will help you decide how compatible the two of you are. Although a first impression tells you if you want to get to know someone better, a thoughtful appraisal may reveal both admirable and dangerous aspects of a personality that you might have overlooked, and that may prove to be important in the long run.

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## 3 Ways to Support a Grieving Partner



By Linda Guma

Coping with the loss of a loved one is undoubtedly very painful. It may cause us to simultaneously experience rage, sadness, despair, and disbelief. This emotional suffering is known as grief, and it's our natural response to loss. This

week in the United States, we celebrate Patriot's Day, which is dedicated to the victims who were killed during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. It's a day marked with loss for many in our country, and it's important for us to remember those who perished on that day, especially this year, since it is the tenth anniversary of that tragic event.

But with remembrance comes emotional turmoil. Experiencing loss can definitely be tough to deal with personally, but when you're in a relationship, you also have to be supportive if this happens to your partner. If your mate loses a loved one, you have to know how to be there for him or her. You may feel like there's nothing you can do to help relieve your partner of their misery, but there are ways you can be supportive. Here are three immediate ways to help them:

**1. Be present:**Avoidance is not going to expedite the grieving process. It'll only feel like a second loss for your mourning partner if you pull away. It may be frightening to see your loved one suffering, but you can't pretend it's not happening. Grieving is necessary for healing the pain and moving forward. Acknowledge the devastation of the bereaved, and let your significant other know that you are there for them by expressing your sorrow and support. Choose your expressions carefully. For example, use phrases like, "I'm so sorry," or "I care." Don't say things like, "I know how you feel," or "It's not that bad," which won't be helpful and will only reflect a lack of understanding.

**2. Be patient:**There's no such thing as a set timeline for grief. Some people may cry every day for five years, while others may do all their mourning at once. While you want to give your partner hope, don't tell him or her that the sense of loss will be over soon. Be prepared to stand by for as long as it will take. Be patient and encourage your partner to be patient.

**3. Be encouraging:** While it's necessary to go through the mourning process in order to heal emotional wounds, it's also important not to let it take over your lives. Spend time with your partner outdoors and get some exercise. Ask them to join you for a jog in the park or for a game of tennis. It may not be a solution to the problem, but the endorphins produced by physical activity will help relieve some tension and frustration.

**How can you help your partner through the mourning process? Share your ideas below.**

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## **Are You a Kim Kardashian or Tara Reid Bride?**





By Brea Gunn

Not every woman is cut out for a big Kim Kardashian-style bash for her big day. Many would prefer a quick and discrete elopement, much like Tara Reid's wedding. So, what's a girl to do? And how do you decide what's the right choice for you?

Let's take a look at things objectively for a minute. If you have a large family (and, wow, Kim K. does), then you have to examine how many people you're comfortable inviting to your celebration. If you have dreams of being a princess, a big traditional ceremony is just the thing for you.

Kim Kardashian's ceremony was just about as close to a fairy tale wedding as you can get...without actually being a royal.

Between the three costume changes, black and white color scheme, and nearly 400 guests, she wowed the guests with glitz and glam.

Here are four things to consider about a large, traditional ceremony:

**1. The size of the guest list:** A traditional ceremony and

venue will allow you to invite all of your family and friends, including those that you don't see too often.

**2. The ability to change outfits multiple times:** I loved all three of Kim's dresses. She looked fantastically glam, and because she was in a traditional setting (most likely with a dressing room), she was comfortable changing outfits.

**3. Knowing your vendors:** If you get married locally, there's word-of-mouth to rely on. I don't know many of us out there with a direct line to Vera Wang, but you should totally get the number of that amazing caterer that your friend had at her wedding.

**4. Help:** I cannot stress how important it is to get good help. It can be hard to find, unless you have family close at hand. Plus, you need to have someone there to help lace you into your gown.

Now, if a large, lavish affair just isn't your thing, you may want to consider elopement. Take Tara Reid and her whirlwind romance. One minute she's engaged, and the next second (okay, it was actually more like two hours), she's married! Thanks to Twitter, her family probably got the news the same way the rest of the world did. And eloping is just the thing if you aren't into all kinds of fussiness. It's quick, discrete and you can invite people...if you want. It's totally up to you.

With an elopement, you have far less to worry about than with a big ceremony. Here are some things to consider:

**1. Destination:** You could go to the courthouse, I suppose, but it really wouldn't be much fun. So let's think bigger, like Tara Reid. Greece? Jamaica? Hawaii? There are lots of beautiful destinations out there from which to choose.

**2. Guests:** Beyond the location you get married, you have to think about whether you want to truly elope with no attendees, or have a few close friends and family fly in for the occasion.



**3. Pack:** After you make your travel plans, all you have to do is pack your bags and go. Quick, easy, and no fuss. Just be sure to bring a camera!

Whether you choose to be a bride like Kim Kardashian and live out your fantasy princess wedding, or you just want to get away and tie the knot with no chaos like Tara Reid, that's a choice that's totally yours. Whatever you choose, it'll be a day you will never forget.

*Brea Gunn is a monthly contributor to Cupid's Pulse, and writes for a Hudson Valley weddings site for real weddings, reviews and inspiration from local wedding business resources.*