

10 Secrets to Online Dating Success

by Sandy Weiner, Founder Last First Date



If you're dating online, you're going to want to check out these 10 tips for finding love.

Think of your online dating profile as a marketing tool for love. Every inch of space is valuable 'real estate,' yet most people have no idea how to fill out their profile or date online in the most effective way. In fact, you may be unknowingly turning off the very people you want to attract. You must paint yourself in the best possible light to attract the highest quality people. I want you to send out a strong personal message to your future

love interest so s/he can find you! On that note, continue reading for the 10 secrets to online dating success.

1. **Don't be self-deprecating.** Although you may think it sounds cute, others might read self-deprecation and get turned off by the negativity. People can assume you have low self-esteem, so keep your essay upbeat and positive.
2. **Use great photos.** First of all, use photos. Period. Without pictures, you will likely be passed by. Most singles search for profiles with pictures only. What types of photos will attract the right attention? Your profile photo should be a close-up of you smiling, teeth showing, looking natural. Women and men should wear color to stand out in the sea of blacks and dark blues. You should post at least 3 more photos; 1 full body shot, 1 of you doing an activity you love, and 1 more formal. You can include a pet in one photo, but not in your profile photo.
3. **Keep it short and sweet.** Ever come across an essay that's so long, your eyes glaze over and you skip to the next profile? Remember that online dating is like your personal marketing tool. Would you read an ad with very long copy? No, you want to read the *key points* of why you'd be interested in the product, right? In your profile essay, you want to share a few personal stories that convey what it would be like to be in a relationship with you. Keep the essay to no more than 200 words to make sure your ideal match reads it.
4. **Nix the TMI.** An online profile is an introduction to wonderful you. It's not the whole story. People who share too much are usually perceived as insecure and even a little scary. So, tell just enough to intrigue, but leave some mystery. Mystery is sexy. It will

- encourage your ideal partner to send you an email and get to know you. Think of it this way — if you met in person, you wouldn't be sharing your favorite poem or your physical ailments. Save it for when you're in a relationship!
5. **Share what makes you unique.** One of the biggest issues I find in online dating is that everyone sounds the same. All women feel just as comfortable in a little black dress and heels as they do in jeans and a T-shirt. All men want to find a best friend and lover. So, set yourself apart by sharing what makes you special, but don't list a bunch of adjectives. Tell a short one- or two-line story about each of your top attributes. For example, "I'm musical" becomes "I can still play *Stairway to Heaven* on my old Yamaha classical guitar that I bought when I was 16. I'll serenade you if you promise to sing along."
 6. **Initiate contact.** One of the biggest issues I've seen is that people tend to only respond to emails that are in their inbox, but they don't make the first move. You could be missing out on so many potential matches. There are a few things you can do to change that. 1) Do a search for matches through the site's search feature, and write to 2 people a day. 2) Do a search for people who've viewed your profile, and contact the ones that stand out. 3) Check out the profiles of people who send flirts or winks. Write back to the ones you whose profiles you like.
 7. **Don't take it personally.** If someone doesn't write back, move on. When I first started dating online, I placed so much hope in each potential match that when one ignored my email or disappeared after a few emails, I became devastated. Don't take any of it personally. The people you're writing to online don't know you and you don't know them. How can it be personal when you

- don't yet know each other? Unfortunately, etiquette seems to have gone out the window with the advent of online dating. People ignore you, disappear in the midst of a hot conversation, and don't call you after you've given them your number. You can't control any of that. The only thing you can control is yourself and your attitude. Move on and find someone who *does* respond.
8. **Be clear.** You may be confusing your potential match by writing a profile with seeming contradictions. For example, if you start out your essay talking about how laid back you are, and end with a laundry list of all the types of people who would not be a good match, you're giving the reader a mixed message. Are you laid back or ultra-controlling? Ask a close friend to read your profile before posting to be sure you're conveying a clear message.
 9. **Include your relationship standards.** One of the biggest mistakes I see is when people talk about how much they are going to give to their future partner. "If you're in my life, you'll get back rubs every day, I'll cook you gourmet meals, and I'll buy concert tickets to your favorite bands." What's wrong with that? It's all one-sided. You're giving before there's a relationship. In a good relationship, there's a give and take. So, state your relationship standards, what you're looking for in a mate. Then say something like, "If you're that guy/girl, I'll bring you my delicious chicken soup when you're sick."
 10. **Mention that you have kids, but...** If you have kids, they are a very important part of your life. You'll want to attract someone who loves kids, even if yours are grown. But, s/he's viewing your profile because s/he wants to date you, not your kids. So, don't post photos of them (This is also to protect their privacy). Don't state in your profile that your kids are the most

important people in your life. We know they are, but s/he'll be left with the impression that s/he's never going to be front and center in your life. So, mention that you have 2 kids and they are fabulous. And that's it. S/he'll get to know your wonderful children if and when you're in a relationship.

Your online dating profile is the first step of the online dating process, ensuring that the right man or woman can find you based on shared values, activities, and worldview. If you are able to create a quality profile that showcases your wonderful personality, your future partner will be drawn to you and become interested in finding out more. And remember to have fun!