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10 dating rules for singles over 60

By Laura J. Schaefer

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If you're over 60, there's no better time in life to fall in love. "Older singles are happier with their family, friendships, love and sex lives than any other age group," says [Dr. Terri Orbuch](#), relationship expert for OurTime.com and author of *Finding Love Again: 6 Simple Steps to a New and Happy Relationship*. "With age comes wisdom and happiness. You're never too old to date again, and you're definitely able to find new love again!"

Dating may feel a little different than it did at 20, 30 or 40, but that doesn't mean it can't be deeply satisfying and fun. "At this age you have mastered a lot of personal issues," says [Dr. Pepper Schwartz](#), AARP's Official Love and Relationship Ambassador and author of *Finding Your Perfect Match*. "You have lots to offer and good stories to share."

As you embark on your new dating adventure, keep a few simple "rules" in mind...

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Rule #1: Reveal yourself to potential mates gradually as you date

"Many singles over 60 think that when you're dating, it's best to disclose everything about yourself in the beginning so your partner knows the real you, no secrets or surprises," says Dr. Orbuch. "Instead, it's better to reveal personal information about yourself gradually over time. If the person is right for you, there will be plenty of time for the details to unfold." This is particularly true when it comes to health information — there's definitely no need to share your medical history until you've decided to get serious with someone.

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Rule #2: Don't limit yourself based on others' expectations about singles your age

This is the age of personal reinvention and opportunity, so enjoy it! "Your driver's license says you're 60 or older, but that doesn't mean you need to adopt anyone else's tenet of what a 60-year-old should do or feel," says April Masini, relationship expert, founder of [AskApril.com](#) and author of *Date Out of Your League*. "If you want to go whitewater rafting or salsa dancing, do it! You'll meet potential dates who are more interested in what you do and how you do it than how old you are."

Rule #3: Know your values and find someone who shares them

"The truth is that if you want to find someone to grow older with, look for someone who has values and attitudes that are similar or compatible to yours," says Dr. Orbuch. If time with family is important to you, for example, make sure it's also important to your new love

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Quick Poll

Men: Which of these grooming changes would you make for the right woman?

- I'd shave off all my facial hair
- I'd grow a beard/mustache/goatee

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Rule #4: Determine how you prefer to communicate with your date(s)

“One of the biggest complaints I receive from both men and women 60+ is that they either prefer to text — or they despise texting,” says relationship expert [Nancy Michaels](#), author of *Dating Success After 40*. All of the communication options can seem a little overwhelming, but there’s nothing wrong with stating your preference and sticking to it.

Rule #5: Don’t lie about your age

“You may think that claiming to be younger than you are increases your chances,” says [Joan Price](#), a speaker about later-in-life sex and relationships and author of *Naked at Our Age*. “But once it comes out (and it will!), your date can’t help but see you as someone who started out with a lie. Not a good beginning.” Likewise, if you join an online dating site, be sure to use a flattering, recent photo of yourself.

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Rule #6: Listen to your gut

“Pay attention to early warning signs that someone might not be legitimate or is not presenting him- or herself honestly,” says Dr. Orbuch. “Never give money to someone you meet online or offline right away.” In addition, you should get comfortable with expressing your true feelings if you’d rather not see someone again. “Don’t string someone along, and don’t make up excuses if you don’t want a second date,” advises Price. “Practice a way to say your version of ‘I’ve enjoyed meeting you, but I don’t think we’re a match’ so you can express it clearly and politely.” There’s no reason to waste anyone’s time if you’re not interested — especially your own.

Rule #7: Open your mind and explore different types of people to date

A good match for you might be someone you’ve initially overlooked for superficial reasons, and this is the time in your life to leave any old limitations and prejudices in the past. “Don’t be too quick to dismiss someone that may be your ideal match just because of a few flaws or dissimilarities in someone’s profile,” says [Leonardo Bustos](#), a boomer dating expert and author of *How To Attract Women With Humor*. When you just look for people who fall within a strict age criteria or share your professional background, you miss out on a lot of opportunities.

Rule #8: Don’t rush into dating or a new relationship until you’re ready

“There’s a definite period of time after a divorce, breakup or death of a loved one before you’re ready to get out there and date again,” says Dr. Orbuch. “The truth is that there are no set timelines to follow, and only you will know when you’re ready to get into the dating world again.” There’s no reason to escalate a relationship before you feel ready, so pay attention to your own emotions and respect what they’re telling you.

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Rule #9: Avoid fairy-tale thinking about love in general

“It’s not your partner’s job to make you happy,” says [Rosalind Sedacca](#), a relationship mentor and author of *99 Things Women Wish They Knew Before Dating After 40, 50, & Yes, 60!*. “It is your responsibility to be all you can be when you enter a relationship. Dependency and neediness are not attractive qualities. Maintain your individual interests — including friends, activities and professional goals.”

Rule #10: Be patient with your love search and focus on having fun first

You're probably a bit pickier about who you'd like to spend your time with now that you know yourself so well, but don't get frustrated if you don't meet an ideal match within a few months. "Do some things that make you feel surer about yourself," advises Dr. Schwartz. "Join a class and meet new friends so that you get used to meeting new people. Go with the attitude that there really are a lot of good people out there and you don't need to date someone right off the bat."

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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