

Practical Tips for Dating Online

[www.TheSinglesNetwork.org](http://www.thesinglesnetwork.org/) Ministries

There is no substitute for acting with caution when communicating with a stranger who wants to meet you. You are in control of your online dating experience.

Remember to always trust your instincts, pray and ask God for direction. Include your friends and family in the process of your online dating as well. It’s not critical in where you meet someone but in your motivations in meeting them. Don’t get ahead of God.

1. Do your homework on the various dating sites. What does the website say about Christ, about what they believe, about who they follow? Remember, Christian in the title doesn’t necessarily mean they believe or support being equally yoked. It also doesn’t mean they are really following Christ.

Questions to ask:

-  How do they collect their funds?

-  How do they find new potential members?

-  What is the application process; how much information are they asking you for?

-  How accessible are the owners/leaders/mangers of the website?

-  What is their policy on separated folks who are considered by God to still be married?

-  Pray and ask God is this the right choice/direction for you?

2. Is there some kind of proof of identification process; marital status, background check they can make available? If there isn’t, take the extra time to find out as much as you can about the person. Facebook is a great tool to checkout someone’s friends, likes and dislikes (even before you are their friend.)

3. Talk by email first, then phone, going slow, building trust and a foundation. If this is going to be the person you may want to spend the rest of your life with you will not regret taking the time to get to know them better. Build a friendship first.

Note: Never send them money for any reason. Online dating has a horrible reputation for drawing scammers from not only from other countries but even in America. Have some common sense. If they barely know you, you have never seen each other in person, why would you send them money. Double check yourself and your need to be needed over common sense. Don’t be stupid.

4. If you ever feel unsafe or threatened, cease communication and report any misbehavior immediately to online dating service.

5. Ask for a recent photo, then video (later).

-  Your picture should have been taken within the last 6 months. Provide a head and full-body shot. Be honest about who you are. Note: If you lie at the start, how does that effect the rest of your relationship.

-  Avoid pictures of yourself with too many props or too many other people. Avoid sunglasses or holding your dog as your main picture.

- At some point in time, I would encourage you to talk by video. We have learned how so many are deceived by false online profiles. How the person never wants to skype or facetime due to not being the person they have portrayed to others.

Note: With the addition of facebook, anyone can easily see more updated photo’s, personal information, etc. Think about this when you submit your email address, last name, etc. I personally like the fact that I can find them on facebook as I have nothing to hide. However, if you don’t want someone to know you quite that quick, you need to use a different email address.

6. Group date first when possible.

- I would invite them to a church function or in some cases, the dating site might have group events that you can attend. This would allow a safe place to connect. It would also allow your friends to meet them too.

Note: Although a lot of singles date long-distance, I would encourage you to only date folks that live within 2 hours. This way you can attend group events, find out more about them, attend their church, meet their friends and family.

7. When it comes time to meeting in person, meet in a public place (not late at night or in bad weather). Choose a place where people might know you. This way you can leave the date if you are uncomfortable. It also allows others who might know you to see you together.

Note: Don’t ever give your home address until you are certain this is someone you trust.

8. Bring a friend along for your date (double date) as an option or plan something shortly after with a friend. Again, this is a great step until you feel more comfortable being alone with someone you have met online.

9. Make sure someone knows where you are and who are meeting; have a plan for them to call you during the date.

10. Be smart, go slow and wait on God for his direction.

***Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not***

***and he will make your paths straight.***

FINAL THOUGHT: If the thought of telling someone of how you met the love of your life bothers you, then perhaps that is God telling you the way you are connecting is not right for you.