

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.

Do-It-Yourself Date Night Advice from HGTV Host Monica Pedersen





By **Krissy Dolor** and **Whitney Baker**

In the summer, spending time with your partner may give you the desire to take a vacation or book a weekend at one of those posh beach houses, but, if you're on a budget or simply nervous about fluctuating gas prices, you'll need to find other ways to keep your relationship exciting without breaking the bank. A do-it-yourself (DIY) date night is the perfect solution.

Monica Pedersen, lifestyle expert and television co-host of *HGTV Dream Home Giveaway 2011*, recently dished with us about her own relationship with husband, Erik and five ways to plan a romantic evening that won't break the bank.

"Everything I do is under budget, real do-it-yourself," explained Pedersen, who taped *Bang for Your Buck* this summer, a show where she works with a realtor to evaluate newly-renovated houses and help people figure out how to redecorate their home on a smart budget.

This fashion-model-turned-design-student always had an interest in interior decorating, perhaps because of her

parents: her father was a handyman, and her mother enjoyed to sew. But what caught HGTV's eye in hiring Pedersen was her ability to put together a room that would sell, without spending a fortune.

It's no surprise, then, that this TV personality enjoys the simpler pleasures in life when it comes to creating intimacy with her husband. "We've always had a chalkboard in our kitchen, and my husband writes me love notes on it, says Pedersen. It can be anything like, 'Welcome home,' or 'Good luck on your shoot.'" She even takes pictures so she can cherish the sweetest messages forever. "It's silly, but it's a romantic little thing that means a lot."

Writing a message to your partner doesn't cost a thing, and it can really increase the intimacy in a relationship. If you're tight on money, start thinking outside the box for ways to spice things up!

Here are five tips from Pedersen to make your very own at-home date night feel like a special occasion:

1. Light the scene: Create a romantic atmosphere with candles. If large pillars or candelabras are out of your budget, purchase some inexpensive tea light candles and place them in small glass votives on a table, around a room, or by the bathtub! In the world of design, nothing sets the tone faster than lighting.

2. Make it a tradition: Uncork a great bottle of wine and toast your partner. Pedersen is a fan of Rutherford Hill Merlot from Napa Valley, CA, which was served at her wedding. She advises writing your toast ahead of time so you can read it to your date. It shows that you put thought into the evening. To start a new tradition, date the cork from that night and tuck it away. Pedersen has a collection of corks marking special date nights in a glass box on her coffee table.

3. Create the perfect pair: If dinner is part of your date night, make a dish that you know your partner will love, bring out the fancy table settings (using the “good stuff” is a great way to turn a typical evening into a special occasion) and turn on some “mood” music.

4. Add a thoughtful touch: Save money and time with inexpensive take-out and a mixed bouquet of fresh flowers. These two items can make a simple date at home feel unique. Bouquets usually cost under \$10 at most grocery stores; if you’re near a Costco, pick up a bouquet of their fresh-cut roses for a bargain price. Remember, it’s making the effort that counts.

5. Invite the crew: If getting a babysitter is a problem, include the kids in your plans. For instance, let them each create a list of all the reasons why Mom loves Dad and Dad loves Mom. Or have them choose a romantic comedy DVD that you can all watch together.

“Never apologize for having a small budget,” Pedersen emphasizes. “It pushes your creativity!”

Pedersen adds that her father gave her the most important piece of relationship advice. “He said, ‘You know kid, you need to find a hobby, something that you guys can do together.’” So what do the Pedersen’s do during their time off? Golf!

“When we got married, I said, ‘I want you to teach me to play golf.’ Now, it’s something we do together; we’ve traveled all over the world to different courses,” said Pedersen. The couple plays every Saturday afternoon and then enjoys takeout for dinner at the same place each week. “His friends always say, ‘You want to play golf with your wife?’ But it’s our thing that we do together – cell phones off, no Blackberries – it’s just him and I, spending time together in nature.”

Pedersen recommends that all couples pick something that they

can enjoy with their partner – whether it's fly-fishing, wine-tasting or simply grabbing take-out from your favorite restaurant – make a tradition out of it.

Monica Pedersen is an interior decorator, lifestyle expert and television host. This summer, she will be working on a book about home entertainment, due in bookstores early next year. She can be seen regularly on HGTV's Designed to Sell, Bang for Your Buck, Showdown, and the HGTV Dream Home as well as on appearances on Live with Regis and Kelly and The Today Show.

Lady Antebellum's Hillary Scott Is Engaged





There was yet another reason to celebrate on July 4th, as Chris Tyrrell proposed to Hillary Scott during a romantic sunset on Independence Day. “Chris proposed exactly the way I’ve always dreamed. Our families were close by, but it was just us out on a beautiful deck overlooking a lake in East Tennessee,” the Lady Antebellum lead singer told [People](#). The proposal was romantic, yet casual, as it took place during a hike and the couple was wearing work-out attire. Although the wedding date is not yet set, the couple looks forward to “forever together.”

What are some laid back yet memorable ways to propose?

Cupid’s Advice:

It can be tricky to strike a balance between simple yet special ways to propose to your loved one. Cupid has some advice on how to make your engagement low-key, yet a memory you will treasure forever:

1. During your favorite activity: Do whatever you enjoy doing together, whether it’s going for a hike, like Hillary Scott

and Chris Tyrrell, or watching a movie. What matters is that you're surrounded by a serene atmosphere, so that you can tune in to each other.

2. At home: When your sweetie gets home after a day at work, surprise him or her by laying out some rose petals in the bedroom and playing some soft music. Then get down on your knee and pop the question. This is a romantic way to propose, yet it doesn't involve anything extravagant.

3. During a meal: Presenting the sparkler over dinner at home or at a restaurant can be a spontaneous way to ask the question. You don't have to follow the scripted ring-in-the-food technique. Just go with your instincts.

Do you have any ideas for a creative proposal? Share your thoughts below.

David and Victoria Beckham Celebrate 12th Wedding Anniversary





July 4th is a day of extravagant celebration that's incredibly hyped every year. Not only is it America's Independence Day, but it also marks the day that David and Victoria Beckham said "I do." This year, the couple celebrated twelve years of marriage. The soccer star told RadarOnline.com, "It's a special day for us, it always has been and always will be." The couple has all the more reason to be ecstatic, with a baby girl on the way.

How do you make your anniversary special after a number of years together?

Cupid's Advice:

Your wedding anniversary is such a special day. It's a commemoration of the meaningful moments spent between you and your partner and your future together. Here's how Cupid thinks you can make your day truly unforgettable:

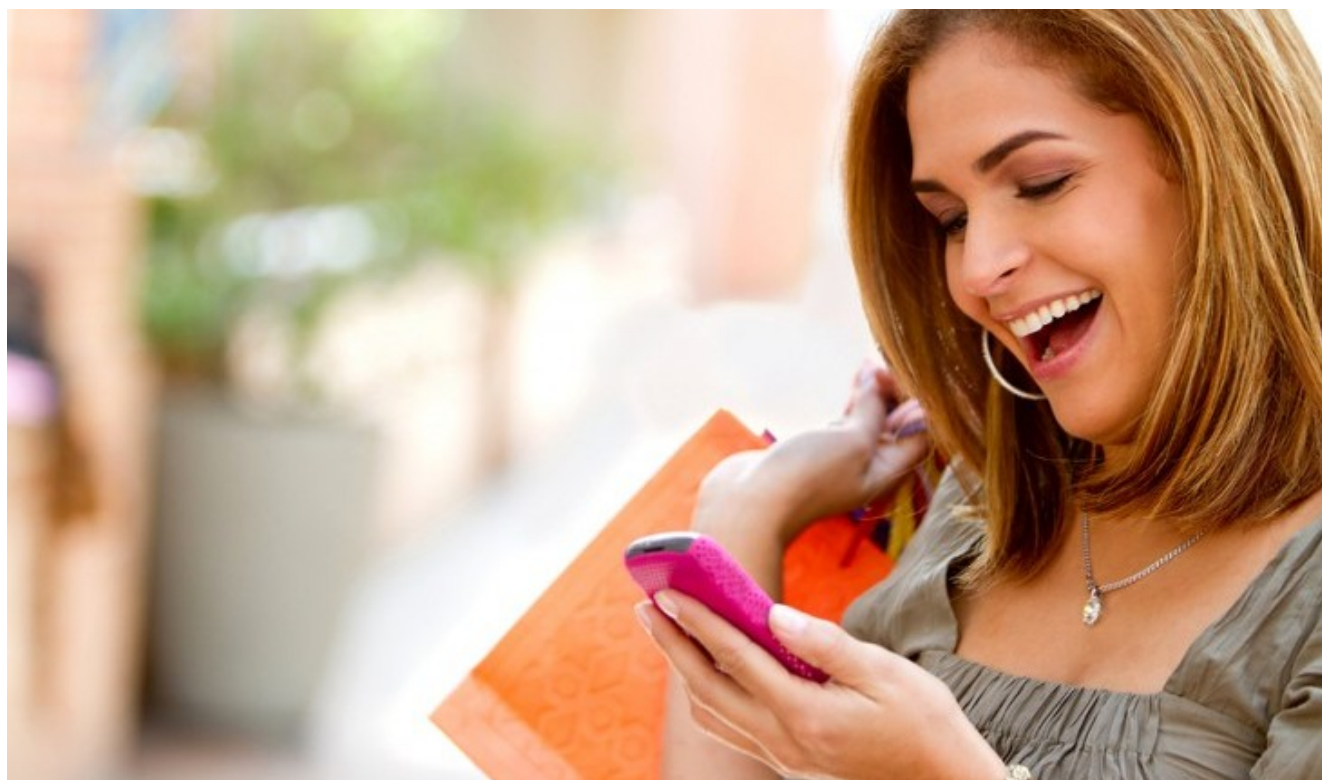
1. Relive your first date: Rekindle the romance and go to the same place where you spent your very first date together. Relive the day that marked the first of many special moments together.

2. Make a wedding day scrapbook: Gather up all the photos from your wedding day and arrange them into an album or scrapbook. You can also add new images by going for an anniversary photo shoot. Mark the passing time with a smile.

3. Prepare free love coupons: Be romantic and make some free love coupons to give to your partner on your anniversary. It's a sweet idea. Just be creative!

What are some things you can do to make your anniversary extra memorable? Share your thoughts. Don't be shy!

Our 5 Best Summer Date Movies



By Diamon Hall

Going to the movies is a reliable, low-key date idea. However, they might be more enjoyable if the film has a love or relationship theme to it. Want to know our top picks for you and your honey to look forward to this summer? Take a look at these five, which are sure to get your hearts' melting:

1. *The Ledge* (July 8): Terrence Howard stars as a police officer named Hollis in this sexy and suspenseful thriller. Gavin, played by *Sons of Anarchy*'s Charlie Hunnam, is tangled up in a love affair with his evangelical neighbor's wife Shauna (Liv Tyler). Suspense comes into play when Gavin is reeled into a life or death situation by Shauna's husband, Joe (Patrick Wilson). Hold onto your date until the end of this romantic thriller.

2. *Friends With Benefits* (July 22): This comedy stars Justin Timberlake as Dylan, a potential recruit who gets reeled into the Big Apple by headhunter Jamie (Mila Kunis). Despite their immediate attraction to each other, they realize they're everything they've been running away from in a relationship. Deciding to keep it strictly physical, this sexy duo learn that a "no strings attached" affair is almost impossible.

3. *A Little Help* (July 22): Dental hygienist Laura Pehlke (Jenna Fischer) not only loses the love in her marriage, but also loses her husband to a heart abnormality. Her mother, Joan (Lesley Ann Warren), and sister, Kathy (Brooke Smith), step in to help and offer advice on how to cope with her husband's death and deal with her angry and hostile son, Dennis (Daniel Yelsky). In the midst of all the confusion, Laura discovers that the only person she can truly confide in is Kathy's husband, Paul (Rob Benedict), who's had feelings for her since high school. Twenty years later, circumstances draw them closer to each other despite their obvious complications. Watch to see how this craziness ends.

4. *Crazy, Stupid, Love* (July 29): In this comedy, Cal Weaver (Steve Carrell) is in his 40s and life couldn't possibly get any better for him. After all, who wouldn't want to have a good job, big house, great kids, and married to his high school sweetheart? Unfortunately, his dream life quickly takes a turn for the worst when he discovers his wife cheated on him and wants a divorce. However, this corny guy can barely snag a date. Friend Jacob Palmer (Ryan Gosling) happens to be a player and tries to work his magic and get Cal to score with the ladies. See what happens when Cal realizes that no matter how he tries to change, his heart is one thing that can't be replaced – and it seems to keep leading him back to where he began.

5. *One Day* (Aug. 19): After only one day together (their college graduation), Academy Award nominee Anne Hathaway and Jim Sturgess (*Across the Universe*) begin an undying friendship. Their characters, Emma Morley and Dexter Mayhew, keep their friendship alive by remembering key moments of their relationship every July 15. But somewhere between their laughter and tears, the two discover what that graduation day really meant to them, which leads to a renewed passion for life – and love for each other.

Hopefully this list provided you with some good movie date ideas. Let us know what you think of each movie after you've seen them in a comment below!

A Healthy Romantic Dinner for Two



By Brian Steele

Making a meal with your partner can be one of the most romantic things you can do. It's a fun and cheap way to enjoy yourself on a date night, and a simple way to get closer to your partner. The best part about this is getting a home cooked meal – and who can resist the simple pleasure of eating in the comfort of your own home?

However, you *do* want to make sure you're enjoying your meals, not suffering through them. Many individuals find it hard to maintain healthy dining habits because they don't want to sacrifice taste for a decrease in calories and fat. Luckily, you don't have to compromise taste for health, as it's possible to have a dining experience that satisfies both your taste buds and your body.

What's more is that it's simple and rewarding to cook a great meal at home and share it with that special someone. Your

significant other will appreciate that you care about their health. In addition, dining together will go far in strengthening the romantic bond you already share with each other.

Make the meal with your partner and feed each other while you're cooking. This can be a very intimate and sensual experience, so get creative!

The following is a recipe for two that will not only satiate your hunger, but will provide a romantic evening at home:

Ingredients:

Four Portobello mushrooms

Shredded mozzarella cheese

8 tablespoons of tomato sauce

Steps:

1. Wash the mushroom and remove the stems. Once removed, the stems should be put aside as they will be chopped and used as a topping.

2. Place the washed and dried mushroom caps in a baking pan. Place two tablespoons of tomato sauce on each cap. Then sprinkle the mozzarella cheese over the sauce. When you are finished, set your oven to preheat at 350 degrees.

3. Take the stems that you had removed earlier and chop them up. Once chopped, spread evenly over the four mushroom caps.

4. Once the oven is ready, place the baking pan in the oven and let it bake for 30 minutes.

5. After 30 minutes remove and serve. The cheese may be really hot at first, so be careful!

Wine:

This dinner pairs well with red wine – in particular, a merlot or cabernet sauvignon. Red wine has two major benefits: It

helps set a romantic mood and is also chock full of antioxidants, which research shows is advantageous to the promotion of good health.

Dessert:

This main course can be followed with a simple dessert of tea and Greek yogurt. Tea has additional antioxidants and Greek yogurt contains probiotics. Probiotics has been shown to aid in proper digestive health and no healthy lifestyle would truly be complete without them.

If you are looking for a great romantic evening in, consider trying this delicious, healthy recipe for two. Your partner (and body) will thank you!

Brian Steele is a contributing writer at various sites like Probiotics.org.

10 Ways To Get Into A Summer Romance





By Melissa Tierney

Summer is the perfect time to go out and have fun. While you're at it, why not aim to have a season filled with some love and lust. Everyone wants that perfect, warm weather romance that will hopefully last past Labor Day, but how do you find the one that will sweep you off your feet? Here's some advice on how to get into the, passionate relationship that will keep you glowing every single day!

1. Aim to have fun: Everyone says you're likely to find someone when you least expect it. Go out with your friends, dance the night away and stop aiming to find 'the one' while you're out. Who knows – you might be having such a good time that your future significant other can't help but notice you!

2. Have an open mind: Be willing to go out and meet new people. Keeping your eyes wide open will help you meet someone that may be perfect for you that you would have otherwise overlooked.

3. Head to the beach: Relaxing at the beach is a great way to meet that hottie playing volleyball or the new summer

lifeguard while also soaking up some rays. If you're calm and relaxed, you're more at ease when chatting up a new guy, which is a great way to start off a summer romance.

4. Take a break: Instead of eating lunch at the office, take a break and go to an outdoor café. You may befriend other singles taking a break from work, and one of them could be Mr. Right.

5. Join a dating site: Summer is the perfect time to join a site like Match.com or eHarmony.com because everyone is looking to have a good time when the weather gets warmer. If you're already part of these networks, change your profile – maybe an updated interests list or new picture will spark that special someone's interest.

6. Go to a new place: Check out a new bar or club over the summer. In addition to enjoying new scenery, you'll meet people who aren't typically at the bar or club scene you're used to.

7. Be a social networker: If there's someone you've been crushing on for awhile, why not add him as a friend on Facebook or follow him on Twitter. You might just come home to a Facebook chat or mention in your timeline, asking you out on a date!

8. Go outside: Instead of doing activities inside, head outdoors. Go for a run in the park, read a book outside a cafe, or simply go for a walk. You can't meet anyone new indoors, so expand your horizons and enjoy the weather!

9. Put down the technology: When you're out, live in the moment and stay away from your phone. If someone sees that you're constantly attached to your iPhone or BlackBerry, they'll assume you're always busy or preoccupied, which won't open doors if you're looking to meet someone.

10. Be outgoing: If you're normally shy, summer is the perfect

time to let loose and be yourself. Feel comfortable with who you are and try interacting with people you normally wouldn't chat up. Heading outside your comfort zone may yield to get comfy with your next fling!

Do you have any tips on how to get into a summer romance? Share your stories below!

Twilight's Nikki Reed and Idol's Paul McDonald Are Engaged



Breaking Dawn star Nikki Reed and former *American Idol* contestant Paul McDonald are engaged after a whirlwind romance, reports [People](#). The pair hit it off after meeting in March, and have been extremely happy together since. Reed showed off her ring at the MTV Movie Awards on Sunday, where she told reporters, "He's the one. I've never met anyone like him. I've never met anyone who has such a good solid heart and comes from such a good solid family and is just a genuine person. We have the exact same sense of humor. I've never laughed so much with anyone as I do with him."

What are some things to be careful of in a whirlwind romance?

Cupid's Advice:

The swept-off-your feet feeling is highly coveted in a relationship. However, it's important to step back every once in a while. Here are a few things to be careful of in a whirlwind relationship:

1. Taking the right steps: It's fine to have a quick courtship, but make sure you are taking the right steps. For example, try giving your beau a key to your home or apartment before moving in together. Slowing down your relationship, even a little bit, will pay off in the end.

2. Discussing your goals: While you may only be concerned with your love for your partner, it's important to discuss future goals before taking the next big step. If the two of you want different things in life, your relationship may face struggles down the road.

3. Setting boundaries: Make sure the relationship is moving at a pace that's comfortable for both of you. Don't allow your partner to persuade you to take the next step if you don't feel ready. Make sure that you know how far you are willing to take the relationship, and stick to your convictions.

Have you had trouble in a whirlwind romance? Feel free to comment below!

Summer Lovin': 10 Ways to Heat Up Your Relationship



By Diamon Hall

Relationships require just as much attention as a newborn baby. While they start off sizzling with love and affection, they can easily fizzle out if they aren't handled with care. Since summer is almost here, the heat under your relationship's fire should be kicked up a few notches! Here

are 10 tips to keep the blaze alight:

1. Reminisce: Go back to the very first moment you met each other and the feeling that came with it. Remember the fire in your partner's eyes when they were first laid on you? Bring back that fiery moment time and time again.

2. Hold the phones: Turn off your BlackBerry. Shut down the laptop. Cut off all outside communication and focus on your significant other.

3. Surprise, surprise: Men, you can never go wrong with sending flowers to her job. Ladies, light some candles and put on his favorite lingerie for when he returns home from a hard day at work. Occasional, unexpected treats keeps the suspense and awe alive in any relationship – even long-term ones.

4. Communication is key: No partnership can sizzle without it.

5. Plan a getaway: A weekend trip by yourselves, especially if you have children, may be just what you need. Alone time gives a couple the opportunity to tune the world out and bond.

6. Thank your partner: Let your better half know how much you appreciate him or her. Whether your mate has done something for you recently or not, just thank him or her for being a part of your life.

7. Spoil your companion: Without spending too much money, pamper your lover in the comfort of your own home. Massage his or her back. Bring out the strawberries and whipped cream and feed it to your guy or gal. Have fun showering your partner with some extra love and affection – who knows, you might get some extra lovin' in return!

8. Compliment your helpmate: A praise can go a long way. Tell your loved one how hot he or she looks today. If your significant other changes hairstyles, make it known that you've noticed it. A simple positive may be just what your

partner needs to boost his or her confidence.

9. Little things: Pack a lunch for your beau or gal the night before work with a love note attached. Wash the car and cross that extra thing off his or her to-do list. Prepare a hotbath to soak in after a long day. Sometimes it's the little things that can make a big difference.

10. Three simple words: Last, but certainly not least, let the three words "I love you" roll off your tongue every single day. These words are the fuel that keeps every relationship afire.

If you follow these 10 tips for summer lovin', your relationship should be one of the hottest!

5 Memorable Summer Fling Movies





By Andrew Pryor

It's true that movies take inspiration from real life, but real life can also take inspiration from a good movie. So if you're not looking forward to this summer because you think the passion's gone away, get inspired by these five movies about summer romance. These tales of fair-weather flings are sure to raise your temperature and make you want to go looking for your own co-star – or create a love scene with the one you already have:

1. Grease: Starting off senior year with some passion-filled “summer lovin,,” there's no way this movie wasn't going to top our list. John Travolta is greased lightning in a bottle all throughout this rocking tribute to Rydell High, and his duet with Olivia Newton-John is the perfect ode to all that is loved and lost in the summer months.

2. Dirty Dancing: The movie that launched a thousand dance programs, this sizzling dance-floor drama defined Patrick Swayze's career through his dynamic moves, along with his chemistry with his dance partner (and future *Dancing With the*

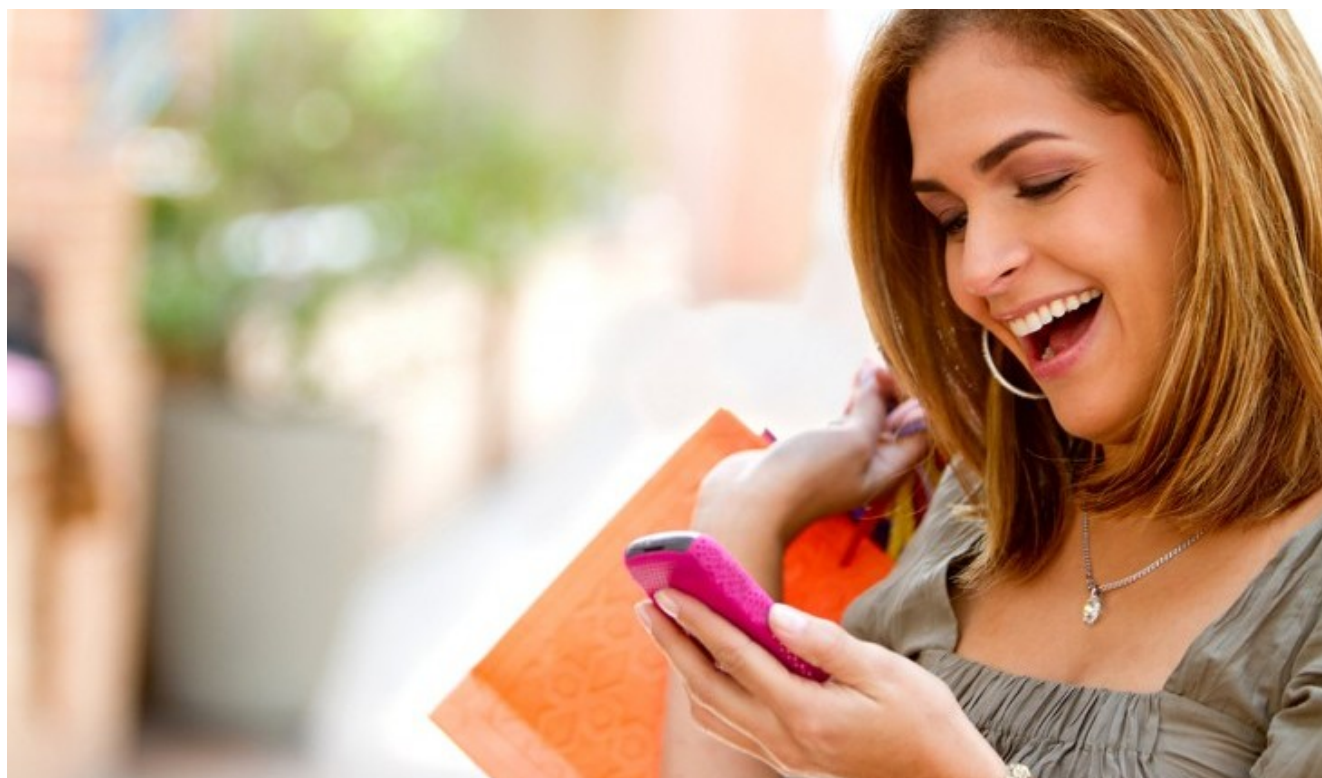
Stars contestant and winner), Jennifer Grey. Watch it and be amazed at how much grace and passion is in one summer movie romance.

3. Body Heat: William Hurt is a womanizing lawyer and Kathleen Turner becomes his vice. When they meet, sparks fly and things begin to burn – including their chemistry. A reminder of the all-encompassing – and sometimes dangerous – nature of passion and romance, *Body Heat* depicts what happens when a torrid affair turns into “all is fair in love and war” during a dry and unforgiving summer.

4. How Stella Got Her Groove Back: For every woman who needed a vacation and found so much more, *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* centers around Stella’s (Angela Bassett) summer fling with an exotic islander (Taye Diggs). It’s a reminder to every lady that love can be found in the most unexpected places.

5. The Notebook: This tried-and-true tale of mismatched love between Noah, a lowly country boy with a modest upbringing and Allie, a girl from the upper-crust of society with the world at her feet, is a movie-interpretation of romance king Nicholas Sparks’ bestseller. This 2004 hit proves that happiness with your soul mate trumps sticking to class ranks any day!

Sheryl Crow Has A New Boyfriend



Sheryl Crow is back on the dating scene! In fact, she's been recently spotted dating fellow musician, Doyle Bramhall II, who plays in her tour band and also co-produced her most recent album, *100 Miles from Memphis*. According to [People](#), the two have known each other for quite some time. Their friendship budded into romance as the two began to spend a lot of time together on and off tour. The singer is the proud mother of two young sons. She says that she and her new man have a great foundation having known each other for 15 years, but she's currently keeping the relationship friend-based around the kids.

How do you turn a good friendship into a romantic relationship?

Cupid's Advice:

Some of the most successful relationships started out as

friendships. If you start having feelings for a friend, here are some ways to build on that:

- 1. Hang out alone:** Romance is most likely to begin when you're alone together rather than in a large group. With some alone time, you can get to know each other on a whole new level.
- 2. Drop hints:** Send a flirty look their way when you get the chance. A wink is also sufficient if you're trying to let on that you want something more than just friendship.
- 3. Enjoy doing what you always have:** Just because your relationship is growing, it doesn't mean that you can't enjoy the activities you always have as friends.

Have you ever had a friendship turn into a romance? Share your story below.

Scarlett Johansson and Sean Penn Go Public at Witherspoon's Wedding





After they were spotted together earlier this month, Scarlett Johansson and Sean Penn finally decided to go public with their relationship. The couple was seen together on Saturday at Reese Witherspoon's wedding to Jim Toth. After the wedding, Johansson and Penn stopped by Jimmy's Bar at Ojai Inn. According to UsMagazine.com, an eyewitness said Johansson was uncomfortable with all the stares they got from the bar. She muttered, "This is so terrifying," and Penn held her hand as they went to their seat. According to the eyewitness, Johansson sat in Penn's lap and they made out in full view for 15 minutes after their table was cleared.

How do you know when to go public with a relationship?

Cupid's Advice:

So you've been dating someone for a while and now you're wondering if it's the right time to take your relationship public. Cupid offers some suggestions on when to break the news:

1. The One: If you think you're meant to be soul mates and the relationship is strong and serious, it's time for you to take

your union public.

2. Motives: Think about why you want the relationship to go public. If it's because your loved ones are pressuring you to find someone, then it's not a good idea to introduce your partner solely for that reason. However, if you love your special someone and want those close to you to see why, then go for it.

3. Emotions: If you're still unsure of going public with your partner, this might be a sign that you aren't ready yet. Take your time and introduce him or her once you're comfortable.

David and Victoria Beckham Are Expecting a Girl





Mozel tov; it's a girl! According to [People](#), David and Victoria Beckham announced Friday that their fourth child will be female. "We're still in shock. Obviously, having three boys, you kind of expect another one, so finding out a little girl is in there is surprising, but, obviously, we are over the moon," David said. "Our three boys are happy and excited, and Victoria is doing well." Fashion designer and former Spice Girl Victoria said that they know how to handle boys, but are still happy to have a girl in the family.

How do you break the news of a baby to your other kids?

Cupid's Advice:

1. Have a game plan: It's best to plan in advance what you will tell your kids when it's time to break the news. Let them know that things will change drastically when their new sibling arrives. Also, be prepared to answer the tough questions they'll ask such as, "Where do babies come from?"

2. Be honest: Lying to your kids is just wrong, especially in this scenario. It's best to let them deal with it for as long as possible before the big day arrives.

3. Tell them you'll still love them: What's most important is to tell your children that you will love them just as much as before even though they won't be the only one in the spotlight anymore.

Britney Spears Says She Has a 'Normal' Relationship With Jason Trawick



While most people are sitting around imagining the celebrity lifestyle as wild and crazy, Britney Spears is getting coffee with boyfriend Jason Trawick. According to UsMagazine.com,

Spears told Ryan Seacrest that her and Trawick's life "isn't that crazy" on his KIIS-FM radio show this past Friday. "We're really normal," the 29-year-old pop sensation insisted. "We work out a lot. We love to work out. We do stuff together like that. We take walks." The couple has been together since early 2009 and continue to enjoy each other's company ... even when Trawick is 'kicking her butt' in cardio.

What are some everyday things you can do with your partner?

Cupid's Advice:

Some people think you need to constantly 'one up' your previous date to keep a relationship interesting. On the contrary, Cupid thought of a few everyday activities that are just as special:

1. Walk together: Whether you walk to get in shape, to get to work or just to enjoy the weather, you can be doing so with your partner. It's a great way to just enjoy each other's company for an extended period of time, while relaxing and breathing fresh air.

2. Eat together: At the very least, share meals! There's no reason you can't dedicate at least one meal per day to your significant other. This will give you both a chance to compare days.

3. Watch together: Don't you just hate when everyone's talking about a movie or TV show that you haven't seen yet? Well, instead of looking at it as an experience you're missing out on, look at it as a suggestion for you and your beau's Friday night! It gives you something to talk about in addition to something to enjoy.

Kim Kardashian's Boyfriend Kris Humphries Serenades Her



Kim Kardashian is venturing into the world of music with a little help from her NBA player boyfriend. Kardashian, who debuted her new song “Jam (Turn It Up)” this week, told [People](#) that Kris Humphries serenades her with her own song. “Kris loves it... He sings it to me on the phone.” While Kardashian says she loved recording the song, she isn’t interested in making an album. “It was just something I tried,” the reality star said. “It was just something that kind of got me out of my comfort zone. And I’m really happy I went for it and did something I’m so not comfortable doing.”

What are some creative romantic gestures?

Cupid's Advice:

It's important to show your partner how much you care every once in awhile. Cupid has some creative ideas that your mate will love:

- 1. It's the little things:** Do the laundry, clean the bathroom or cook dinner. These simple household chores will show your partner that you care even more than a traditional romantic gesture would.
 - 2. Sway:** Surprise your partner with a romantic spin around the floor... the kitchen floor. Make a normal night special by asking for a dance after dinner.
 - 3. Cut out coupons:** Give your mate free romantic coupons for a 30-minute massages or romantic dinners, redeemable anytime.
-

Hall Pass with Owen Wilson, Jason Sudeikis, Jenna Fischer and Christina Applegate





Two married men (Owen Wilson and Jason Sudeikis) are given free week passes by their wives to do whatever their hearts desire with other women. The dream come true quickly turns into a nightmare when their wives (Jenna Fischer and Christina Applegate) start abiding by the rules of the *Hall Pass* as well. It doesn't take them long to discover that this agreement was more imperfect than ingenious as they realize that their marriages are put to the ultimate test.

Is it ever healthy to practice an open marriage?

Cupid's Advice:

Having consent to see other people while you're married doesn't necessarily mean there aren't going to be any problems. Cupid had some things to consider:

1. Jealousy: Whether they admit it or not, some people get jealous in a relationship when their partner is even so much as talking to the opposite sex, let alone sleeping with them. If you and your mate are considering having an open agreement, make absolutely sure that your consent isn't

halfhearted or the jealousy won't eat at you (and your marriage).

2. Attachment: When you spend time with someone that makes you happy, there's a good chance you'll want to keep them around. Therefore, if you or your partner are having an affair with someone refreshing and new, you may just find yourself too attached to say goodbye. In fact, you might have to say farewell to your marriage instead.

3. Children: Even if you and your partner don't have kids of your own, you probably have younger siblings, neices or nephews closely watching your choices. Being intimate with someone other than your spouse might confuse those looking to you for a role model.

Release date: 25 February 2011

Cupid's rating 3.5/5

Vanessa Minnillo Is Cool With Nick Lachey Hosting Vegas Swimsuit Party





Letting your partner go to Sin City without you is one thing, but letting him go with a bunch of supermodels seems a bit risky. Apparently Vanessa Minnillo doesn't think so! Minnillo recently let future hubby Nick Lachey go to Las Vegas alone Thursday to host a Sports Illustrated swim party while she stayed behind for auditions. Talk about a cool fiancée. Even though Vanessa wasn't on Vanity nightclub's list that night, she was on Lachey's mind. "She looks as good if not better than any of the models you see behind me in a swimsuit," he told [E! Online](#). And as far as the wedding plans go, Lachey assures us that they're "getting there slowly but surely...we're inching our way along."

Is it OK for your partner to go on a wild trip without you?

Cupid's Advice:

Knowing whether or not you should trust your partner to go on a trip without you is a big decision. If you're not sure, Cupid has some things to consider:

1. How long: There's a big difference between going away for a

weekend and going away for weeks. A lot can happen if you're away from your special someone for an extended period of time.

If your partner plans on packing all the clothes in his or her closet, maybe you should tag along on the trip.

2. Who is going: It's not always about how much you trust your partner as much as it's about how much you trust their friends. If your beau still hangs out with his crazy single friends, make sure to remind him that he's not a bachelor anymore before he leaves.

3. Reason to worry: Ask yourself why you're worried in the first place. It's normal to be a little uneasy, but don't let the jitters get the best of you. If your partner has broken your trust and given you a reason to worry before, there's nothing wrong with insisting to go with them.

Penélope Cruz and Javier Bardem Find Time for Romantic Dinner





Vicky Christina Barcelona stars and now-spouses Penélope Cruz and Javier Bardem found themselves with some free time last week, reports [People](#). The couple, who just had their first child together, were able to get away for a romantic dinner in London at Gordon Ramsay. Onlookers say the two couldn't keep their hands off of each other and that they were looking very cozy.

How do you find time for romance when you have a baby?

Cupid's Advice:

It's easy to focus all of your attention on your new bundle of joy, but in order to main both your sanity and your relationship, make sure to take some time out to focus on romance:

1. Schedule it: It may not be the most romantic idea, but if you don't schedule some alone time, no one will. So make dinner reservations for two, and get a babysitter.

2. Find a pattern: Does your baby's nap time always seem to fall around the same time as when your partner gets home? Take advantage of it, and cuddle together in the rare

silence. Just make sure there's a baby monitor nearby in case both of you fall asleep.

3. Create inside jokes: Nobody will be spending more time around your newborn than you and your spouse. To create a connection during a less than private time, mention something that only your honey will understand. The inside information will bring a smile to his face.

Teen Mom Star Leah Explains Why Husband Corey Is 'the One'





Teen Mom star Leah Messer says the relationship between she and her husband Corey Simms is better than ever, according to UsMagazine.com. In fact, she recently told her friend that he is "The One." "At first there were ups and downs, but I think we're doing really good now," Messer said. "The thing is with me and Corey, we do things very fast. From the very beginning, we got pregnant. But with [him], I feel like I'm happier than I've ever been in my entire life." She added that if he were to propose she would say "yes – hell yeah!"

The relationship between these two has been no walk in the park, including a six month break following Messer's affair with an ex-boyfriend.

Can you regain trust after your partner cheats?

Cupid's Advice:

Probably one of the most difficult things to do is trust once it's been broken. It involves more than just your partner's desire to make things right. Cupid has a few suggestions:

1. Honesty is the best policy: They broke the trust, so now they have to work twice as hard to regain it. The only to do

that is to simply be honest ... all the time. Set up a policy of total disclosure between you and your partner.

2. Forgive, but don't forget: If you're serious about making your relationship work again, then you'll have to forgive your partner. Remember that just because they came back, it doesn't mean they won't leave again. So be cautious, especially at first.

3. Find out why: This is something you may not want to hear, but there may be some opportunities for your relationship to grow if you know what drove them away from you in the first place.

Must-Dos for a Memorable Valentine's Day





By Babe Scott, author of *Delicious Dating*

Heidi Klum is going to say it with a surprise box of confetti hearts, cute underwear and chocolates. Katy Perry is said to be buying Russell Brand a lilac-colored Bentley. So how are *you* going to make your guy feel like the only man in the universe on [Valentine's Day](#)?

It's a given that your beau will romance you with a candle-lit dinner, but what will you do to ensure this night of love will be forever brulée-torched in your memories? Here are a few tips:

Dress to Impress

Ditch your Bridget Jones-style orthopedic underpants and usual denims. Your man is booking a delicious meal in an attempt to ignite your sensual appetite, so the least you can do is make an effort.

Men are very Pavlovian when it comes to clothes, and what turns them on is a fitted dress and soft, figure-hugging fabrics. The Little Black Dress is always a good standby – a

little cleavage, a spritz of perfume and high heels should have him salivating. Take a cue from Heidi, and make sure that what's underneath is equally enticing. Forget the Spanx, and put on those sexy knickers and a push-up bra.

Give Him a Gift

You might not be buying him a Bentley, but that doesn't mean the effort is all his. Give him a token of your appreciation and affection – maybe a guy necklace, a compilation CD of both of your favorite songs, or even a framed photograph of you together. You want this gift to remind him of you every time he sees or wears it, so avoid the generic.

Create Some Ambiance

Chances are, you'll be at your place later, so make sure you have all the ingredients to whip up his favorite cocktail and snacks. Remember to tidy up, and set the stage with dim lighting and soft pillows. Have candles and mood music at the ready, put some flowers in a vase, and get your best and softest clean sheets on the bed. It's the little details that count. Maybe have some strawberries and sparkling wine, if not Champagne, in the fridge for the morning.

The night doesn't stop once he pays the check. You want to continue the romance when you get home, and nothing says, "I don't care" more than a messy apartment and an unmade bed.

If you plan out every detail, you'll be in for a delicious night!

Babe Scott, a self-declared "manthropologist," is the author of Delicious Dating: The Single Girl's Guide to Decoding Men by Their Wining and Dining Styles. A magazine publisher in her native Australia, Babe broke bread with more than 100 men, and interviewed more than 200 men and women to reveal how to judge a man's potential as a lover and husband by what and where he eats. Learn more at www.BabeScott.com, and follow

her on Twitter: @DeliciousDating.

10 Tips To Keeping Your Valentine



By Brenda Novak, *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author

With [Valentine's Day](#) approaching, it's easy to start pondering your love life. The "what if's" begin to run rampant, and the future is undoubtedly a big focus. If you can't imagine your life without your current partner, you need to start thinking about how you plan to keep him or her. Brenda Novak,

bestselling author of more than 30 Harlequin romance novels, has some tips on how to do just that, which she's garnished from her own experience and research:

1. Avoid negative thought patterns: Allowing yourself to mentally or verbally tear down your significant other is like gnawing at the bond that holds you together.

2. Remember that this person means more to you than anyone else: This includes your parents and your kids. People who live their entire lives for their children are often disappointed to find that they have no relationship left once the kids head out on their own.

3. Be more flexible and forgiving with your spouse than mere friends and neighbors: We expect our spouses to “understand” our stress or limitations – in other words, put up with our crap. Instead, reserve your patience and kindness for the person who means the most to you.

4. Understand that relationships work on a spiral: The more thoughtful you are with your loved one, the more fulfilled and happy he or she will be, and the more he or she will be interested in giving back to you.

5. Don't get too practical: Some couples forgo the flowers, the cards, the dinner dates and the chocolates in favor of saving money. But what's worth more to you? A few bucks (or even a house or a car), or a relationship that will likely affect your whole life and the lives of your children?

6. Try to do something nice for your spouse every day: Even if it's just a chore he or she typically does, these thoughtful touches will act like a hedge against the tough times.

7. Be physical and touch a lot: These little reminders that a spouse cares are nurturing to the soul and send wonderful signals to your children. Your kids will feel secure and

happy because *you're* secure and happy, and they'll be more loving because of the example you've set.

8. Remain loyal: Have the grit it takes to stick together through thick and thin.

9. Be unselfish: It might seem otherwise, but life isn't all about you, how you're feeling and what you want. Worry more about whether you're being a good spouse than whether your spouse is being a good mate to you, and you'll be glad you did.

10. Take care of yourself: You don't have to be model-thin or in the first blush of youth, but be the best you can be – mentally and physically. In other words, be someone you'd like to be with.

Brenda Novak and her husband, Ted, live in Sacramento and are proud parents of five children – three girls and two boys. When she's not spending time with her family or writing, Brenda is usually working on her annual fund-raiser for diabetes research – an online auction held on her at www.BrendaNovak.com every May. Follow her on Twitter: @Brenda_Novak. Still want more? Check out her special Valentine's Day giveaway [here](#)!

Valentine's Day Giveaway: Pauly D's E-Card





This post is sponsored by StarGreetz.

Are you stuck on what to say to your significant other, crush, or even just your friends on Valentine's Day? Let Pauly D do it for you! Everybody's favorite *Jersey Shore* guido has a new line of e-greetings and ringtones that make for the perfect gift idea. Not only are they hilarious, they're personalized! You can choose exactly what you want Pauly to say in addition to your names. These e-greetings and ringtones are fun, cheap and guaranteed to make you fist pump. If you're tired of throwing grenades on Valentine's Day, head over to www.StarGreetz.com and let @DJPaulyD speak for you. And when the love holiday is over, get Pauly to wish your friends a happy birthday, invite them to your event, or make you laugh until you answer your phone!

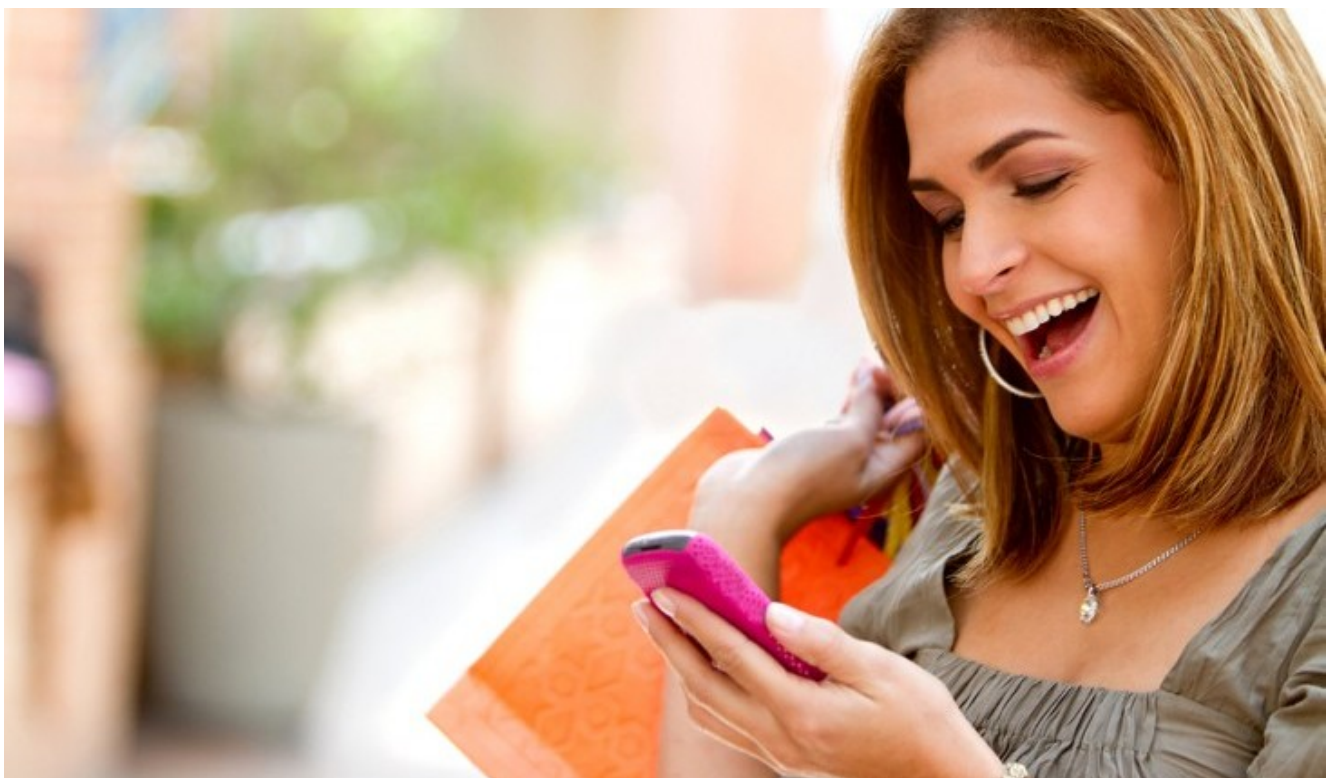
~~To celebrate Valentine's Day, Cupid's Pulse has teamed up with StarGreetz to offer **Pauly D's e-cards** to **FIVE LUCKY READERS!** Simply tell us your favorite DJ Pauly D moment from season three of MTV's *Jersey Shore* in a comment below. The funniest moments win! Please be sure to use your real email address so we have a way of contacting you if you've won — don't worry,~~

~~your address won't be shown and we will never spam you. This giveaway will run until 11:59 PM EST on Monday, Feb. 14 – Valentine's Day. Check back on Tuesday, Feb. 15 at 1 PM EST for a post announcing the winners. Good luck!~~

This giveaway is now closed.

For more fun gift ideas, follow @stargreetzinc on Twitter.

Will Kelsey Grammer Beat His Daughter to the Altar?



Kelsey Grammer's eldest daughter, Spencer Grammer, recently announced her engagement to longtime boyfriend James Hesketh,

but will she have to pick out a dress for her dad's wedding before her own wedding dress? Kelsey plans on marrying girlfriend Kayte Williams in February, even though his divorce from his wife Camille is not yet final. Thanks to California divorce law, if a judge agrees to "bifurcate" the proceedings, he will be able to remarry while continuing to battle over the assets. According to RadarOnline, Spencer has yet to pick a date to walk down the aisle.

Why should you get married sooner rather than later?

Cupid's Advice:

Some couples spend years getting to know each other before walking down the aisle, while others wait only months. Cupid thought of a few situations where it's good to get married sooner rather than later:

1. If you're older: As the years go on, the dating rules change a bit. We're more comfortable with who we are and what we like. As we get older, the rest of our lives seem less intimidating! If you find true love later in life, don't waste any time!

2. If you're divorced: After being married once or twice, you know the ropes. So maybe you weren't with the right person, but now that you're alone it's difficult to be single again. If you find someone who makes you feel that puppy love you missed so much and you know what mistakes to avoid this time around, don't procrastinate with the "I do's!"

3. If you're widowed: Losing a spouse is incredibly painful. Lying in bed with nothing next to you, but an empty space will constantly remind you of the empty space left in your heart. If you're lucky enough to find someone that truly makes you happy, let him or her help fill those spaces right away.

Jessica Simpson Talks Up Eric Johnson's 'Perfect Tush'



Jessica Simpson isn't shy about letting her fans in on the details to what she finds attractive in her fiancé, Eric Johnson, according to UsMagazine.com. In fact, Simpson tweeted on Saturday, "Saying my prayers before bedtime...Thank you Lord for blessing me with a Man that has the perfect Tush." This isn't the first time Simpson has made a public declaration about her love and attraction to free agent Johnson. The duo have been captured in the past locking lips in Italy as well as licking frosting off of each other's faces.

Are physical attributes important in a partner?

Cupid's Advice:

The rules of attraction are vague, as people have their own preferences. Sometimes we don't like to admit that our boyfriends won us over initially with their looks (and then later his personality), but there may be more to it than just an easy pair of eyes:

1. It's all science: While we may swoon for a man with a strong jaw, what our subconscious is seeing is a man with good genes who is a potential mate. Even though we think we're choosing our partners, our primal instincts may really be running the show.

2. It's not just looks: Sometimes after you've been in a relationship for awhile you sit and joke with your girlfriends about how you landed your flame. Pheromones, or a subtle scent that every person emits like a perfume, can attract you to your match more than looks alone.

3. Physical attraction is important: No matter the reason, there's no denying that you need to be physically attracted to your partner in order to be in a successful relationship. As long as you like him for more than his good looks, that's all that matters. That said, there's nothing wrong with appreciating his assets!