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Modern Romance: The New Rules of Dating

It's time to face the facts: The dating tips your mother gave you have changed a bit. And by a bit, we mean that you no longer have to rely on the guy to make all the moves. We talked to a relationship expert about what twist modern times have put on the old rules of dating. A few of the dating rules still apply, but have slight modifications. Read on to find out which rules are bust, and which are a must.



The Pick Up

It's no longer necessary for men to pick up women at their homes. This was largely appropriate in times when women lived at home with their parents and they knew exactly who was coming to their door. In fact, women can pick up men. But, in today's era of digital dating, it's best to keep your address private. Online and [mobile dating](#) [1] has made it possible for you to connect with more people, but it also creates a bigger pool of potential creepers. When meeting face-to-face, April Masini, a relationship and dating advice columnist and author, suggests a rendezvous point.

"Meet him somewhere until you get to know him better," Masini says. "It's perfectly good etiquette for you to meet your date for the first, second, and third dates."

He Says, She Says

Texting, emailing, and social networks must now be factored into communication efforts. But don't rely only on these modes of communication. It could lead to the wrong impression.

"Texting is what you do to save time," Masini says. "Relegating a date to the same method you use to get low bank balances is insulting. The same goes with Facebook. I hear a lot of

younger people using Facebook to do what they should be doing in person when it comes to romance and dating.”

The idea is to use the different ways to reach out as a starting point, but definitely don't use it as the only way to reach out. Do use it to send clean and flirty conversations. If you're comfortable enough with adding a new date to your personal networking sites, then more power to you. Just don't fret over every single detail of their online life without having conversations with them in person.

Doing the Deed

The "no sex on the first date" rule still applies—unless, of course, you're only looking to hook up. If that's the case, don't expect something deep and meaningful to develop from a one-night stand. Masini says women tend to think sex is more than what it is.

“The bottom line is he was ready and you were willing,” Masini says. “Sex doesn't mean the same thing to men that it does to women, so don't trick yourself into thinking that sex on the first date means he likes you.”

This old—yet effective—rule gives you the chance to really get to know each other. Take the first few dates, or even months, getting to know each other on a deeper level. That emotional connection will make the sex all that much more explosive down the road.

Go Exploring

In a nation that is a cesspool of different cultures, races, and ethnicities, the possibilities within your dating pool are exponential. But, if that's not the way you work, don't break away from your core values. The key to a successful relationship, or having a fun date, is to find compatibility within your own limits.

“There is more competition today than ever before so you'd be crazy not to explore outside your traditional racial, religious, and ethnic group,” says Masini. “Know where you're open and where you're not, and then leverage those openings so you can explore your options in dating.”

So, if you're not into dating someone whose values are significantly different than yours, look for someone who expands your lifestyle experience by taking you to a fun vacation spot or trying new foods.

Opposites Attract (or Not)

Just because magnets stick to each other doesn't mean you and a potential date will too. If you're looking for someone you can grow with in a relationship, pick a partner with interests similar to your own. This will alleviate any tensions regarding activities, parties, and people you interact with.

"Opposites are fun in the short run," Masini says, "but those with more likes than differences will be more successful."

Young at Heart

Toss aside the rule that dating outside your age bracket is forbidden. Men are dating younger women, because, well, they've done it for centuries. Women have followed suit and are dating younger men because of the vitality they give the relationship. It's fun and keeps things interesting. Your experiences and the way you live should really determine the quality of a date, not the year on their birth certificate. One caveat: No one younger than 18, please.

April Masini is the author of two self-published books on dating, Date Out of Your League and Think & Date Like a Man. She regularly answers readers' questions on dating on her site [AskApril](#). [2]

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