

Fishing For Mr. Right – Types of Guys to Throw Back



By Kelly Rouba, GalTime.com

How to Navigate the Rough Seas of Online Dating

If you're like me and haven't found Mr. Right yet, chances are you've tried or may consider trying an online dating site. Over the past few years, I've created profiles on a few sites and never had so much as one date come of it. In fact, I decided to give up on online dating altogether last year after I discovered the one guy I was planning to go out with had a girlfriend.

However, I recently decided to jump back in the online dating pool after my housemate and best guy friend encouraged me to

keep at it, so I gave it a try on one of the popular free sites.

To my surprise, my inbox has seen a steady stream of invitations from my male counterparts. I've also actually gone out with a few of them – the first of which I thought had real potential until he revealed his true colors a month into dating. As stunned as I was to see his alter ego emerge, I realize now that the signs were there and I should have proceeded with greater caution.

Since then, I've vowed to guard myself and created a list of men and equated them to various types of 'fish' as a reminder of who to watch out for during my quest to find love. To all the lovely single ladies out there who are also searching for their soul mate among a vast sea of fish, I hope this list will help safeguard your heart as well.

The Blowfish–

This guy wants one thing and that's to get in your pants! He will come on fast and strong and may even disguise himself as Mr. Nice Guy on the first date or two before he reveals his kinky side. In fact, one guy I dated did just that. He went out of his way to charm me and win me over – even having his mom bake me cookies twice – before his conscience finally kicked in and he decided he had too much respect for me to use me for sex.

Moral of this story: Take it slow. All will reveal itself in time, and the real deal will stick around because he knows you are worth waiting for. So if you catch a blowfish, toss him back!

The Clownfish–

Everything is a joke to this guy, including dating you. If you go out with him, expect to be embarrassed as it's likely he will be surrounded by his drinking buddies and will succumb

to their typical childish antics and rowdy, obnoxious behavior. The good news is a clownfish is easy to spot thanks to his goofy and drunken profiles pictures, so steer clear!



The Starfish–

Every woman deserves to be treated like a princess – and by that I mean adored and respected. A starfish will never do that because he is too into himself. While his narcissistic personality may not always shine through online, it will on your first date.

My last date was a mild version of the starfish, and he dominated the evening with conversation about himself. He never even asked me one question about myself and, in the process, he revealed too much about himself. I quickly learned he is 8 years sober, broke and doesn't really have the job title he proclaimed. The guy later texted me to let me know he was nervous on our date and will be "calmer" on the next date. Umm, what next date?

The Clam–

This guy may seem friendly at first, but as things start to heat up and you want to get to know him better, he will quickly "clam up." Dating someone secretive and tight-lipped only breeds suspicion and that's no way to lay a foundation for an honest and open relationship. Move on quick!

The Mussel–

Anyone got a mirror? This guy will need it since he will be more into himself than admiring you. It's easy to spot Mr. Mussel, though, since all his profile pictures will feature his abs and biceps (and are often devoid of his head for some odd reason). If you don't let yourself get caught up drooling over his brawn (remember, you need a guy with brains too!), you'll look for smooth sailing.

The Shark–

Beware of sharks! These guys are ruthless and tough, and there's not a romantic bone in their bodies. Fortunately, sharks are also easy to detect since their profile names often have the word "death" or "dark" right in it and their image is equally as frightening. Need I say more here?

The Snake–

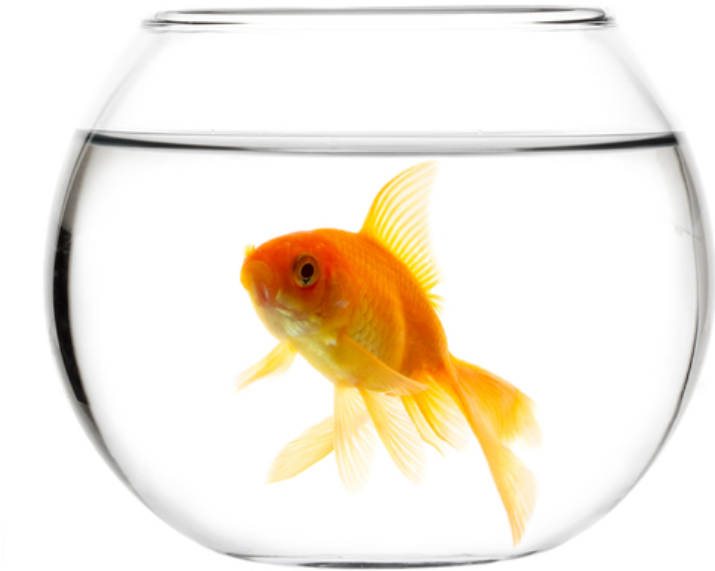
The snake is a guy who is looking to create trouble in your life. As a prime example, my housemate's crush found me online and asked for my number so he could text me contact information for some contractors who could repair my basement wall. After I gave him my digits, he instead hit on me via text and asked for more of my pictures. (He never did give me the contractors' contact information, either.)

Not wanting my housemate to find out from someone else about what had occurred, I felt obligated to tell her what happened so she wouldn't think I was trying to steal her crush. Sadly, she bought his bs response hook, line and sinker after she confronted him. The good news is that you can be spared this type of agony if you keep an eye out for snakes!

The Hammerhead–

You will find yourself beating your head against the wall with this guy. He always wants things his own way and will pout or whine until you give in – or he'll just walk away. And let

him because there's no reasoning with him and all relationships should involve compromise so both parties are happy.



The Goldfish–

This guy likes the finer things in life and will blow through his entire paycheck to get what he desires – from sports cars to gold chains (Notice I didn't say your heart?). It's all about making him look good and there likely won't be much left to spend on you, if he even wants to spare some change. Instead, look for a guy who is willing to pamper you too!

The Guppy–

New at dating, this guy just wants to play the field. He is unsure of what he wants, except for sex of course, and he is nowhere near settling down or even interested in a monogamous relationship. Fortunately, on some dating sites, you can tell when another user is online. So if the object of your affection is still on the prowl or barely setting aside time for you, move on!

Now that you've read these pearls of wisdom, hopefully you'll know who to avoid during your search. As a helpful hint, look

for “the oyster.” There’s a treasure inside this guy that is worth waiting for. Happy fishing!

Should a Woman Propose to a Man?



By McLean Robbins, GalTime.com

A woman dreams of the day when that special someone sinks to one knee, looks them lovingly in the eyes and utters those four magical words, “Will you marry me?”

But in today’s glass-ceiling breaking, two-income household holding, Mr. Moms-are-totally-cool day and age, is this notion

a bit antiquated? Has the women's liberation movement come so far that we can now propose our own version of happily ever after?

Our initial reaction after being presented with this topic was a resounding "heck no," but naturally, more exploration was necessary. So we queried leading relationship experts, lawyers, dating coaches and wedding professionals to get their opinions.

We'll warn you – there's no concrete answer, but our industry experts did come up with some valuable arguments for and against the issue.

Traditionalists Say "No Way"

Tasha, a love coach who appeared on VH1's *Secrets of Aspen*, says that when a woman proposes to a man, she castrates him. "When you take the proposal away [from the man], you cut off their ability to make you [the woman] the happiest you could be."

"If you're putting the best product you have out there, you will capture your rational mate [without proposing] rather than drag him [to the altar]," says Constance Dunn, M.A. etiquette specialist and author of *Practical Glamour*. "And this is coming from a card-carrying feminist!"

"It's all about perceived mate value," she says. "Sure, you might be able to drag some dude to the altar, but he's always going to wonder if he could have done better." "If something is readily available, it isn't as valued ... look at the success of the Birkin bag wait list."

Letting a man take charge isn't about letting go of your own self or conceding that he has more power in the relationship, says Tasha. It's about allowing the person you love to make a grand gesture.

“There’s something important about that ritual of a man making that commitment to a woman,” Dunn says. But, she admits, women have the ultimate power – saying yes or no.

Dunn agrees that as society continues to evolve, the idea of women proposing may become both psychologically and socially more acceptable. “But it’s only been a few decades ... we aren’t there yet.”

Moderates Say “You’re Doing It Every Day”

Laurie Puhn, lawyer, couples mediator and author of the national bestseller *Fight Less, Love More: Five Minute Conversations to Change Your Relationship Without Blowing Up or Giving In* says that women “propose” to men every day – they just don’t call it that. “It’s called an ultimatum.”

“The reality is that women initiate probably over fifty percent of the ‘are we in this for the long haul’ conversations,” says Puhn. This gives the man the information he needs to know that when he asks you to marry him, he’s assured you’ll say yes.

Of course, Puhn cautions, conversations of that nature should not be brought up lightly. But if you’re nearing or over 30 and have been seriously dating for six months or more ... it’s natural and fine for a woman to want to bring up the topic.

A huge number of changes in relationships, for good and for bad, come about as a result of women initiating, poking, prodding, and setting time frames, she says. The issue isn’t necessarily what one says, but how they phrase it. Relationship discussions of any nature won’t be successful if phrased as “you’d better do it,” she says. Women who feel the need to issue proposals – of the mini or major variety – need to know before speaking what they are and aren’t comfortable with ... and how to walk away if they don’t get the answer they need.

“You’re never too young to value your time.” If you want to make sure you’re giving yourself ample opportunity to meet Mr. Right before you have to meet Mr. Right, that’s the outlook to have, says Puhn.

While this type of proposal isn’t “fun or exciting,” it’s the reality of many relationships today.

And, if a woman wants to get down on one knee and ultimately do the proposing, Puhn is fine with that – so long as she has the confidence and guts to “make that the story [you tell your grand kids].”

But will it ever become commonplace? No. “When we get to the male birth control pill, you can talk to me about a woman proposing.”

Progressives Say “Go For It ... Selectively”

In the Old World where civility is king, the man should always make the moves,” says Paul A. Falzone, CEO of eLove, a dating and matchmaking service with a three-decade history. “But now we’re in 2011 and the world has evolved quite a bit. If a guy can take a woman’s assertiveness, God bless her; let her run.”

Of course, he says, this type of forward thinking need require a certain type of man. If your sweetheart is a traditionalist, a subtler hint might be the better route. But, as Falzone cautions, “at the stage in the game where you’re getting down and proposing, choice shouldn’t really be in the game. You should have it pretty nailed down by then.”

In other words, are you damn sure he’ll say yes? For some women, it’s about taking life into their own hands and being the master of their own destiny. “You’re the most important person in your life and you’ve got to look at yourself and think, what’s best for me?”

If the answer is marriage and your relationship and timing are

right, a proposal might be the way to go.

If you're determined to do the asking, make sure you're planning a proposal the man would enjoy, says Sandra Aaron, owner of Mindless Sophistication Events in Toronto, Canada. "This isn't the moment for a female's fantasy proposal. This is the moment to make him feel appreciated."

Sometimes, Falzone says, men need a god kick in the pants. Just remember, he cautions, that one should make sure they're doing it for the right reasons – that they're truly ready to get married.

What about you? Would you propose to your sweetheart, and under what circumstances?

Is He Husband Material?





By Kelly Rouba, GalTime.com

The other day, my friend was distraught over how his wife has been treating him lately. The two had begun the process of getting divorced when she suddenly had a change in attitude and promised she would change. Sadly, that promise lasted only a couple of weeks.

After we discussed the situation, we began exploring what he should expect from his partner and it led me to think about what characteristics I should be looking for in a man so that I don't end up in a similar situation someday. For those single ladies, like myself, who are hoping to get married one day, allow me to share some expert advice on what you should be looking for in a partner:

"What makes a man husband material are emotional characteristics, including stability, reliability and honesty. These are the hallmarks of what makes a man a good long-term partner," says Dr. Seth Meyers, a licensed psychologist, relationship expert, and author of *Dr. Seth's Love Prescription*.

In addition, and perhaps “the most surprising factor that is important is empathy, or the ability to be sensitive and understand how the other person feels,” Meyers adds. “When problems develop, as they inevitably will, having a man in your life who listens and cares about your feelings is one factor that helps to solidify mutual respect and intimacy.”

Stacie Ikka, founder of Sitting In A Tree, a consulting service that was created in response to the dating community’s need for customized and innovative approaches to help facilitate sustainable relationships, offers the following tips:

1. You feel as good about him when you’re not with him as you do when you are with him.
2. He’s never made you cry and you’re confident he never will. (There’s a saying that goes something like this: No boy/man is worth crying over and the one who is will never make you.)
3. He shows a genuine interest in the things that are important to you.
4. He fights fair.
5. He holds your hair back if/when you’re sick.
6. If your child were to come out EXACTLY like him, you’d be thrilled.

As for my own advice, which I shared with my friend, you need to learn to love yourself first. Learning to love yourself and finding self-fulfillment while single is crucial because you cannot expect a mate to fill those voids for you. Depending on a partner to meet those needs will never work and you’ll remain emotionally needy, not to mention more likely to put up with bad behavior just to be with someone.

Personally, I also promised my parents I’d never bring someone into the family who didn’t fit in with them or get along with them because they mean too much to me. Plus, I want to be with a man who respects me, values me and treats me well

because I will do the same in return.

Maybe this piece of advice seems obvious, but Robert Epstein, Ph.D., who is a distinguished research psychologist and former editor-in-chief of *Psychology Today* magazine, reminds us that the man needs to be “available (meaning not married or in a serious relationship), and he needs to be ready for a long-term commitment.” Emotional availability (don’t want someone who’s pining for his ex) is also key.

Beyond that, women also need to watch out for deal breakers, meaning threats to having a future together, Epstein says. “When there is a deal breaker, that means that extremely important relationship needs – either your’s or his – are not met by the other person. You want kids, for example, and he hates them. Forget about it!”

If you feel an issue is at-hand that could be a deal breaker, it’s best to address it right away. “When there are deal breakers, you need to put them on the table and talk about them. If you try to hide them, they’ll turn up anyway, eventually, and probably destroy your relationship – or at least make you miserable. Get them out in the open and see if you can work something out! Hey, maybe he can handle having just one kid! You never know until you talk.”

Here’s to happily ever after!

He Said/She Said: Decoding the Text Message



By Analorena Zeledon, GalTime.com

I don't think anyone really thought about how complicated text messaging would turn out to be when it was first invented, not to mention how talented we'd have to become with our thumbs. Seriously. If you think emails can be misinterpreted easily, think about those short, abbreviated messages specifically designed to say a lot in as little space as possible. They are minefields when it comes to romance.

Even the most simple messages can be over analyzed. Ever received a text with a "ha ha" and a period after it? How do you interpret that? First of all, why is the "ha ha" separated? Was the person showing sarcasm, did his I-Phone auto-correct it or did he genuinely find it funny? And if he found it comical, then why did he end it with a period? Periods are meant for formal sentences in emails, letters, papers, books, etc. But NOT in text messages! Especially

after a vague “ha ha.” So at this point, you are psychoanalyzing his attitude. “Is he mad at me? Did I do something wrong? He never uses periods. So I definitely messed up. Oh no, is he going to dump me???” See the problem? OK, maybe that is a little extreme and you’re not quite that insecure, but tell me you haven’t had moments of doubt after sending and receiving a text where you’ve stared at the message and re-read it a million times.

How about when you impulsively reach out to the cute guy from the gym and text, “Why don’t we go out for drinks?” And he responds with “Sure.” What does that mean, SURE? Now, take a step back. What if he wrote you that same message but added the word “sometime.” Then what then? When is “sometime?” Is that in a day, a week, a month, a year??!

Men say that they are simple and straightforward. They mean exactly what they say. But do they? Read the following text messages and think about them (really think). What do YOU think they mean? Then we’ll give it to you straight. We’ve polled some of the best love & relationship experts in America to clarify these vague texts. Giving us the male perspective is **Thomas Edwards Jr.** known as **the Professional Wingman**; he has been featured on *Maxim* and *E!* Online. From the female perspective, we have funny but no-bull, **Ensley Gilchrist**, the proud author of a humor and dating blog, **Haughty By Nature** and **Laurie Davis**, the founder of **eFlirt Expert**.

“I wish you were here”

GIRL INTERPRETATION: “He really likes me! Awww and he misses me!! So cute!”

Actual Meaning:

THOMAS: “I want something and only you can give it to me.” It could mean he actually misses you, the way you kiss his lips or the way you make his favorite Italian sandwich. Whatever the case is, he misses you and you are appreciated. But

beware, too early in the game and he might be a High-level Clinger.

LAURIE: If you've been on more than 3 dates, this is absolutely adorable and he's a keeper! But, if you only grabbed drinks once, this reeks of desperation. He's basically admitting that he's sitting around his lonely apartment-for-one clinging to the memory of how the light hit your hair in the bar din.

"Are you going out tonight/ What are you doing later?"

GIRL INTERPRETATION: "He wants to hang out with me! He can't stop thinking about me!"

Actual Meaning:

ENSLEY: "Maybe I can get this one in the bag before I have to buy her too many drinks."

THOMAS: "Can we have sex?" Not much science to this one.

LAURIE: If it's after 8PM, this is definitely a booty call. If sent earlier in the day it could be genuine, but beware, you've got a last minute planner on your hands! Same day scheduling too early in the courtship process means you might be a fill-in for a cancelled date.

"Can we reschedule for another night? I am not feeling well."

GIRL INTERPRETATION: "Poor little boo boo! He needs me to bring him chicken soup and some lotion-infused Kleenex!"

Actual Meaning:

THOMAS: "Whatever responsibility I had, I'm bailing" or "I want you to take care of me."

It could be a cheap bail out of something he doesn't want to do. Or he's not feeling his best and may want to be alone. Pay attention to the context in which he says this one.

ENSLEY: "That hot girl from the bar Saturday night just told me she was free."

LAURIE: This level of sharing is actually a good thing. A statement like this is one way of showing vulnerability and you can expect more to come from your relationship. But if you have plans, watch out! Your date is about to get cancelled.

"I'll text you later."

GIRL INTERPRETATION: "He must be really busy right now. He has such a stressful job! Why can't his boss give him a break?!"

Actual Meaning:

THOMAS: "I'm bored and I'm going to do something else." OR "I want to call you later but I'm too scared to do it." If you get that message mid-conversation, it probably means he's losing interest and wants to get back to playing video games. Texting is also an easy way out and it takes the pain away from actually talking on the phone so he may be avoiding that. This also can apply to anyone that will text, "I'll call you later," and ends up texting you.

LAURIE: Generally, this means, "I'm still too lame to pick up the phone and call you."

Now, if he just mentioned he was about to run into a meeting or have dinner with friends, this is acceptable. But, if you're in the middle of a conversation, it is NOT. He might as well be saying he's bored and/or has better things to do.

Were you surprised? Or are you a text-messaging fiend who can read men's minds with as much ease as adding 1 +1? If you're

the latter, well then my hat's off to you! If you are however, more like me, then I guess we still have some work to do (but don't worry, I am sure you have all the other bases covered *wink).

Experts Corner

Thomas Edwards Jr.: Founder of **The Professional Wingman** (www.theprofessionalwingman.com), he has been featured in *Maxim*, as well as *E! Online*, *CNN*, *MSN*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *Blast Magazine*.

Ensley Gilchrist: Author of humor and dating blog, **Haughty By Nature** (www.haughtybynature.com).

Laurie Davis: Founder of **eFlirt Expert** (www.eflirtexpert.com). *eFlirt Expert* markets your "single-dom." Helping singles establish the ultimate virtual first impression and transition their digital selves to meaningful, in-person dating experiences.

New Dating Apps to Manage Your Love Life





By Rebecca VanderMeulen, GalTime.com

Is your smartphone the first thing to greet you in the morning and the last thing you see at night?

“If you’re a power user of your smartphone, you should definitely use it in your dating life,” says Laurie Davis, founder of online dating consultant eFlirt Expert. Given how indispensable mobile apps are these days, it’s no surprise that there are tons of applications to help you find a dating partner and plan a rendezvous. Pretty much every dating site has its own mobile app, Davis says. Besides that, you can download apps designed just to manage your dating life. “More people are spending time on their smartphones,” author and online dating expert Julie Spira tells us. “Mobile dating apps make it more convenient to meet someone while you’re on the go and are rapidly growing in popularity.”

Our experts say there are so many to choose from, but here are some of the newest choices:

HowAboutWe

Instead of scrolling through ubiquitous profiles of singles

who like baseball and long walks on the beach, why not vet them based on what they suggest doing for fun? Spira says this app does just that. Here's how it works: Post "How about we ..." and use your imagination to complete the sentence. Recent examples include, "How about we sit on a park bench and make up conversations for the people we see?" and, "How about we go see a band that neither of us has heard of?" Someone nearby post something that sounds fun? Send a message. That's it! HowAboutWe's iPhone app, launched in June, integrates with Foursquare – useful if you're looking for a happy hour nearby.

Bizzy

Looking for a new place to take that guy you met online? Davis advises checking out Bizzy, a new app (in Beta) available for Android and Apple devices. Like Foursquare, you check into that new coffee shop down the street and rate it. But Bizzy takes things one step further by asking you for your favorite places – like your thoughts on the best food truck, best live music and best salon. The app recommends places you might like based on your answers to these questions, ratings of places you've checked out before and preferences of people who share your taste.

PinPointsX

Spira says this is the app for when you're looking for a hookup. It shows you other members who live nearby, displaying information like their names, ages, height and weight. Of course you can also make a profile complete with a photo and brief, tantalizing bio. Find someone who looks like fun and you can send a message or give him a call. PinPointsX lets you search for men, women and couples. Plus, the app helps you find bars and hotels once you figure out who you want to meet. PinPointsX is available for Apple devices and in the Android Market.

DatingCRM

Ever meet John during happy hour at that funky dive bar, only to confuse him with Jake from the hot club you checked out last weekend? Then you may want to check out DatingCRM, an app that keeps notes on all the potential dates you meet. While a new guy thinks you're texting, store tidbits about where you met, his favorite beer and what he does for a living. "It's like a digital black book," Davis says. Right now DatingCRM is only available in its private beta version since the developers are still working on the details. But this means you have a chance to give them feedback.

Got any others we should know about? Let us know your tip on managing your love life ... we want to hear from you!

10 Signs You're Ready For a Relationship





By Marianne Beach, GalTime.com

I'm admittedly a recovered relationship addict. I went from relationship to relationship with little or no break in between. Luckily, I was finally able to break that cycle and stay single for two years – before finally meeting my dream guy (and now husband).

But staying single for a serial monogamist is often easier said than done. After all, you're used to having a second opinion, someone to take to dinner parties and curl up with in bed. An empty house can be frightening for someone addicted to love.

But Jennifer Oikle, Ph.D., relationship psychologist, dating coach and founder of **MySoulmateSolution.com**, insists that though it's difficult, it's also ultimately rewarding and will prepare you for the relationship of your dreams.

So how do you start? First, she says, forget being committed to a relationship and start becoming committed to yourself instead. "Become delighted by the idea of discovering who you are, without having to please someone else."

In fact, she suggests not dating at all for a certain amount of time, so you don't fall into old habits. "Avoid all of the typical ways you usually behave to find a new beau (going to bars, trolling the Internet, etc)," she says. "Ask a friend to be your sponsor and help you stay single."

During that dating fast, start living for yourself. "Become involved in new hobbies, activities and same-sex friendships to help you discover who you are, what you love, what you don't love," Dr. Jenn says. "Allow yourself to discover new strengths, become aware of patterns which no longer serve you and begin trying out new behaviors so that you become a strong, confident, self-sufficient person, before you head back onto the dating field."

When you are feeling more secure with yourself – and you don't need a relationship to survive – start with casual dating first, rather than jumping in with both feet.

"By casually dating, often more than one person at a time, you can slow yourself down, by spreading your attention over more than one person – keeping you from getting over – invested in any one person too quickly," Dr. Jenn explains. "You want to keep dating until it's comfortable – until you aren't running into a relationship to get away from the insecurities of dating."

How do you know when you are finally ready to enter a real relationship? Dr. Jenn suggests you look for the following signs:

1. You've been on your own for at least 3-6 months and you no longer feel like you NEED a relationship just to survive.
2. You feel like you are good on your own.
3. You feel confident.
4. Your mood is stable – you don't let the little ups and downs of life throw you overboard.
5. You can hear other people's opinions and criticism and not

take it personally.

6. Your worth isn't directly related to what other people think (as long as it is, you are too vulnerable to date).

7. You aren't preoccupied with your ex and your emotions are no longer raw.

8. You can think of the past and just feel mostly gratitude for what you learned AND you can explain what you learned, how you contributed to the cycle and how you will proceed differently. If you can't name those things, you aren't ready to date because you'll just make the same mistakes.

9. You now have interests, hobbies and friendships that you are passionate about and invested in and you are serious about not dropping them for ANY man!

10. Ask your friends – they will know! ☐