

# Enjoying Your First Date

Going out on a first date can be an exercise in frustration for many of us. It's a paradox that we are excited to go out with someone for the first time, and at the same time, we put ourselves under tremendous pressure to make a really great first impression. When we go out on a first date, it's with the knowledge that has been drummed into us for as long as we can remember – "You only get one chance to make a good first impression."

What we fail to understand, though, is that a first date is not a job interview or an audition for a motion picture. Instead, it's all about getting to know someone else – and letting them get to know us. What often happens is that so many of us get wrapped up in making an absolutely incredible first impression that the person we're with doesn't even get a chance to know who we really are.

Sure, it's important to make a good first impression, but not at the expense of not being yourself. For example, you might do your best to come across as witty and clever and up on the latest current events. During your first date, you really come out looking awesome. You look so awesome, in fact, that there's a second date in the making.

But, that means that you're going to have to prep again for being witty and clever and up on the latest current events and that might lead to a third date and you have to be witty and clever and...

Get the point?

That's an awful lot of work, isn't it – especially when the person that you're dating hasn't even met the real you yet.

So, what's the best way to handle things?

Well, on your next first date, relax a little. This doesn't mean that you show up looking like a slob and trotting out every dirty joke that you know – but it means that you let who you really are come through now and then. Wear some nice clothes, but don't spend a small fortune. When it comes to what you're going to talk about, keep things light and moving along. Take your date's lead and see if there aren't some areas of common interest the two of you share.

Remember that the purpose of a first date is to find out if you want to have a second date. This means that you have to find out who they are, what they're interested in, and how they are connecting with you. When they ask you something, just be yourself and answer honestly – without trying to come up with the right answer.

If you follow this advice, you'll discover that going out on a first date doesn't have to be some kind of excruciating torture. Instead, it can be something totally enjoyable – and an experience that might well lead to a second date and a third date...and who knows where it can go from there?

Kathy Stafford, Relationship Coach

“I show singles how to get married and couples how to STAY married”

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