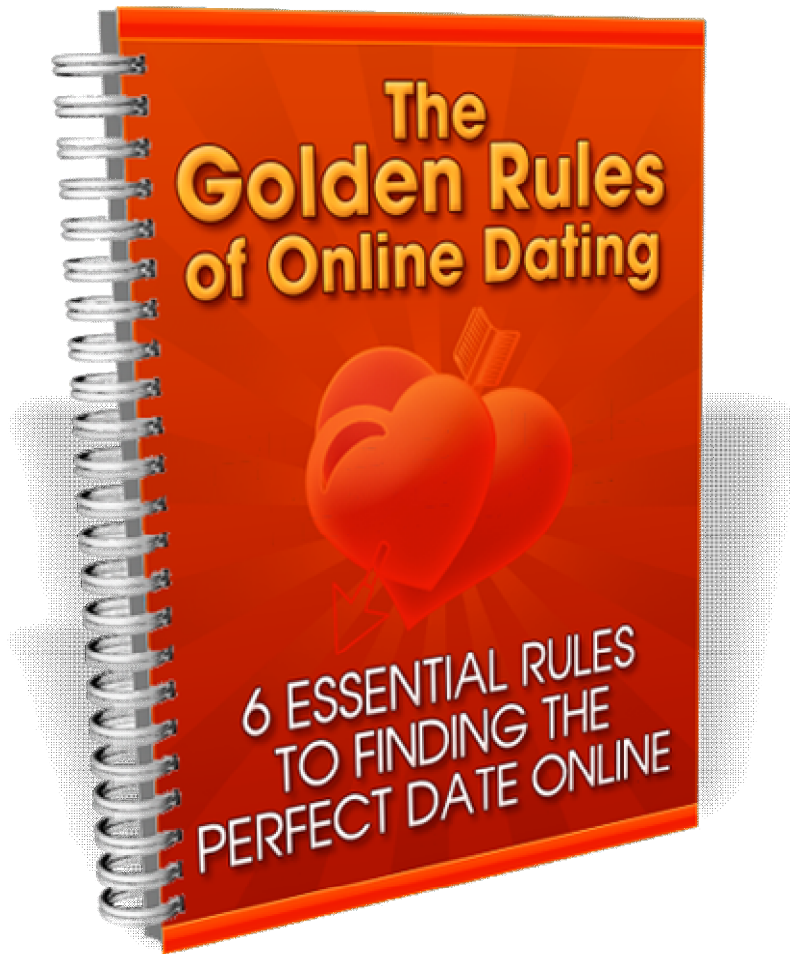


The Golden Rules of Online Dating
6 Essential Rules To Finding The Perfect Online Date
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The Golden Rules of Online Dating

Online dating has exploded in popularity over the past few years. As our lives get busier and more hectic, and the internet has become more accessible, it has become easier and easier to meet new people online as opposed to via more "traditional" methods. Online dating lets you identify people who share your interests, and fit the profile of the kind of person you are looking for, before you even make first contact. The possibilities of making the kinds of connections you want are very realistic, and many long lasting relationships and marriages have begun via online dating services, not to mention casual relationships as well if that is what you prefer.

The possibilities are all right there and waiting for you, but there are a few key rules you need to know and follow in order to find your perfect date online. Read on to learn The Golden Rules of Online Dating – 6 essential rules to finding the perfect online date!

Rule number 1: Play it safe

Online dating is a fantastic way to meet new potential love interests, and the kind of people you'd like to get to know further, but at the same time there are risks involved, as with just about anything in life. Before you decide which online dating site you are going to join, there are some precautions you should take.

To begin with, make sure your computer itself is adequately protected. Ensure you have an antivirus program installed, a firewall, as well as

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malware protection. With these applications in place, you face far less risk of any unwanted nasties making their way onto your computer once you start browsing for dating sites and exchanging emails with potential dates.

When you come to the point of interacting with people online, don't hand out unnecessary personal information. Nobody online needs to know your home address, the specifics of your place of employment, your full name and other information of that nature. You can share personal information after you have actually met an individual and established a sufficient level of trust. Before that point, protect your personal information and concentrate on the kind of light exchanges that will help you decide who you might like to get to know further.

For men, be wary of people who may seem to be expressing an unusual interest in marriage early on in your interactions. Also be careful of people making requests for things from you, such as money. If you begin to feel pressured, step back from the interaction and consider seeking a new service or potential date. Online dating should be enjoyable and pressure free and if you follow the golden rules, it is.

For women, don't allow any individual to place any kind of unwanted pressure on you, be it to discuss things you'd prefer not to, or to meet in a place you are uncomfortable with. The first time you meet up with someone offline, make sure you set a time in the middle of the day, and go only to well lit public places until you know you are dealing with someone who can be trusted. For the first couple of offline dates, arrange to meet with or call a friend immediately afterward, so you have

someone looking out for you.

Keep these considerations in mind, exercise a healthy amount of caution and common sense, and you will find online dating to be a safe and wonderful experience.

Rule number 2: Carefully choose the right site for you

Online Dating has grown exponentially over the past few years, and the amount of choice in Online Dating sites is enormous. In order to make contact with the kind of people that suit you, it is important that you start by finding the type of site that suits this kind of people.

There are a number of questions for you to consider that will help you make the right choice.

1. *How much are you able to spend?*

There are both free and paid online dating services, and varying prices on sites with different features to offer. Generally speaking, free sites are less than ideal, as you will find far less protection in place from the site administrators, and a higher number of 'unsavory types'. If money is a real issue and you feel you need to use free sites, be sure to remember the precautions described in "Rule 1".

2. *What features would you like to have access to?*

Paid sites will offer different features such as chat, instant messaging, profile matching and so on, and you'll be able to access

varying features for varying amounts. Investigate which sites give you the best value for money, and provide you with the most features that you are interested in using.

3. *Would you prefer to meet people who share special interests and / or your religion?*

There are a number of websites dedicated to particular sets of interests and hobbies, and also to individual religious faiths. If special interests and / or your religion is highly important to you, you may want to consider dedicated online dating services such as these.

4. *What degree of privacy and safety are you looking for?*

Some online dating sites allow you to restrict views of your profile and picture, giving you the option to manually allow specific people to see them. Some sites also do full background checks on their members, verifying marital status, age and so on. Decide what degree of privacy and safety you'd like in your service and choose a site accordingly.

5. *Who do your friends, family and associates recommend?*

If you know anybody that has done any online dating, nothing beats hearing about a first hand experience. See if you can get any testimonials on quality online dating services from people you know.

Rule number 3: Write a great profile, with a great pic.

Once you have chosen the dating site that is right for you, it's time to get started. The first thing to do is write yourself up a great profile, with a great picture of yourself. In the online dating world, this profile is your introduction and your first impression. Make sure it reflects who you are, and what you are looking for in a date.

Think about what is most important to you. Think about the things you absolutely love, and mention each of them in your profile. It is important that any potential dates understand the things that are most firmly a part of you, that aren't going to disappear from your life any time soon! Also, think about the things you dislike – those things you absolutely do not want in your life. You don't want to find yourself on a date with someone that dislikes what you like and likes what you don't. Get the things that are most important to you out in the open straight away, so that the right kind of person can accurately match themselves to you from the beginning.

Try to let your personality come through. Imagine that you have actually met someone for the first time in real life, and write down what you would want to say to them. We often find ourselves wishing we'd had the time to think of the perfect thing to say to that new love interest when we first met - this is your chance to avoid those stumbles and make sure you say exactly what you really want to.

Find or take a great picture of yourself, as this will be the first thing people will see when browsing the dating site. Make sure your photo is current – the last thing you want is to make anyone feel you are misleading them about any part of who you are. If you can, invest in a professional photographer to put you in your best light. Some photographers specialize in photos for dating sites, so take a look around your local area and see what you find.

Rule number 4: Take your time

Now that you are all setup and ready to start browsing for potential dates, remember that this is not a race or a competition. There is no point in rushing in and arranging real world dates with someone you're not sure of. Sit back and browse slowly and casually, without pressuring yourself. You are looking for someone you can trust, and with whom you can build a strong relationship.

There is no need to take risks, just hold off until you see a profile that really piques your interest, and you find yourself saying "Wow, this person sounds great!" You have all the time in the world, so wait until you're comfortable and allow yourself to make good choices.

Rule number 5: Honesty, honesty, honesty

Once you do find someone that takes your eye, that you want to know more about, the key thing to remember is honesty, honesty, honesty. This means both not intentionally misleading the person you are talking to, and also not being afraid to be clear about who you are as a person.

Don't overstate or understate things about yourself in order to be more impressive, such as salary, fitness, age and so on. No healthy relationship was ever built on anything apart from complete trust. You need to show the person from the beginning that you are true to your word. Adhering to this rule is as simple as being yourself.

Also, don't be afraid to be clear about things that are important to you. Don't hold back on what you really think and feel, just because you are concerned the person you are interacting with may not like it. The truth is that if a person doesn't like what you really think and feel, you want to know about it as soon as possible, as it means they are not the one for you. This is one of the many benefits of finding a partner online – the ability to get it all out in the open up front without fear. The earlier you can determine that you are not suited the better, as it will free you up to find a partner who you are suited with. Online dating can thus save a lot of time and heartache.

Be consistently open and honest and you will find the perfect date that much faster.

Rule number 6: Listen attentively & go question for question

As much as you want a potential date to know who you are, it is also very important to let them know you want to learn about who they are as well. The rule of thumb is to listen closely to everything the person tells you, without rushing them or interrupting them, and to ask them a

question for every question they ask you.

Try to think of questions that will gather the most insight into the person you are talking to. Here are a few example questions that you can weave into your initial conversations:

Q. What do you think are the biggest mistakes people make in relationships?

This will tell you a lot about the person's previous relationship experiences without you having to ask directly. Their answer will not only give you insight into any sore points that you should bear in mind when dealing with the person, it may potentially alert you to possible issues if they happen to raise any points that may relate or be integral to your own personality. Again, be honest with the information you learn.

Q. What is most important to you in a partner?

This question is a great way to find out what the person is really looking for in a partner, and to hear about things that might not have made their way into their carefully written profile. Asking a person to describe on the fly what matters most to them is the best way to get an honest answer.

Q. (Put this gently) So, why is a nice person like you single at the moment?

You can rephrase this question in a number of ways to ensure that it doesn't make the person feel bad when you ask it, but it is a good question to ask since it offers a good way to find out some important factors about their background and lifestyle. You may also find out the

person is coming out of a recent break up, or that they lead a busy lifestyle that you'll need to work around, and things of that nature. Be gentle, considerate and courteous when asking this question, but look for a way to introduce it into the conversation.

Conclusion

Once you have started chatting with potential dates keep the Golden Rules in the forefront of your mind. Remember, always play it safe and protect yourself when chatting to people and arranging meetings. Take your time and don't rush into real life meetings. When you do decide to meet someone for a date, take your time and be careful not to rush into a new relationship. Continue to be honest, to listen attentively and to be clear about the things that are important to you.

Follow these Golden Rules and your perfect date is just around the corner!

For more information about Online Dating, visit:

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