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5 Crazy Places to Snag a Great Summer Date

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After nine long months of getting kids up and off to school early in the morning, then burning the midnight oil to make sure homework assignments get done, summer break has arrived. While the winter months are dutiful, this season blossoms with long luxurious days of reprise. It allows single parents to dedicate a bit more time in the hunt for the perfect new partner. I asked my single parent community about the crazy places they've met a future date and they responded with lots of suggestions. Below are the most unusual, out of the box, and extraordinarily organic hot meeting spots for you to explore.

1. My number one favorite suggestion was Saturday morning at the hardware store. Sheridan an American living abroad, travel blogger for *Bon Voyage Magazine* and single mom of two said, "I am working on a do it yourself home improvement renovation and I've never seen so many *single men* at one store in my *entire* life." Available men of all ages are more than willing to offer advice in helping a woman find her way around the store. Ladies, asking for help in an area you truly don't understand is not only an organic conversation starter, it allows you to play the damsel in distress card, for real!

2. David, moneycrashers.com resident single dad, says one of the best places for men to meet women is in the cosmetics department at a mall retail store such as Macy's or Nordstrom. Striking up a conversation with either the sales rep or another female shopper is his method. "Employ the ruse of searching for a gift for Mom, women love men who care about their mother," he suggests. Like the hardware store example above, the whole fish out of water or dude in distress thing, is a natural way to engage the people around you in conversation. Then endearing them to you with your heartfelt story will surely captivate a lady's attention.

3. Saturday nights when it's your weekend with the kids doesn't mean you have to be a shut in. April Masini of AskApril.com suggests that taking your kids, at 7 p.m or 8 p.m., for an ice cream date will get you out amongst the date worthy. You'll inevitably see other single parents taking their kids for "custody dates" as well. Kids' movies on weekends, is another stellar opportunity to mingle with single parents, especially while waiting in line to buy tickets or at the concession stand. After the film stop and let the kids play an arcade game while you loiter with the other singular adults in the lobby.

4. Even in the summertime, single parents have a natural rhythm to their schedules. Time your visit to the local coffee shop after carpool drop off at camp. Don't try going when all the regular morning employees are grabbing coffee on the way to work. You'll find there are plenty of other single parents in the same boat you are, dropping off a child for camp, and looking for a latte to jumpstart the day.

5. "If there ever has been anything that you've wanted to try, now is the time to do it, be active and engaged," said [Dr. Jane Greer](http://Dr.JaneGreer.com), marriage and family therapist, SHRINK WRAP media commentator and author of "What About Me? Stop Selfishness From Ruining Your Relationship." One of her single parent clients always wanted to learn how to horseback ride, she started taking lessons and met a great guy at the stables. Are you interested in getting your kids a pet? Do your due diligence. Visit pet shops, dog shows, and dog parks. Engage everyone you meet in a conversation about their animal. People love talking about their pets and it's a natural, warm and friendly conversation starter that might just lead to a precious first date.

Now that you're on the look out in crazy places nothing should stand in your way of a great summer date. But what if you still don't have the nerve to approach that hottie you've spotted across the plumbing supplies aisle? Boost your courage by joining www.fantasydatinggame.com. Like in other Fantasy Sports, players create leagues, set stakes and compete to earn points.. For example when you're at CVS, smile at the person next to you in line -- earn points. Strike up conversation at the dog park -- earn more points. Or introduce yourself to the guy at Starbucks who gets the same mocha frap every morning -- yep, you're getting more points for that. Even your kids' activities, like camp pick-up, pool time and birthday parties are places to increase your total score. The goal is to work your routine to work your game and maximize all the blissful summertime possibilities.

While you are out there surfing the planet for a new relationship, do it safety. I found this cool new app for your phone called bsafe. It's a free app from www.bipper.com, that turns your smartphone into the ultimate safety device. With the push of one button, you can alert selected predefined contacts that you are in danger and shares your location anywhere. It has a "Follow

Me" feature to allow friends to walk with you by GPS when you are walking alone. It even gives users the ability to simulate an incoming call to get out of a bad date!

What's been your favorite out of the box, absolutely unique hot spot to meet other single parents?

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