

The Modern Matchmaker's Guide to Dating Etiquette

Make The Date

- The initial call should be quite brief, as most people are more comfortable talking in person. The purpose of the call is to make the date, not to discuss your life story. Do not judge a person until you meet them, as you may catch someone who is running late, or at the end of a long work-day.
- A man should make the initial phone call, suggest where to have the date, and ask the woman if she has any other suggestions. The date could also evolve around a particular hobby, such as tennis, that the couple share an interest in.
- Movies and plays are not recommended. It is important to establish an open line of communications which should last throughout the relationship. If you both want to see a particular movie or play, make sure that you have a cocktail or dinner prior to going to the theatre, and perhaps dessert afterwards.

Dress To Impress

- Physical chemistry develops in 30 seconds or less. It is important to look your best. Your attire should be appropriate for the date destination. Sweats and tennis shoes are not recommended, unless you are going to be athletic.
- Dress with class. Men, in particular, are visual creatures. They are born that way. It is fine for a woman to look somewhat sexy, but trashy is unacceptable. Unless formal attire is requested, men should dress business-casual.
- Try not do overdo the makeup, or the costume jewelry. Men prefer an enhanced, natural look, rather than an overdone, fake appearance. It is better to wear a few quality pieces of jewelry, than cheap looking necklaces and bangles from head to toe.

The First Date

- A man should pick a woman up for the first date, unless she specifically requests to meet at the proposed destination. It is also acceptable to meet your date at a half-way destination, if distance is an issue.
- Use common sense. A man should wash his car before a first date. It is a direct reflection on him. Be thoughtful. It is nice to arrive with a small surprise, even if it is just one red rose. But it is certainly not a necessity.
- Be romantic. A quick kiss on the cheek and a smile does wonders. A cold, prudish handshake is not acceptable. This is a date, not a business meeting. Then, offer a sincere compliment, such as, you look so nice today.
- Charm her with classic etiquette, but do not overdo the chivalry routine. Open and close the car for her, and do not forget your umbrella if it calls for rain. But, do not suggest that she walks on your raincoat to avoid a puddle.
- Do hold the restaurant door and let her have the window view. Do let her order first and insist that she have the last bite of dessert. And of course, the man should always pay the check, and leave a proper tip, unless the woman prefers to share the expense.

Less Is More

- Do not drink excessively on a first date, or any date, for that matter. You become more uninhibited, loose self-control, and can easily embarrass your date. It is fine to have a glass or two of wine or champagne, and make a toast to meeting each other.
- Do not talk excessively on a first date. A few moments of silence are fine. Everyone has a past. This is not the time to discuss your life story, or prior relationships. There is no need to discuss your personality weaknesses, or how badly your children may treat you.
- A man should not appear to be cheap on a first date, but a woman should never order the most expensive entrée either. If everything is a la carte, it is not necessary to order every course offered, unless your date strongly suggests it. Desserts can be sensuous.
- Body language is important. Do not sit across from your date you with tensely crossed arms and a nervous look. Make eye contact, relax you arms, and just enjoy each other's company. Be positive and open-minded. This could be a new beginning.
- If you had an enjoyable date, end the evening with a kiss on the lips, and an invitation for a next date. Body language will guide your next move. If your date was not what you had hoped for, end the evening with a cordial handshake or a quick hug.