

HOW TO ASK A WOMAN OUT

The Best Way to Ask Her Out

Follow these five steps to guarantee you'll have an awesome first date

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Don't assume she knows what "let's grab a drink" means. Nearly 70 percent of single people have been confused about whether an outing was a date or not, a recent report finds.

According to the survey, which was commissioned by ChristianMingle and JDate, men are just as bewildered as women when it comes to classifying dates. That's a little strange, since guys usually initiate the rendezvous, says April Masini, author of *Date Out of Your League*.

But here's why: Many men are purposefully vague when asking a woman out to avoid getting shot down, Masini says. While it's tempting to try to dodge rejection, if the woman doesn't know you're into her romantically, you could get stuck in the friend zone, says Masini.

She'll admire your confidence if you make your intentions clear. Follow these steps to increase the chances she'll say yes.

Ask for Next Friday

"When you schedule a date several days away, you show her that she's special and you respect her time," Masini says. Ask her out about a week in advance, or longer if you're planning something big—like a concert or an all-day hike. If she says she's busy that day, simply ask her to suggest a better time.

Pretend It's 1999

Two words: Call. Her. Half of the women in the new survey said that texting made it harder for them to figure out if a date was a date, and 85 percent said they would rather have a guy call them to ask them out. Bonus: She loves hearing your voice, and she'll think it's sexy that you took the time to pick up the phone, Masini says.

Don't Be Coy

Saying "let's hang out" can leave her wondering whether you mean "as friends," says Jane Greer, Ph.D., a New York-based marriage and sex therapist. And "let's go out" could mean that you just want some company while you eat.

The magic words that leave no room for misunderstanding: "I'd like to take you out."

If she knows you're asking for a *date*, she'll have the chance to let you know whether she's into you. If she's not? "At least you'll know right off the bat," Masini says. "You can make the conscious decision to not waste your time on someone who's not interested—and find someone who is."

Do Your Homework

It doesn't sound like a date if you don't have a plan. So choose an activity—but tailor it to her interests to show her you're thoughtful, says Greer. For example, if she's outdoorsy, go for a hike and a picnic. If she's really into wine, take her to a tasting.

What if She Asks You Out?

If she ambiguously asks you to "hang out," get a read on her feelings by acting like it is a date. Dress up, wear cologne, open doors, and offer to pick up the check.

(Related: **What to Wear on a First Date**)


Pay attention to how she responds, Masini says. If she looks uncomfortable or insists on opening doors for you and splitting the bill, she might want this to be a platonic outing. But if she graciously accepts your chivalry, try to casually drop the word "date" into your conversation. For example, jokingly say, "this is the best first date I've ever been on." She'll either go along with it or change the subject, and then you'll know for sure.

(For more help reading her, check out **27 Subtle Signs She Likes You.**)

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