

31 STEPS TO ONLINE DATING SUCCESS



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Introduction

In the last 5 years the online dating jungle has morphed from a small habitat into a ginormous ecosystem, and by doing so shed the stigma that was once attached to it.

In 2011 an Oxford University questionnaire revealed that one in three people are now using dating sites to find partners online.

However, despite its popularity and vast numbers, the online dating journey from singleton to twosome is not all plain sailing.

But just like with any journey, a little preparation beforehand will help you to avoid many troubles on route, and ensure that you arrive safely at your destination.

In these 31 steps I'll help to equip you for the online dating jungle. We'll make sure that your backpack contains the correct survival gear, and most importantly, that you know how to use it.

Now let's get started...

Packing for the Trip (Preparation)

The correct preparation can really mean the difference between early success, or long term hardship. Skipping these steps would be a big mistake.

1. Know what you are you looking for

Before you jump head first into the online dating jungle, it's important to know what you hope to find there. If you hope to see monkeys, then you need to know in which jungle you are most likely to find them.

In other words, you might be looking for a long-term relationship, someone to marry, or just a casual encounter. Whichever it may be will influence how you prepare yourself and which dating site you join.

2. What type of personalities do you click with?

What traits would your ideal partner/date have? What traits would not be so ideal?

But don't be so quick to rule out opposite traits, as they do attract. In fact, a psychology study in 2007 revealed that although the similarity of personality traits

results in more marital satisfaction in the early years, the couples with similar traits report less satisfaction in the middle and later years.

And even the world's largest species of monkey chooses mates with genes that are different from their own to guarantee healthy and strong offspring.

3. Deciding which dating site to join

There are probably more dating sites today than there are trees in the Amazon. You'll find dating sites for the masses and niche dating sites for pet lovers, mud lovers, church goers, single parents and casual encounters to name just a few.

Some dating sites are free, while others charge a monthly fee. If you do join a paid site, just don't forget to cancel your subscription early, as most re-bill you automatically.

You can find reviews of the most popular dating sites here:

<http://www.datenurse.com/dating-site-reviews/>

4. Beware of the dating scams

Yes there are snakes in the jungle with you, and they are poisonous, and they are experts at camouflaging themselves.

Lonely hearts can also be vulnerable hearts, and there are unfortunately people out there with zero morals who will take advantage of you without batting an eye lid.

I could simply say that if requests for money ever arrive in your inbox, then it's a scam. It most likely is, but there are a lot more scams out there than you could ever possibly know about, far too many to write about here.

I don't want you to get scammed, that's why I recommend that you head over to my blog and read this valuable post: <http://www.datenurse.com/online-dating-scams/>

Sharpening Your Weapons (The Dating Profile)

Is your dating profile irresistible? It will need to be if you want to be successful. These steps will ensure you stand heads and shoulders above the rest.

5. Why you need a catchy screen name

To stand out from your dating competitors you'll need to market yourself as the best thing since sliced bread. Gaining someone's attention is the first step to any marketing campaign.

In the jungle, male monkeys 'wash' in urine in order to become more sexually attractive to female mates, and the female baboons flash their bottoms at males they are attracted to. I'm not suggesting you copy the monkeys like for like, you would probably get banned from the site, but you do need to make the effort to get noticed.

Online this effort starts with a catchy screen name. Think about your passions and try to incorporate these into the name.

For example, *"TimLovesCamping"*, is far more interesting than *"Tim12345"*. And don't give away too many personal details; a first name is fine, but definitely not your full name.

6. A heading to die for

Continuing with the attention grabbing theme, most dating sites allow you to enter a few words as a heading to describe yourself; and you should most definitely make the most of these words.

You're aiming to create a heading that creates interest, intrigue, and curiosity to persuade a potential date to click and find out more about you.

Some very common headings I see are: *"Looking for My Mr Right"*, *"Looking for Love"*. There is nothing really wrong with them, but they could be so much better.

Again, you can include your passions and hobbies. Something like: *"Snorkelling Mad Girl Seeks Guy in Wetsuit"*, or *"My Monkey Has to Love You Too"* are a lot more interesting.

Also telling someone not to do something often has the opposite effect; this one has worked magic for me in the past: *"Whatever You Do, Don't Click Here"*.

7. An irresistible dating profile

Being irresistible describes something that you have to have because it is too desirable or wonderful to restrain yourself from having.

This is what you're aiming for with your dating profile.

We are all unique, and we all have different qualities, interests, ambitions, and goals in life. So don't be shy, point these out and make your profile more enticing than the next.

If you love to travel, tell a short story about your last adventure rather than just saying "I love to travel". Try to paint a picture of what their life will be like with you in it, and make it a positive and exciting one.

One thing you should not include is any personal information like your name, address or phone number.

8. Don't write your autobiography

If you've written more than half a million words about yourself, then you should perhaps consider publishing a book. But your dating site profile is no place for an autobiography. So keep it short and sweet, 200 to 300 words is a nice sweet spot to aim for.

9. Don't tell pork pies

Honesty is unequivocally the best policy, both online and off. If you tell fibs they will one day come back and bite you where it hurts.

One of the most common lies that men tell online is exaggerating their size, as in head to toe. And if your stomach is trying its hardest to escape your pants, please don't describe your figure as athletic.

You may be hiding behind a computer screen in the comfort of your own home as you write your profile, but the main aim is to actually meet someone face to face. And trust me, that meeting won't go so well if you have tricked them there under false pretences.

10. Can you spell “conscientious?”

I can't, so I wouldn't worry about it. But I would worry about more basic spelling mistakes, grammatical errors and net speak.

And Keep an eye out for the most common grammar goofs like: your/you're, its/it's, there/their, here/hear.

11. Is that you in the photo?

Uploading a photo will definitely increase your profile views, in fact, without one you may struggle to garner much attention at all.

Now I know we all looked our best ten years ago, but please save these photos for the family album. You can get away with a couple of years, five at the most if you age well, but certainly no longer.

Photos in which you are doing something interesting will tell a lot more about you than a simple portrait.

12. Is that appropriate attire for work?

If you are looking for a relationship and not just a little fun, then it's advisable not to show too much too soon.

Ladies, a little cleavage won't hurt anyone, but if it's not appropriate for work, it's not appropriate for your dating profile. The same goes for you too guys.

After all, unwrapping the presents before the big day really does spoil the surprise.

13. Sneaking a peek at existing profiles

Looking through existing dating profiles can be a great way to gain some inspiration. But try to avoid the temptation to copy word for word, as after all, you are unique, and there should be no one else out there quite like you.

14. Asking for help

The jungle can be a scary place, so don't be ashamed to ask for help.

A good friend can check how your profile looks/reads, and maybe even add a few anecdotes that you hadn't thought of.

Pitching yourself is never easy, but your success depends on you getting it right.

Learning to Shoot (Communication)

When I first started dating online it took me over a month before I received my first reply (a negative one), despite sending out over 100 messages. But I learned from my mistakes and now enjoy a much better response rate. You can too if you follow these next steps.

15. Proactive marketing

I'm afraid that McDonalds has not yet setup a restaurant in the jungle. And waiting for someone else to put food on your plate is not an ideal strategy, since you may die waiting or not like what you are fed.

So if you want to eat, and eat something that you enjoy, you're going to have to go hunting. This means searching for people that you like the sound of and getting in touch with them.

16. Short, sweet, and personal

The first message that you send to someone will determine whether they look at your profile, or just move on to the next.

An opening message should have a killer subject line that grabs their attention with a vice like grip, and ideally be no more than 100 words long.

Make it personal by referencing small details from their profile (images/text). And inject your personality into the message, and be sure that it mirrors what you've written in your profile.

First impressions count, and your first message is an opportunity to stoke your desired date's curiosity. Mention what you have in common and give them some really good reasons to message you back.

17. To wink or not to wink

Whether or not winking will work for you really boils down to the chromosomes that you are carrying.

For those with XY (male) chromosomes, winking rarely works well. But for the XX (female) chromosome carriers, your chances of receiving a reply are significantly higher.

However, for both sexes, winking is still a lazy way to communicate your feelings.

18. Arrange to meet up sooner rather than later

Ultimately the end goal is to meet someone, and it's better to do this sooner rather than later.

I'd suggest that if after three to four mails you feel like this is someone you would like to meet, then arrange to do so.

What you don't want to do is spend weeks and weeks writing back and forth with one another, then meet up and discover that it's not meant to be.

Time is precious, so use it wisely.

19. Rejection is not pleasant, but it won't kill you

If you are to be successful at online dating, then you will need to get used to rejection. It's going to happen, and online it can happen even more often than off since people tend to be a little pickier.

Just don't take it personally. And instead of letting each rejection get you down, use them to make you stronger and more determined.

20. Perseverance is the key to success

I can't emphasize this enough, but to be successful with online dating and also life in general you need to be persistent and believe in yourself.

Only the weak give up, and I don't believe that you are weak, if you were, you would not have read this far.

Encountering a Predator (First Real Date)

A little preparation beforehand will help to ensure your first date goes off without a hitch. Follow these steps and a second date may be on the cards.

21. It's time to get real

Don't expect to enter the jungle and not encounter a predator, it is after all the reason why you are here.

Sooner or later you're going to find someone that you would like to get to know a little better. Your email conversations will have been going well, and you may have even talked over Skype or Google Talk whilst maintaining your anonymity.

A real date is the logical next step.

22. Safety must come first

First date excitement can play havoc with our common sense. But it's still important to stay safe and keep your guard up for now.

Do tell a friend or family member where you are going and when you expect to be back. Arrange the date in a public place and try to park close by, not down a dark-narrow street.

If you don't drive, do not accept a lift home, even if it is raining cats and dogs. And don't drink too much alcohol, even if it does help to calm your nerves.

23. First date ideas

Somewhere public like a coffee shop, pub, or bar are good places to meet.

Try to avoid loud places where you will struggle to hear one another, and most definitely stay away from the cinema, since you can't learn anything about one another whilst watching a film.

Personally I prefer to avoid restaurants and eating meals on the first date. One because talking and eating at the same time is always a challenge for me, and two because it avoids the awkwardness of paying the bill afterwards.

But a couple of drinks won't hurt anyone's pocket, even if the date has not gone so well.

24. A little preparation

On the day you may be nervous which can make finding good conversation difficult. Therefore it's good to come up with some ideas for conversation beforehand.

But don't script out everything that you want to say and attempt to memorize it, else you might end up sounding like a robot.

25. How to spot each other

If you're meeting in a public place (which you should be) spotting each other can sometimes be tricky.

So do tell one another what you are planning to wear, and also if your hair style has changed dramatically since your profile photos were taken. Changing hair colour from blonde to brunette would certainly cause some confusion; and in this case a recent photo would be beneficial.

Also by telling each other what you plan to wear, you can avoid the situation where one person is completely overdressed.

26. Get ready for picture shock

Even if your profile photos are recent, and your date's are too, we know that we have selected out very best photos, the ones that you only capture once in every 1000 snaps.

So try not to be too surprised if on the day your date looks a little different.

Of course, if they are two feet smaller and a lot rounder, then you can most definitely express your surprise.

27. Avoid small talk and moaning

Try to avoid mentioning the weather and how you've spent your day so far. If you are tired drink a coffee, but don't mention how knackered you are. The date is an opportunity for you to get to know each other better, and a good conversation should tell you lots about each other.

28. Ending the date and post date follow up

When the date comes to an end you may be tempted to make a rash decision. Either telling them you'd love to see them again, or that you feel a second date would not be beneficial.

Instead sleep on it for a night and make the decision the next day. And don't play games and wait for them to contact you, or stick to any three day rules. If you would like to see them again, tell them sooner rather than later.

If however the date didn't go as smoothly as you expected, but was not a total failure, don't be so quick to rule out a second date.

Sometimes it takes people a little longer to get to know one another, and first date nerves can often play havoc with one's true personality.

I personally don't have any rules where if it's not working after three dates I call it quits. In fact, with one person I met, I only realized how amazing she really was after our tenth date.

Heading Deeper into the Jungle (The Long Journey to Happiness)

I know far too many people who give-up online dating barely before they've even started. These are also the type of people who give up on diets, fitness programs and almost anything that requires long-term commitment and hard work.

The secret to being successful online is really very simple, and I've summarized it into these final three steps.

29. Nothing worthwhile in life is achieved easily

It takes a great deal of hard work and perseverance. You need to commit yourself fully, and not just for a single month, but for as long as it takes.

In my experience this can often take 6 months or longer. So set your goals, and don't give-up till you have achieved them.

30. Trust your instincts

Our instincts protect us and guide us through our lives, so pay attention to yours. Regardless of how lovely the person sounds in their profile, however much you seemed to click, if your gut feeling when you meet is that they're not for you, then move swiftly on.

31. Don't forget to have some fun

Many challenges in life are often very daunting, none more so than the challenge of finding your soulmate.

But if you approach it with a positive mindset, actually enjoy the experience of getting to know new people; then there's no reason why you can't have fun along the way too.

That's All Folks

I really do hope that you've found this guide helpful, and that you now feel a little more prepared to enter the online dating jungle.

If you would you like to help your friends prepare too, then please feel free to share this guide with them as well.

Then all that's left to say is: good luck, stay safe, and keep smiling 😊

Yours Truly

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