

*Your
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**Online Dating
Navigation the open
waters with
an open mind and
healed heart**

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Online Dating

Online Dating doesn't have to be a job.

Online Dating is a tool to meet new people and learn more about yourself.

This is for you if you have not started, don't want to start and had a bad experience before.

This is for you if you cannot get past swiping and texting.

This is for you if you are struggling with inappropriate questions or not getting quality dates from this experience.

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Mind Set

- Go in with fresh attitude. Use this as an opportunity to get to know yourself better, meet new people, practice your dating skills, and go have fun! We know all the reasons why you don't like it or why it didn't work before but leave that aside.
- Do it to date. Not to get married. Take the pressure off yourself when you are meeting with people. Enjoy the moment and the experience and look for organic confirmation about the direction of the dating
- Don't overthink every match. Talk, get to know them. If they seem fake or flaky, move on. If they don't respond, move on. You will not always learn why they ghost, leave, change, etc. MOVE ON.

What Sites?

It is LESS about which sites and MORE about being in the right head space.

- Free: Facebook Dating, Hinge, Plenty of Fish.
- Pay to play: Hinge, Match, Bumble, Eharmony, The League and Coffee Meets Bagel.
- Christian ones but seriously not always: Upward, Christian mingle, Christian café, SALT, Holy, Sunday
- Consider one that is specialized for: fitness, farming, age, hobby
- There are good people on all sites.
- There are hot messes and scammers on all sites.



Safety First -What are you weeding out?

- Scammers/Cat-fishing. People who literally are not who they are portraying (using someone else's photos, life, etc.) to eventually get something from you.
 - Consider Reverse number and photo apps or google
- Not safe people. They present as amazing, but they are still married, not a believer at all, showing signs of an unhealed heart and match ZERO of your God given dealbreakers.
- Try NOT to weed out the person you don't immediately swoon over. Talk to someone outside your race, height, weight, distance, likes, education. This person could teach you a lot or make great low stakes practice. You are just talking at first.

Setting up a strong 'attractive' profile

1

Pick your best photos. If you have professional shots, mix in natural, unfiltered shots. Include photos that speak about who you are and what you love.

2

Be positive about what you are looking for without talking about what you don't want. No one likes negative!

3

Don't overshare in your bio. They are not deeply reading it anyway. Be brief and to the point. Do not list all your dealbreakers

4

Distance. The best way to get dates in real life is limit long distance with online. Be open to it sparingly. If you just getting back out there and nervous hold off on Long Distance.

Your Profile in Detail - PHOTOS

- No pictures over 2 years old. Great photos of you clearly showing YOU.
- Good head shot. Full body shot. One photo with friends at end but be sure we know which one is YOU.
- Photos doing something you love or shows your personality.
- No more than one photo with sunglasses or hats that hide what you look like.
- Use as many pictures, videos, ticklers as they allow.
- If you have professional shots, not over filtered, and add natural ones to offset.
- We don't need 5 pictures of your car, boat, dog, cat unless you know that is the most important thing to you.

Ladies

- stick with one hair color/style ish unless you truly show up (I wear my hair straight and curly). Watch the gray ladies under 60. If you are rocking gray, own it with a chic style and accessory. Men want youthful, not young.
- Some make up but not too much makeup.
- Not too much skin ladies.
- Over 60; long hair can look unkempt.

Men

- Smile (you are not on death row, nor should this be your mug shot).
- No shirtless tops. Not photos from the bathroom mirror. Set the timer if you have to.
- Don't hide the bald in ball caps in every shot. No comb over. If you are bald, own it.

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Your Profile Bio in Detail

Your Content

KISS: Keep it super simple. But say something!

- Stay in the present: Interests/hobbies (faith can be rolled in there), Career/retirement
- One ambition or dream about your future and where you want to go.
- Be thoughtful about mentioning kids/grands (I know some shy away from this so your call). Note: Mentioning grandchildren may make you seem older than you are especially with men without grandchildren.

Be positive. Don't tell us what you DON'T want.

Don't overshare in your bio. This is not a resume. Keep it brief.

Steer away from saying:

- I don't know why I am on here.
- I don't like online dating.
- I don't want scammers, cheaters, drama.
- I own my own home, car, have a job.

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When reviewing Other Profiles

Pick

Pick one or two dating sites and stick with it awhile but do not obsess over it.

Set up

Set up your search parameters and determine how/when you will deviate from that.
Stick to who likes you and who contacts you.

Know

Know your dealbreakers and where you need to be willing to 'try something different'. Remember try to get away from your TYPE.

Watch

Watch for: oversees people, people on oil rigs, people in between jobs, people with tragic stories, people with stock or perfect photos or not candid with friends or those who have to explain their 'status' or why they can't get on video.

Be cautious of a person that wants to move to phonecall/email right away and off app.

Red flag: the person who gives you a bunch of reasons to no video date.

Yellow Flag: the guy who has to 'explain' their marital/financial/living situation.

Red Flag: Anyone asking for money or other items

Do not disclose your financial details.

If you really like them vet them in front of a few trusted friends.

In the Search Process: What to be watchful for

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Getting the Conversation Going

Pause before swiping

- If this person is a maybe, swipe right (they may have 2 of your most important dealbreakers)
- Do NOT just pick your typical TYPE. Where has that gotten you?

First text messages

- Keep it light.
- If you don't tell it to a stranger don't share it. Think the basic information you wouldn't mind anyone knowing.
- Let faith questions come naturally.
- Don't pre-judge answers. Not every has great texting manners.
- Encourage video options (google meets, zoom) within a week of texting. Don't say: I need to be sure you are not a scammer, simply say: those are great questions, I think they would be less clunky if we could see/hear each other. Or I am a visual learner. I find it easier to talk a more fluid conversation live. I like to do a video first but it won't always need to be video or I tend to use texting for confirming information, not really dating or getting to know someone.
- If local plan a visit within a couple weeks.
- If you are new to this you may need to stay away from long distance at first.

First video chat

- Dress like it is a date. Use good lighting and good angles of the camera. Do not do it from bedroom.
- Let your background in your camera view showcase your personality.
- Keep it to under an hour Give them a reason for a a live date or second video date.

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Live Dates

- ❖ If local don't video date longer than 2-3 weeks. If long distance go about 6 weeks.
- ❖ Before the date: if you don't have mutual friends, get last name and do a quick social media and google search to make sure they seem legit.
- ❖ Pick a public place. Let a friend know who you are with and where you are going.
- ❖ 360 on your phone (or similar) is a great feature.

- ❖ Dress for your best first impression
- ❖ Keep your phone away
- ❖ Good eye contact and smile
- ❖ Keep your conversation in the present
- ❖ Still not the time to tell your deepest secrets
- ❖ Avoid talking about the exes. Period.
- ❖ If you talk about your past stick with jobs, social activities, travel, books, adventures, places you like to eat, things you have tried, etc.
- ❖ Not the time to explain why are you single, divorced, widowed in detail.
- ❖ Do not bombard them with questions.
- ❖ Watch their body language, listen to their tone, you will learn a lot.
- ❖ Remember Jackie's guide on a first date: if its not something you wouldn't say to a stranger in grocery store watch what you say on a first date.
- ❖ Consider an activity even if it is a walk around town.

Live Date – How to keep the conversation flowing

- If you are an empath like me or a coach and people naturally share too much too soon you may need to be the one to put the boundary up on sharing too much personal too soon.
- If you want to see them again do not be afraid to say: I had a great time, not sure how you felt but I would love to see you again. If not it was lovely meeting you.
 - If they say nothing just shake their hand and move it along. Take the sting if they don't book then.
- If they ask for a second date and you definitely don't want to, you could say: I so appreciate meeting with you tonight. I do not think I would like to pursue this further, but I am grateful for the chance to get to know you a little bit. And simply turn and walk away. It stings YES but it is better than ghosting or stringing someone along.
- IT IS YES UNTIL IT IS A NO: Try to give folks a second chance.

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Remember early dating is about discovery.

- About what you really like and don't like.
- What makes you feel safe and comfortable and relaxed.
- Watch for behaviors in them that you may have and see how it 'looks' from the outside.
- What triggers you? Explore what that is about.
- Where do you have blind spots and stereotypes.
- How do you want to be remembered?
- If all else fails, how can you be a blessing?



How to cut it off:

- If they are rude or inappropriate bless them and block. You don't need to give long explanations you are not their relationship coach or therapist.
- Simply say: I am not getting the sense I want to pursue this further but I have really enjoyed getting to know you, I wish you the very best.
- If they ask why: If you have one answer you can say it: you want kids I don't or "honestly it may simply be a lot of little things I cannot pinpoint it but after praying about , this is my decision.
- If they ask: what can I do different? For anything level 1 or 2 simply say: You just keeping being you and your right person will come. After level 3 you may need to be more specific.

How to enjoy it:

- Get on once or twice a day.
- Only respond to men searching you out.
- Keep the texting to each person for only a week before booking the video date or either deleting or just go radio silent.
- If you are not getting likes: ask a friend to review your profile.
If you are not getting to a video have a friend review your text.
- If you are not getting from a video to date see what the common denominator is or if you are doing too many/saying too much in a video.
- If you are not getting past a first date see what is coming up for you.

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