

# Getting it right on your first date

## Ten top tips for making sure that you make the right impression

By Chris Barnardo

So you've met someone you like and get on with online and you've agreed to meet for your first date. What can you do to make the best impression and stand the best chance of going on a second date? Well as we discussed last week, meeting in an interesting setting is the first step to having a great first date, but that's

not all, once you meet, there are a few important tips that are worth following if you want to make the best impression.

It goes without saying that first impression count and there is even research that has shown that our first impressions are made in the first tenth of a second of looking at

someone's face. For the first dater, if it doesn't work out then there's no second date, so getting it right is important. So here are our tips for some simple dos and don'ts on your first date; having said that, the tips below are good solid on dates two, three and onwards into your relationship:

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### Think about what you are going to wear

For most girls this is statement is so obvious that it is almost insulting, but thinking about what you are going to wear goes beyond going all out to be drop dead gorgeous. It's about making the right impression, giving clues to your personality and telling the other person the sort of relationship you are looking for.

The first glimpse your date gets of you when you catch each other's eye as you meet is important and will be one that sticks in your date's mind throughout your encounter and well past the first few dates. So, make sure your clothes are clean and ironed and are ones that make you feel relaxed and confident. Ideally they shouldn't be brand new because that can make you look uncomfortable or a bit like a rookie.

Everyone knows that blue is for a boy and pink for a girl, but colours have a psychological impact that goes beyond that. You can't go wrong with dark blue because it symbolizes honesty and loyalty, and a dark blue jacket or blue striped shirt goes well with jeans. Dark green might well be the colour of the hunting and shooting set and expensive British racing cars, and guess what? Studies have shown that dark green is not only a manly colour, but imbues the wearer with an air of solidity, reliability and wealth. Black is worn by James Bond, world dominating megalomaniacal master criminals, and Priests because it symbolises power and authority, but wear it and you can seem a bit distant and even a touch evil. Finally use red only as a detail within your clothes, say as a jacket lining or a tie for example, because although it makes the heartbeat faster, it tends to make you look fatter.

### Listen to your date

Think about what your date is saying. Don't talk about yourself the whole time. Don't talk over them or interrupt them, wait for your turn in the conversation. Don't talk about your job, unless you share the same career. This is your opportunity to find out about your date, the sort of things that they like and want to do. It doesn't need to be an inquisition, just try and ask open questions (questions that don't have a straight yes or no as the answer), like: "What's your family like?", or "What sort of work do you do?", or "What's your favourite book / film / thing you like doing at the weekend?"

### Don't rant about pet hates and hang ups

It's good not to be a bighead and nobody really likes someone who spends the whole evening name dropping and showing off, but neither is it that impressive to reel off a long list of all your ailments and problems, or childhood traumas and physiological hang ups. Everyone has some baggage, but the best bet for us all is to move on and certainly the best bet for a first date is not to bring it all up.

Do not talk about how bad or hard dating is. On a first date, when you're looking for common ground, it may seem very easy and tempting to talk about your dating experiences, because it seems to be safe to assume that this is one interest you share. However it is a very dangerous subject. Your date will naturally draw the conclusion that at some point this date will become the topic of another conversation, which is bound to make her guarded or self-conscious. In any case, who wants

to wind up with someone who has had a tough time dating.

Do not get embroiled in debates where you hold very strong opinions such as religious or political ones. Remember that despite what your date may say about their beliefs, you never know if she is just being polite or trying to be politically correct, or that someone in her family is or does the exact thing that you have just ranted on about for ten minutes.

Whatever happens, do not talk about your ex-partner or your previous dates.

## Remember your manners

It's simple, you say a whole lot about yourself, your style, how classy you are and what you think about your date by how courteous you are. Once on the date always be courteous and polite not only with your date but the other people such as waiters or staff that you meet. Modern society is all about equality, but it is still polite to hold open a door for someone and wait for your date to be served before you start eating your meal for example.

Compliment the other person if you think that they look nice or say something funny, but only if you mean it. Look for things that you like about the other person, for which you can make genuine compliments, if you can't find any, perhaps this is not the right person to be with.

## Never be late or early

Always be on time. Being late shows that you have little regard for your date, it is rude and at best it seen as a power play. If you are meeting at the venue, be five minutes early, so that your date does not have to wait on their own for you. If you are picking up your date, never be early because they may not be ready.

## Be generous

When you go out, on a first date always be ready to pay. If you're doing things on a tight budget, choose inexpensive things to do. If your date insists, then share the bill graciously. Always leave a proper tip.

## Relax and be funny

Going out on a first date can be a nerve wracking experience, but it doesn't really have to be. If things go wrong, remember that you never have to see the person again, so really you have nothing to worry about.

"Good Sense of Humour" is so important to a woman that the acronym, GSOH, is almost synonymous with dating adverts. Surveys asking women what they look for in a man almost always list a sense of humour as one of the most important traits that women look for in a partner. This does not mean learning Bob Hope's repertoire so that you can spend the evening coming out with choice one-liners, it means someone who is prepared to laugh at things and take life a little less seriously. Practice seeing the funny side of situations and on your first date, look at life positively; you're on a first date, so enjoy it. People like to be with someone with energy and happiness flowing out of them, it makes them feel good, and above all, women find it very attractive.

## Don't get drunk

Be careful what and how much you drink, you might think that when you're drunk you sound witty and clever, but it's likely that you don't. Never drink and drive.

## Be honest

The first date is meant to be fun, but it is also when you work out if you like the other person and could move on to the second date and more. Life is too short to waste it making yourself out to be something that you are not in the hope that when you date finds out the truth they will overlook the real you. If you want a second date because you think it has gone well, then say so. If you don't want a second date then don't waste your date's time by saying that you'll call when you have no intention of doing so. Avoid relationship game playing and game players at all times.

## Be prepared

You need to be relaxed and worry free on your first date, being prepared can go a long way to helping you relax just a little bit. If you are meeting in an unfamiliar town, leave plenty of time to get there and make sure you can park somewhere safe or where you won't be worried about getting a parking ticket. If you get allergic, stomach upsets or headaches sometimes the stress of a first date can make you worse, make sure you have a few spare tablets with you. If you are going out in the car make sure you have an umbrella and a spare coat in the boot (trunk), in case it rains or gets cold. It's very impressive if it gets cold and you are able to offer your date a coat to throw over her shoulders.