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Top 7 deal-breakers for daters over 50

By Laura J. Schaefer

We've all been there — the point when the proverbial red flag appears with your date. You can almost hear the alarms going off in your head. For singles over 50, that sound can pop up pretty quickly. After all, daters in their midlife years know themselves pretty well, and they also know exactly what they will (and will *not*) tolerate. For some, it's a minor thing; for others, it's a general attitude.

Here's what a sampling of single men and women over 50 flagged as their top seven dating deal-breakers. Read on to find out if you think we missed any...

Deal-breaker #1: Financial woes

Issues with finances are at the top of the list for many daters in their fifties — and with good reason. "For 50-year-olds and up, it's important at this stage of life to have a handle on one's finances," says [Terri Jay](#), a life coach in Reno, NV. "If people haven't learned lessons about money, investments, paying bills on time, maintaining a good credit rating, etc., they aren't ever going to get it... and he or she will just be a burden on you if you take that person on as a life partner."

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Deal-breaker #2: Bad table manners Most daters over 50 expect others to have this aspect of life already figured out by now. "I had a second (and last date) with someone recently who insisted on picking his teeth after eating a sandwich," says public speaker and consultant [Nancy Michaels](#), co-author of [Dating Success After 40](#). "Clearly, I can't teach manners to a man in his fifties or beyond if he doesn't already know how rude this is [to do at the table]. I have three children — I'm not looking for a fourth!"

Deal-breaker #3: Incompatible libidos

"Fifty isn't the same for everyone," says April Masini, founder of [AskApril.com](#) and author of [Date Out of Your League](#). "While some women are coming into their sexual prime, feeling free from their kids, money worries and are in good health, many men are naturally facing a slow-down in their libidos." However, intimacy can also be a problem if you can't discuss it frankly together — including the necessity of using protection. STDs are on the rise in the boomer community, so don't forget to be safe even if pregnancy is no longer a concern.

Deal-breaker #4: Dates who insist on playing the "blame game" with their exes

"My biggest dating turn-off: Someone who blames an ex-spouse and hasn't looked at what he or she needed to learn and how this person needs to grow," says Toronto resident Elliott Katz, author of [Being the Strong Man a Woman Wants: Timeless Wisdom on Being a Man](#). "Blaming without learning and growing [from that experience] is a *big* turn-off." Daters over 50 want to get to know others who've made peace with their pasts and are excited about what the future holds. Lots of negative talk about former partners can be another red flag for many: "Speaking harshly and angrily about an ex (or exes) does not bode well," agrees author and consultant [Neil Wood](#). "That's history, so let's talk about the present instead."

Deal-breaker #5: Poor oral hygiene

It's tough to get around a bad smile, no matter what age you happen to be. Marc Silbert, co-author of the book [Suddenly Solo: A Lifestyle Road Map for the Mature, Widowed Or Divorced Man](#), says his research revealed that women would prefer a man with a nice set of pearly whites. "We found out that 30% of the women we surveyed — all 55 and older, widowed or divorced — will *not* go on a second date with a man who has bad teeth," says Silbert. "That is why we recommend that the first doctor you should see before you start dating someone is your dentist!" This particular deal-breaker goes to a larger point about taking care of one's appearance in general, says Philadelphia budgeting blogger and consultant [Reida Gavenda](#). "Don't get me wrong, I'm a very reasonable woman. I don't need a model; I just want a man who shows me he cares about his appearance," explains Gavenda.

Deal-breaker #6: Dominating the conversation by constantly talking about yourself

Daters over 50 aren't looking to attend a one-man (or woman) show. "Do not talk on and on in a monologue style!" warns California author and speaker [Joan Price](#). "Let's have a dialogue. That means that you talk, then you look interested when I talk. If you're talking the whole time, I feel like I could be... well, anybody. At the end of the date, what have you learned? I've learned that I don't want to go out with you again!" [Bobbi Palmer](#), a dating and relationship coach for women, agrees: "I met my husband on Match.com when I was 47 and he 56," she recalls. "One of the biggest dating deal-breakers for people over 50 is sharing certain [types of] personal information too quickly."

Deal-breaker #7: Deceptive online dating profiles

No one likes a fibber, but it's particularly galling for the over-50 set when it comes to online dating profiles. "It's amazing how many people are deceptive with their profiles — either by omission or misstating the facts," says Sean Clark, 52, a VP of merchandising in Milwaukee, WI. "This leads to my number-one deal-breaker: someone whose profile is not truthful. Why would I ever have a second date with someone who did not like themselves enough to tell the truth?" And according to many other over-50 daters, this peeve includes the irritating practice of posting out-of-date photos.

Laura Schaefer is the author of [Why We Fall Out of Love: Experts and Real People Talk about the Reasons Relationships Fail](#) and co-founder of [WordChum.com](#).

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