
NICK NOTAS

FIRST DATE FIELD MANUAL

Consistently escalate your dates from friendly to flirty



Introduction

I'm Nick Notas, a dating and confidence coach for men.

I've helped thousands of men conquer their fears, build genuine self-esteem, and develop charismatic social skills for the last 10 years.



I created this First Date Field Manual to address some of the most common questions I get around dating. Specifically- the first date. I've seen men sabotage what could be should be enjoyable, memorable first dates, all by building up too many expectations, overcomplicating things, and putting too much pressure on themselves.

Use this manual to prepare before you head out and I'm confident you will increase your chances of having an enjoyable night. And more importantly, this guide will help you cross that gap from a friendly connection to an intimate one.

Let's get started.

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The Ground Rules

First dates don't have to be as nerve-racking as we make them out to be. A lot of it comes down to planning ahead and tailoring the experience to your personalities. Sometimes just picking the right environment allows you two to bond and kick-starts your chemistry.

So now you've got a girl's number and you're ready to set up the date. Where should you go? Where should you avoid? Most of all, what should you do?

That's what we'll be covering here.

Base it on common interests

During your initial meeting with a girl, try to discover her passions, interests, and hobbies while sharing yours, too. It makes it a hell of a lot easier to come up with a date idea that is fun and relevant to both parties. You can always introduce her to something new, but if you both love singing, why not go to karaoke night?

Don't overspend

I'm all for treating a girl to a fancy night out, but it's not usually the best way to start. Going overboard can put a lot of pressure on the evening and scare a girl away. You come off too strong, too soon and convey the wrong message. You're trying to buy her affection rather than let her experience it naturally.

And expensive gifts like a dozen long stem roses or \$150 bottles of wine are unnecessary. Just bring yourself, it's all you need to win her over.

Keep it simple

Nothing kills the mood like waiting in bumper-to-bumper traffic. Or driving in endless circles to find parking. Or waiting outside the bar for an hour. Be reasonable and make the date as painless as possible.

Don't make her drive thirty miles to see you — meet her at least halfway or closer to her house. On the same note, don't plan for somewhere you're going to get lost and end up late. Simple is the best choice, save the elaborate plans for future meetings.

Encourage Conversation

A date should be an experience that facilitates communicating and getting to know each other. That's why I don't generally recommend movie dates. Can they work? Yes, but they're not the ideal situation. They force you to be quiet next to one another when the date should be all about the interaction between you.

You want to flirt, laugh, and build the romantic tension. It's much harder to do that when you're silent and staring at a screen. Choose dates that provide opportunities to converse freely and frequently.

Make it one-on-one

I know it's easier to ask her to go out with you and your friends, but first dates should be spent with just the two of you. You're much more likely to create a personal, intimate connection without other people around. You'll make your intentions clear and set the right tone.

Many girls won't be comfortable flirting or getting physical on a first date with people watching. It goes back to "keep it low pressure." You don't want her feeling judged or have to deal with a bunch of new faces. Your friends will understand.

Where to Go and What to Do

The not-so-safe bet

Dinner is by far the most popular first date idea. However, I can't stand behind it for everyone. Dinner forces you to stare at each other and make conversation for hours. It can be awkward, stressful, and seem like an interview. I like dinner dates. Mainly because I love food, but also because I'm a strong conversationalist and comfortable in that situation. But, if you're inexperienced or haven't been on a first date in a while, try something casual like...

The actual safe bet

Grabbing **drinks** is the reliable choice and far less intense than dinner. You can move around, stand next to each other, and relax in a social setting. If the date isn't going well, neither of you feel obligated to sit through an entire meal before leaving. If it is going well, you can move to another location or even back to one of your places.

Also, let's be serious – alcohol is a social lubricant. I'm not saying to get smashed (you shouldn't) but a drink or two can lighten the mood. If one of you doesn't drink, **coffee** is a great alternative. Even though it may seem similar to dinner, it's a different atmosphere. It's more low-key and flexible — you can go for an afternoon cup or a weekend pick-me-up.

So remember- first date venue should be inexpensive and non-committal, so both of

you have the option to leave if things aren't working out. Remember, if things go well at the bar, coffee shop or otherwise, you can always move your date to a different location.

Some other easy date ideas for you:

- Apple picking
- Aquarium
- Arcade (playful and you can challenge each other)
- Auction
- Bike ride
- Board/card games at a coffee shop
- Bookstore
- Bowling
- Cooking class / cook something together
- Costco/BJ's/shopping club (free food is always good!)
- Dog walk at the park
- Explore downtown and window shop
- Farmers market
- Flea market
- Hiking
- Historical landmark / home
- Ice cream shop / bakery
- Ice Skating
- Karaoke
- Museum or art gallery
- Open house (pretend to be a couple)
- Outdoor festival (music, arts and crafts, Renaissance)
- Outdoor/botanical garden or forest preserve
- Paint your own pottery shop

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- Pet store
 - Picnic or feed the ducks
 - Playground (act like kids)
 - Shopping at the mall
 - Sporting event
 - Wine tasting or brewery

Get Your Head Right

Let's talk mindset.

Nearly every "self-help guru" has preached, "just be yourself" at one time or another. Somehow, this single statement is supposed to change us into an all-knowing and ever-confident being that others want to be around.

Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way.

What does that advice even mean? If I'm scared to express myself to new people, how is that going to help? If I don't know how I'm supposed to act, how do I know what to fix?

What you really need is a thorough understanding of who you are, what you want, and what's important to you. First off, believe that if you talk passionately about the things that matter to you, your opinions, and the things you're curious about, this will be engaging enough to attract and connect with the people who are *right for you*.

Stand up for your beliefs

What are your core values? Do you treasure honesty, integrity, open-mindedness, or just being a good person? Live through those values and hold yourself accountable when you betray them. Lead by example and others will take notice.

If someone challenges your beliefs, don't be afraid to speak up. You don't have to start a fight, but let it be known that you won't buckle under pressure. Associate with those who hold the same standards and don't waste time with people who disregard what's important to you.

Don't hide yourself

Never be ashamed of who you are. If you're a tech-loving foodie who plays video games – embrace it. You shouldn't talk a new girl's ear off for hours about it, but be excited to share your interests appropriately. The moment you begin to bury parts about you is the moment you admit something's "wrong" with you.

This goes double for relationships. If you feel the need to hide things from your partner, ask yourself this: will she really not understand or am I just embarrassed to tell her? If it's the former, maybe they're not the right person for you. You should want to be with someone that appreciates all of you, not some false image. Why settle for anything less?

Stop apologizing for your actions

If you said or did something from the heart, don't back down from it. I often see guys saying sorry for flirting with a girl, making a joke, or expressing how they feel. It only makes you look insecure and draws negative attention. Real men own up to their words.

The caveat to this is that if you've crossed a line and truly offended someone – apologize quickly and emphatically. Take responsibility and don't make excuses for what you did. Most of the time, having the courage to admit you were wrong is enough to rectify the situation.

So to recap: You're going out on a date- and your goal is for you to have a good time. You're going to crack jokes and talk about stuff you find interesting, and that's it. If she likes you, great! But you've got to stop living by what other people think and live for *you*.

Focus on being authentic and the people who like you will stick by your side. I think Dr. Seuss said it best:

“Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.”

Grooming Matters

This is one of those topics I like to think of as the elusive obvious- it's so fundamental and basic and right in front of us, that we often forget to address it!

Why does this matter? Well first off, it subcommunicates that you respect yourself enough to take care of yourself. And second, think about the kind of women you want to date. Do you think they'd leave the house with a unibrow or nose hair? You can bet they'd notice it on you.

Grooming is deceptive because no one wakes up with jacked up, nasty toenails. No one wakes up with an ear full of newly sprouted hairs, or a unibrow.

These things sneak up on us minute by minute. So we're always used to them. But

to someone who sees you for the first time, it's painfully obvious, and alarm bells start ringing. So here's the pre-flight checklist. Go down the list and make sure you've got it together.

- Clip and trim your toenails.
- If you really need work on your nails, go get a manicure and pedicure.
- Keep your facial hair tidy and well maintained.
- No unibrows, long nose hairs, or ear hair.
- If you're a hairy guy, shave your neckline and the back of your neck.
- Wash and maintain your hair. No dandruff.
- If you're balding, shave your head. A combover makes you look like you're in denial, but shaving your head gives you control over the situation.
- Manage any body hair that's overgrown.
- Shower and wash your private bits- you don't know where the night could lead you.
- If you have dry, cracked skin, use good lotion. You're a man, not an alligator.

Let's Talk Fashion

Why should you look your best? Because it's damn sexy. And because how you dress and take care of yourself conveys a lot about who you are to women. It shows you are put together, have high-self esteem, and you're confident about your body.

The way you dress is a reflection of your personality and lifestyle. Your looks matter – but not necessarily in the way that you think. Having your shit together with your appearance conveys having your shit together in your life, and *that's* what matters. Fashion and styling play a critical role in first impressions. When you look good, you feel good.

I used to wear baggy jeans and dorky glasses. It didn't help me much then and it won't help you now. Yes, you can get lucky looking like anything, but it makes a striking difference when you make a few adjustments. Remember, the clothes you wear to work are not necessarily what you wear to play. Comfortable khakis and a powder blue polo aren't your best bet for impressing your dates.

The notes below were transcribed by my good friend Howie and edited by me.

First...always accentuate your shoulders

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- Emphasizing your shoulders makes you more attractive. It frames your body and gives you a strong presence.
 - A scarf, zip-structured collar, epaulettes, and other details do this well.
 - Avoid plain crew necks.
 - The seam of your shirt should go to the edge of your shoulder, not before or beyond.

On casual button-down shirts...

- The bottom of the shirt should come to around the top of your pants pockets.
- There shouldn't be a lot of extra fabric under your armpit.
- Your bottom button should come down to the top of your crotch.
- Preferably look for slim fit or city fit, not classic fit or regular cut.
- Roll up your sleeves for a comfortable, relaxed look. Two ways to do it are:
 - Unbutton the buttons and roll it up by cuff-lengths. It should not go past your elbow (no 1950's cigarette-pack look).
 - For shirts with a contrasting pattern underneath the cuff: do one long roll folding your sleeve in half up to your elbow. Then, roll it up the rest of the way leaving some of the contrasting pattern sticking out of the top.

On pants and jeans...

- You should not need a belt to keep them up.
- They should skim along your body and legs- if you pinch the sides, you should have no more than 2 fingers of material.

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- Avoid anything labeled classic or traditional – will most likely be too large of a fit.
 - Always wash jeans in cold water. Don't use a dryer, let them air dry.
 - Don't wash your jeans too often, you can get away with a couple weeks or a month depending on wear. As long as they don't smell or have visible stains, you're good.
 - Wash jeans inside out to preserve color and quality of denim.

On shoes...

- Shoes should be sex on feet. They are your chance to make a statement and showcase your taste.
- For going out: no Birkenstocks, sandals, or sneakers. Go for drivers, slip-ons, and laced oxfords.
- Two-tone patterns are on-trend and more exciting than single colors.

On skin tone...

- White men should stay away from red, pink, yellow, or burgundy because they emphasize unflattering skin pigmentation. The paler they are the more this rule applies.
- Light colors work better than bold colors for white men.
- African-American, olive-skinned, and darker men can wear all colors.

The 4 Step Formula to an Attractive Casual Look

1. Fit

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- The most important component of fashion. Challenge your comfort zone and buy clothes that flatter your body. Get rid of baggy t-shirts, hoodies, and jeans.
 - Pay special attention to emphasizing your shoulders.
 - All clothes should skim closely along your body.
 - Don't be afraid to invest in a tailor or get measured at a store.

2. Distinction

- Your outfit shouldn't be bland or extreme, but somewhere in between.
- Find pieces with interesting construction (seams, patterns, trim, military detailing).
- You should look good from a distance and have subtle details to notice close-up.
- Make use of accent pieces (bold-colored accessories or layers).
- Avoid runway style – you are the focal point, not the clothes.

3. Layering

- Two layers are good, three layers are better. For example, shirt, jeans, and a lightweight sport coat.
- Nice sport coat is essential.
- Lightweight knit v-neck sweaters will always be versatile.
- Different fabrics imply different seasons: Linen is relaxed and implies summer, while light wool is spring to fall.

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- If you're wearing a t-shirt under your sweater, it has to have an intention. Basic white tees look like an undershirt. Choose a graphic or colored tee – something with a purpose, not just a filler.

4. Accessorizing

- Don't overload your pockets with cell phone, wallet, keys, notepad, pen, etc. Keep it simple.
- Can pair a belt with a unique buckle, but keep it subtle and not too flashy.
- Try interesting shoelaces.
- For ties, you can unbutton the top button for casual, "I just had sex in the bathroom" look.
- Watches are awesome.
- Be careful with jewelry, keep it light and not overpowering. I pity the fool who wears too much bling.

Never forget, dress to impress.

Conversation

How many times have you avoided talking to someone new because you were afraid that:

- You wouldn't know what to say.
- You would eventually run out of things to talk about.
- Conversation would be boring or awkward.

That kind of self-doubt can be paralyzing. But you're not alone. Each week I get dozens of questions like,

"Nick, can you please just tell me exactly what to say? That would really help me get started."

I wish I could provide you guys with a miracle fix but then I'd just be another scammy marketer. Conversations are dynamic and unique. You're speaking with different people, with different personalities, in different situations. If you're having the same conversations with all of them, then you're never truly connecting with any of them.

Let go of the idea that a discussion is a mathematical formula. Stop looking for the "secret" to learning how to talk to people. The answer is to become socially confident through real-world experience. What I can provide you with are proven guidelines to make those experiences easier and more successful. I believe anyone else can rapidly improve through practice- I know I have.

For example...

I've gotten girls to talk about their craziest sexual experiences and fantasies after 30 minutes of meeting them at a party. I've had phone sex with women after 2 hours of talking to them on the phone and never seeing them before. I talked about illicit drug experiences on the very first night I met my girlfriend. And I've made best friends with complete strangers by shamelessly sharing my dark and dirty sense of humor.

We are hard-wired to trust people. We are dying for the opportunity to connect and talk about real shit. Almost nobody wants to endure through more small talk nonsense. It's so much more interesting to express ourselves openly and hear the same from others. You just have to cultivate that atmosphere and invite other people to join in. The two main ways to do that are by building...

Comfort – You need to provide a judgment-free environment where people can express themselves without shame.

Trust – You need to demonstrate integrity by being honest and direct. So even if someone disagrees with your opinions or values (like many do with Howard Stern), they feel comfortable opening up, too. When people sense you're bullshitting or just trying to impress them where they will hold back.

Here's how you do it.

Be genuinely interested

If you're just in conversations to talk about yourself, you won't get far. Conversation is a flowing dialogue where two or more entities are learning about each other. A lot of clients have told me they don't usually care about what other people talk about. They only care about their interests and are bored with anything else.

All I can tell you is that if you keep that mindset, you're going to struggle to make connections. You're betting on finding someone who's exactly like you, which is completely unrealistic.

You have to maintain a sense of wonder in life. You have to develop a thirst for learning about different passions, hobbies, and people's unique personalities and histories. This will make you more well-rounded and able to converse with all types of people in all types of situations.

You also need to physically demonstrate that you're interested in the other person. Maintain strong eye contact – glancing around the room will quickly show that you're not actually paying attention. Speak passionately and excitedly. Be animated with your expressions. Stay present in the moment and not in your head.

A conversation is a two-way exchange where you build off of what one another says. Listening will give you all the material you need to relate, ask relevant questions, and continue building the connection. But if you're not actively interested by what the other person is saying, it's impossible to have an engaging discussion.

Use F.O.R.D. and avoid R.A.P.E.

F.O.R.D. is a well-known guideline for what topics are generally effective when connecting with new people. It stands for family, occupation, recreation, and dreams (aspirations). But, what about topics to avoid?

I came across the acronym R.A.P.E. — it stands for religion, abortion, politics, economics. I'd also add in previous romantic relationships. These are sensitive subjects to many people. Unless you're really experienced at handling them or they're relevant to the situation, I'd steer clear until you know the person better.

Ask engaging questions

Stop trying to carry the entire weight of the conversation. Asking meaningful questions takes the pressure off of you. People love to talk about themselves so encourage them to do so. Invite them to share their passions, opinions, and stories. They'll leave the conversation feeling like you were a great listener who cared about getting to know them.

Here are three rules for great questions that lead to meaningful connections:

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- Open-ended or thought provoking. Questions that are easy to answer with one word do not pry conversation open. Force the other person to think about their answer and give you more material to connect with.
 - Creative or unique. Don't ask the same questions they've probably heard a thousand times.
 - Emotional. Your questions should evoke feelings and not just yield constant exchanges of data. You want the "why" behind the words.

Don't stress about coming up with amazing first questions. You're just opening the door so you can continue to dig deeper. It's perfectly fine to get the ball rolling with a "standard" question. Let's take "occupation" as an example. You might start talking to a woman with: "So what do you do?"

She then tells you about her career as a travel photographer. You could follow up with a set of progressively bland, factual questions like:

"Did you go to school for it?" / "Do you like it?"

You'll likely get a lot of short, unenthusiastic, "small talk" replies. It's also going to feel like an interview. Or you could use engaging questions like:

"Did you always want to be a photographer or was there a defining moment?" / "What's the one shot that you're most proud of?"

Which set do you think will get her excited to respond? Which will make her share real emotion and insight about herself? Which will be most memorable?

Use conversational "hook points" to maintain a natural discussion.

Simply put, hook points are any words or ideas stated by the other person. What's being said in the moment will provide you with *everything* you need to fuel conversation. But when you're in your head and not interested in what the other person is saying (step #1), you miss all the wonderful points of reference you can use to your advantage.

Let's continue off the example above. You ask, "So what do you do?". She responds,

"I'm a travel photographer. I actually just came back on Wednesday from Argentina."

What are some hook points I could continue conversation from?

- Travel
- Photography
- Argentina
- Flying (implied by the long-distance travel)

Pick one of the above. There are an unlimited amount of ways you could respond. Think...

Have you been to Argentina? What did you like about it? Do you have a story to share? If not, what do you want to know about Argentina? Are you into photography yourself? How do you feel about flying that long distance?

So you could...

Ask a relevant or deeper question

Like in the example above, you could immediately follow up with:

"I'm jealous, that sounds exciting. Did you always want to be a photographer or was there a defining moment?"

Or even something more lighthearted (but still unique and thought-provoking)...

"Okay so since you're a pro, what's your secret to enjoying a 12 hour flight?" [Flying]

- **Sarcastic tease.** "Wow, traveling the world and seeing beautiful sites sounds like such an awful job." [Travel]
- **Relate back.** "I'd love to visit Argentina – the culture and nightlife seem incredible." [Argentina]
- **Be playful.** "Oh my god why would you ever leave that gorgeous weather?" [Argentina]
- **Roleplay.** "It must be hard handling all that equipment yourself. Looks like I'm your new full-time travel assistant." [Photography]

Mix up your responses and interject statements in between questions.

So the basic idea is this:

Ask an engaging question -> Listen and choose a hook point -> Make a relevant statement / question -> Repeat listening and choosing next hook point.

Maintain strong eye contact

Without it, you will look nervous, disengaged, or disingenuous. This is especially true while the other person is talking. When breaking eye contact, do it briefly and casually.

Stop fearing silence

You don't need to immediately fill every lull in conversation. It's perfectly normal to have a quiet moment or two. As long as you look comfortable in your skin, it won't be weird or "creepy". Silences are only awkward if you make them awkward.

If you tense up, look terrified, and stutter words out – then the other person will feel uncomfortable. But if you smile, take a breath, or casually sip your drink, then everything will feel great. Lead with confident body language even if you're anxious on the inside. Those extra few seconds give you a chance to collect your thoughts and respond well. Not only that, but because you look relaxed, the other person often restarts the conversation. A win-win for you.

Don't be a 1-Upper

If someone's sharing a story with you (especially if it's personal) don't immediately respond with how you have a better, crazier, or more impressive one. It seems like you didn't care about what they told you. They may even feel stupid and regret sharing their story.

Give real, personal compliments

I write about this often, but so many people don't utilize powerful compliments. We all want to feel desirable, interesting, smart, and likeable. A meaningful compliment can make us feel *awesome*. But it has to be authentic and not just to gain approval – people can easily pick up on that.

You have to compliment someone when they've earned it by telling you something *you truly value*. Then you have to say *why* you find that worthy of your praise. Saying "oh, that's cool" or "nice" isn't good enough — it's generic. And if people feel you're being insincere or have hidden motives, it can have a very negative effect on your connection.

So how do you give a great compliment? Make sure they've legitimately earned it and make it unique to them. I only give out compliments when someone has opened up to me, shared something personal, and impressed me. They've earned my praise and it carries a lot of weight because of it.

Don't say:

- "That's really interesting."
- "You look nice."
- "You're fun."

Do say:

- "I love how you're passionate about so many different things."
- "Damn that jacket looks fantastic on you."
- "I feel like I could talk to you about anything and it would still be fun."

A couple of genuine compliments go a long way.

Speak with a dominant, not submissive, tone

Submissive tones have a pitch that rises at the end of sentences. We do this with people we feel are superior (like bosses) or when we're seeking approval – often with new people. It makes you sound nervous and unsure of yourself.

Dominant voices have a neutral or lower pitch at the end of sentences. It comes off secure, confident, and honest.

Stick to positive

Life can already be stressful enough. Everyone wants to be around someone who brings positive energy and improves the atmosphere. It's contagious.

Yes, I understand some people have bonded through complaining and cynicism. But that's a weak, unsustainable way to start a connection. Instead, be the guy who makes them *forget* about their worries and problems.

Even when someone says something like, "I had such a stressful, shitty work week." Don't say "Yeah I know how much that sucks." Instead, elevate them up, "Well it's a good thing you're surrounded by great friends, great drinks, and have the weekend ahead of you :)"

Don't criticize or judge them harshly

When someone shares something personal with you, they're being vulnerable. They're putting their true selves on the line, and that can be terrifying. The worst thing you can do is make fun of someone at a time like that. They let their guard down and you don't want to make them feel rejected.

If you *do* want to tease someone, make sure it's not about anything serious. I might poke fun at their reality TV obsession, but not their career choice. I'll also show interest and ask them another question right afterwards so they know it really was a joke.

Moreover, if you disagree with something, you don't have to keep it to yourself. Be honest but tactful. Convey that you understand and respect their opinion but feel differently. It's okay to have a different opinion and to express it. But if you disagree with something, be polite about it.

Don't say:

- "Wow, how could you like that?"
- "That's wrong, they actually found..."

Do say:

- “I can appreciate that although I’m more of a ___ guy myself.”
- “I read a recent article that said...”

Attacking people only pushes them to get defensive or shut down. If you disagree with someone so much that you can’t contain yourself, they aren’t right for you. Walk away and talk to someone who is.

Give the occasional “I’m listening” signal

A simple head nod, “mhmm”, or “yeah” shows you’re involved in the conversation.

Learn how to tell a good story

It’s so much easier than you think. Every story follows this basic pattern:

Hook -> vivid imagery/emotions -> punch line.

Stories are an amazing way to draw someone in while getting them to relate with the real you. And since you’re just recalling something from your past, you won’t run out of what to say.

Avoid one-word or generic responses

They come off curt and can close the doors to more conversation.

For example, if someone asked: “I really want to see a game at Fenway, have you been?”

Don’t respond:

“Yeah”, “No”, or “Yeah, it’s cool.”

Do respond:

"Yeah, I go every year with my dad. You should definitely see a game before you leave."

"Nah I haven't but I'm dying to go, too."

With both of those, you can lead into a story or ask a relevant question.

Assume people will like your presence

Our perceptions have a powerful impact on our outcomes. If you walk into every social situation thinking "they're not going to want to talk to me", "I'm going to get rejected", or "this is going to be awful", you're going to prove yourself right. You will project defeated body language, be timid, and have a hard time relaxing.

But if you believe people will be warm, friendly, and inviting – that'll come true more than you think. You will walk into conversations genuinely excited to connect with people and it immediately shows.

Be expressive

You don't need to feign excitement or become a chest thumping "alpha male". But showing little to no facial expressions and having the "deer in headlights look" won't arouse anyone.

SMILE! Get fired up when sharing a point you're passionate about. Raise your eyebrows in surprise when they tell you something personal or shocking. Give a playful look of exasperation. Use your hands to help convey emotion.

Being animated is magnetic. Think about someone you consider a “very social person”. How do they look in conversation? Dull or lively? Half of what makes conversations interesting for people is seeing your reactions to them.

Delve into personal and “dirty” subjects

People aren’t going to tell you personal details about themselves until you ask for them.

A client of mine was on a date with a girl whose father had recently passed away. When she told him, he awkwardly responded, “I’m sorry...” and left it at that. I asked him why he didn’t say anything more and he replied, “Because that’s personal.” I said, “That’s the point!”

Don’t be afraid to get to know someone past surface level, even about sensitive subjects. I would’ve asked...

What was your dad like? How was your relationship? What’s your favorite memory of him? How have you been dealing with the loss?

You’ll never know whether or not she wants to talk about it until you try. She brought it up, and if she’s ready to talk, you’ll connect with her on a much deeper level than expected.

Don’t fear controversial or intimate topics like death, drugs, fears, and embarrassing stories. And you should definitely get into sexual conversation with women you like.

It's better to be too forward than too timid — that's how you learn someone's boundaries. Let them tell you after you push that they're not ready to talk about something.

You just have to ask good questions.

Open yourself up and be vulnerable

If you're not willing to reveal your true self, flaws and all, what makes you think anyone else will? Don't be afraid to share your secrets and personal stories first. Be open and emotional about your past.

My friend's teenage nephew was recently diagnosed with schizophrenia. He hinted that he was struggling but was embarrassed to talk about it.

My friend told her nephew about how she struggled with anxiety and used to be embarrassed about it, too. She found out she had a hormonal imbalance, was prescribed medicine that made her better, and that it was nothing to be ashamed of.

After revealing that about herself, her nephew opened up about how his medicine is not working as well anymore. He was starting to hallucinate and needed a higher dose but was scared to tell anyone. Because of that, we were able to get him the medication he needed.

Sometimes you've got to take a leap to get others to trust you.

Don't brag or show off

Studies show that doctors who use simple language and vulnerability when talking to patients are seen as the most personable. We want to feel like we're talking to someone who gets us and is on the same level.

Similarly, the snobbier you act, the less relatable you are. You inherently make the other person feel like you look down upon others. Therefore, they become worried that you're judging them and see them as less.

You don't need to impress people or compensate for your insecurities. People who are genuinely awesome and confident don't need to prove it. They let their actions, behavior, and personality show it for them.

You can talk about your hobbies, exciting stories, and what you own while being humble and not constantly talking yourself up. Share a little and let people want to inquire more about you naturally. Then it won't feel like bragging to them.

Making good conversation is one thing, but you're not on a date to make new friends. To make a romantic connection, it's all about escalating through flirting.

Flirting

Alex was a frustrated mechanical engineer. Every girl he liked saw him as just a friend. They never flirted with him and there was no romantic connection.

Alex became bitter and angry towards these women. He blamed them for his lack

of dating success.

I told him to send me some of his text messages, online dating exchanges, and a summary of his first dates. It was immediately clear to me where he was making his mistakes. I asked him, “Why do you think these girls aren’t flirting with you?”

He replied, “Because I’m an engineer. I have a nerdy, uncool job. I’m not tall or muscular and I wear glasses. Mostly because I’m nice and I’ve realized that girls only want assholes.”

I shook my head. “It has nothing to do with any of that. Plenty of women will like you but **not until you stop treating them as friends**. Completely platonic talk gets you nowhere.

What is (and isn’t) flirting?

The purpose flirting is to convey one thing and one thing only....

“I want you as a sexual partner and not as just a friend.”

Women are attracted to men with honest intentions. It takes confidence to display who you are and what you want unashamedly. It shows you’re a leader who prioritizes yourself in life.

They know why you’re there. They know that if you’re investing time in them, you’re more than likely interested in them sexually. Playing it “safe” isn’t fooling anyone — it just makes you seem scared or disingenuous.

I remember when I first attempted internet flirting advice in the real world. I high-fived girls I met, called them silly names, and even got some kisses.

I thought I was the man. I had girls laughing with ease. I could actually see their initial attraction and interest in me. I'd finally gotten a grasp on flirting...or so I thought.

I kept facing dead ends. I'd meet girls, trade numbers, and not hear a response. Or I'd get replies but could never seal an in-person date. Or I'd go on a date that I believed went perfectly only to not get another chance.

How could this be? I was lighthearted and fun like most advice instructed. I used humor to create an enjoyable atmosphere. I playfully flirted with the girls which I believed would lead to us hooking up. I did everything right except...

I didn't show enough intention.

While I thought I was being a potential sexual partner, I was actually more like a gay best friend.

Understanding Friendly vs Sexual Flirting

For the sake of simplicity, I want to break flirting into two types: friendly and sexual. The difference between them is the underlying message they convey — intention.

Friendly flirting is safe. The deeper message is, "This is innocent fun!" It's how many men flirt with girls they desire.

This is a great way to break the ice and create some initial tension. But while effective for the first moments of meeting or early on a date, it won't take you much further.

Sexual flirting is risky. The deeper message is, "This is fun and I am sexually interested in you." It's hard to mistake as a friendly gesture. This is how men should be flirting with girls they desire.

Some examples of these are...

- High-fives (friendly) **vs** holding her hand and playing with her fingers (sexual)
- "You can't eye me like that!" **vs** "If you keep eyeing me like that I won't be able to restrain myself."

Although sexual flirting requires more courage, it's the only path that consistently works. Do your conversations have romantic implications or are they platonic? Are some of your questions sexual? Is your teasing playful or bold?

- "Do you consider yourself a romantic?" **vs** "Do you consider yourself a sexual person?"
- "You're such a nerd!" **vs** "You're such a nerd! Did I mention how I find intelligence irresistible ;)"

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- “Aww, are you trying to make me smile?” **vs** “You’re so trying to seduce me — it’s working.”

Are you giving any compliments that are more forward in nature? Are you outright conveying your interest in something about her?

- “Wow, you’re very independent.” **vs** “Wow, I love how independent you are.”
- “It’s really cool that you’re so passionate about traveling.” **vs** “Your passion for adventure is ridiculously sexy.”
- “I like the color of your dress.” **vs** “I have to be honest, your curves look unbelievable in that dress.”

So next time you’re out flirting with a girl remember this...

Getting her to think, “wow, he’s funny!” is a good start. Getting her to think, “wow, he’s hot and turning me on!” is where you want to be. And you do that by making your intentions known.

Non-verbal Flirting

Body language is the strongest indicator to calibrate flirting. It’s hardwired into our biology and always reveals how we feel.

If you can read a woman's non-verbal cues, you can escalate an interaction smoothly and seamlessly.

The first question men ask me about flirting is...

"When should I start?"

Right now!

Stop believing you need some obvious sign of approval or else you'll miss out on many opportunities. Most women know if they're attracted to you within five minutes. Yet the majority won't start flirting until *you* do. They'll wait for you to take the lead.

That's why it's best to assume that if she's talking to you, she's open to the idea of flirting with you. Flirting will help you gauge her reactions and determine whether or not she's interested, *sooner rather than later*.

If you're waiting to take action because you're afraid of rejection, there's no point. You are delaying the inevitable (good or bad) and setting yourself up for more hurt.

Show your intentions (flirt) early on, see how she's responding (body language cues), and *then* adjust (calibrate) based on that.

Flirt -> Read Body Language -> Calibrate

This basic framework applies to all types of flirting — whether it's through physical contact, compliments, or teases.

Read her body language

I want you to be aware of these body language cues but don't seek them out. The last thing you want to do is give her a genuine compliment and then stare at her intensely to see how she reacts. Just be conscious of them.

At first, they may be difficult to recognize. But with a bit of experience, you'll be picking up on them with ease.

Proximity and Positioning

We gravitate towards people we feel comfortable with and are attracted to.

- She stays or moves closer when you move closer to her. **Good**
- She moves further away when you move closer to her. **Bad**
- She displays open body language to you – example: she turns and faces towards you with arms uncrossed. **Good**
- She displays closed body language to you – example: she turns and faces away from you and crosses her arms. **Bad**
- She leans into you while talking or listening. **Good**
- She moves or allows you to move into each other's personal/intimate zones. This often indicates she is ready to be kissed. **Good**

Eye Contact

Regular eye contact demonstrates attention and engagement.

- She makes eye contact and smiles from afar. **Good**
- She looks down or away nervously when you hold eye contact with her from afar (while smiling). **Good**
- She makes repeated eye contact and smiles from afar. This is a definite "approach me" signal. **Good**

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- She holds consistent eye contact when talking to you. **Good**
 - She breaks eye contact often, distractedly looks around, or makes little eye contact. **Bad**

Smiling and Laughter

Smiles and laughing are natural indicators of interest and approval. Unless of course...they're laughing *at* you.

- She smiles often while talking to you. **Good**
- She rarely or never smiles while talking to you. **Bad**
- She has an upset, angry, or cold expression. **Bad**
- She laughs when you say something funny or tease her. **Good**
- She laughs even when you say something not that funny. **Good**

Physical Cues

When a woman is attracted to a man, there are common physical cues she will display. They can be conscious or unconscious. These are positive signs unless she isn't making any eye contact or seems distracted by them.

- She gently twirls or strokes her fingers through her hair. **Good**
- She pushes her hair back to expose her neck. **Good**
- She plays with her jewelry such as twisting her ring or touching her necklace. **Good**
- She rubs her fingers along objects such as the stem or rim of a glass. **Good**
- She runs her hands over erogenous zones such as neck, collarbone, wrist, or thighs. **Good**

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- She incessantly taps her fingers or often checks her phone. This can be a sign of nervousness but is generally disinterest. **Bad**

Excitement

Passion and excitement display happiness and even arousal.

- She sits up and becomes more attentive. **Good**
- She speaks with passion. Her volume and speed of conversation increases. The exception is if she's angry or flipping out on you. Otherwise... **Good**
- Her facial expressions are animated when speaking — raised eyebrows and wide eyes. **Good**
- She uses hand gestures to express points or convey a story. **Good**
- She responds with one word or short answers. **Bad**

Physical Contact

Arguably the strongest way to connect with others and show intention. We touch those closest to us. Studies show that physical contact establishes trust, affection, and attraction.

- She smiles, keeps talking, and her body looks relaxed when you touch her. **Good**
- She frowns or looks pissed off when you touch her. **Bad**
- She touches you back when you touch her. **Good**
- She pulls away or pushes you off when you touch her. **Bad**
- She touches you on her own (light brush, playful shove, leg against yours) **Good**

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- She lets you keep your hand or leg on her. **Good**

Mirroring

Mirroring is an unconscious response where we mimic the actions of those we like. However, a lack of mirroring does not indicate a lack of attraction.

- You take a sip from your drink and she immediately follows. **Good**
- You lean back against the bar or wall and she does the same. **Good**
- You turn your body towards her and she faces you. **Good**

Calibrate to her responses

As you're flirting, see how she reacts — "good" or "bad". This will determine how to proceed. Typically, she'll show multiple signs at once (laughing, sitting close, facing you, strong eye contact) that you can pick up on. Keep it simple.

If you receive good responses, keep flirting with her. Continue showing your intentions mixed in with normal conversation.

You should progressively show more intention (escalate). As time goes on your questions become more personal and sexual (more on that in a bit), statements become more forward and bold, and touches more intimate.

If you receive bad responses, temporarily ease up on the flirting – such as teasing, touching, and sexual innuendos.

Many times when a woman responds negatively to an advance, she's not telling you off permanently. She may be shy, caught off-guard, or not comfortable with you yet. Building rapport and strengthening the connection will show your consideration of her feelings and comfort level.

After a few minutes, you can initiate flirting again. If she still responds negatively, you may be better off walking away. My rule of thumb is if you get 2-3 consecutive bad responses, she's probably not interested. And if she sternly tells you at any moment to stop touching her, I advise you to listen.

Calibrating your romantic advances takes practice and time to learn. You're dealing with unique individuals in unique situations. But while nothing is absolute, these guidelines are a tried and true foundation.

If you aren't listening to her body, *you're not actually listening.*

Body Language

"The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said." – Peter F. Drucker

There's no doubt your words convey powerful messages. But what matters much more are the subtleties your body gives away. Understanding and mastering this "second language" was the most useful transformation I made for my dating and professional life. We'll be covering this in two sections- the basics of your body language, and nonverbal communication.

Body Language

Having confident body language completely changes the way people perceive you. You'll command more respect and be taken more seriously. People will trust you

more. Girls will find you captivating and attractive. And even if you're nervous on the inside, you'll look calm and collected to everyone else.

I never said it was easy — actors spend years perfecting their non-verbal communication to express the right words and emotions. Before audio was in film, we still managed to understand exactly what Charlie Chaplin was saying. But with these tips, you'll charm hearts and generate laughs without even opening your mouth.

1. **Stand tall.** Don't slouch or hunch over. Years of playing Quake and Diablo didn't make this a simple task for me, but by consistently reminding myself it became second nature.
2. **Keep your head up.** Always look straight ahead at the horizon and avoid looking down while you walk.
3. **Take up more space.** Keep your feet shoulder width apart while standing and sitting. This demonstrates you are relaxed and comfortable.
4. **Relax your shoulders.** They should not be stiff or tense. Lift your shoulders up and let them drop. They should fall back and rest naturally.
5. **Don't cross your arms or legs in front of you.** Closed body language looks defensive and like you're protecting yourself. Think about it: when someone gets mad or upset, what do they instantly do? Also, we tend to mirror body language and if you don't look relaxed, the other person can't relax either.
6. **Avoid leaning in to talk.** Getting too close too soon from the front is aggressive and distracting. Speak louder (from your diaphragm) or move to

her side. If you're in a tight space, rather than standing awkwardly, see if there is something you can lean against.

7. **Hold your drink to your side.** When you're at a party or bar, nothing shows you're nervous like clenching a drink against your chest. Always keep your glass down and to your side while not drinking.
8. **Keep your hands out of your front pockets.** If you need some place to put your hands, your back pockets with your thumbs out displays open and inviting body language.
9. **Move slower and with purpose.** Sudden movements scare people and seem like a nervous tick. A man who walks and talks in a collected manner radiates confidence.
10. **Talk with your hands.** Use your hands to emphasize points and add passion to what you're saying. Always keeping your hands stiff by your side makes you seem uncomfortable. Just don't put them in someone's face — chest level and below is perfect.
11. **Eliminate nervous tics and bad habits.** This goes for face touching, foot tapping, nail biting, nose picking, or fidgeting in general. They distract the other person and you appear anxious and agitated.
12. **Observe others.** This is the best piece of advice I can give you. Watch the cool guy surrounded by women and see how he presents himself. Take note of his facial expressions, hand gestures, and overall posture. Similarly, pay attention to handsome Hollywood actors (no homo) and their body language in interviews and on screen.

Going for the kiss

Alright, let's talk about sealing the deal. You dressed well, had a great conversation, joked, teased, and the nonverbal communication was flowing. It's time to go in for the kiss damn it.

This one point will greatly influence your success rate.

Notice I said *go for* a kiss and not *get* a kiss? Yes, I've found that even the men who attempt a kiss but don't get it immediately have a higher chance of building a romantic connection. The guys who don't try at all are the least likely to get another opportunity.

But how do you know when to go for a kiss?

Use touch as a litmus test and read her body language. Create physical contact early and often. If she's receptive (positive, smiling, still engaged in conversation) increase the intimacy of the touches.

If you've made it at least halfway through a date and she's still having fun – assume she's ready for a kiss. You don't need to wait for a blatant signal because most women will never give it to you. And please don't wait until the very last minute, it will spoil the surprise.

You can do this anywhere. While sitting next to her, while standing together, or even while walking. Here's how...

Wherever you are, stop talking. You can even get her attention by softly saying, "Come here" or "Shhh..." Look her deep in the eyes for a few seconds. You want her to gaze back into yours.

Then either step towards her or bring her into you. Pull her in by the hand or by the waist. Move in slowly and kiss her.

Don't rush any of this. Take your time. Looking into her eyes and moving in slowly lets her realize you're going in for a kiss. It gives her a chance to accept or deny your advance.

She's going to respond one of three ways:

- **Positive:** She kisses you back.
- **Neutral:** She gently turns to give you her cheek. She hesitates or looks shy about it. Or she says something like, "I'm not ready yet." Or "Not here."
- **Negative:** She completely pulls away. She looks upset. Or she flat out says, "I'm sorry but I don't see you that way." Or "I don't kiss on the first date."

If you get a positive response, the romantic barrier is broken. You can keep kissing her periodically throughout the date and see where things go. With a strong negative response, you shouldn't try to kiss her again – at least on this date.

But with a neutral response, this is where things become interesting (and controversial). Many times women are simply caught off guard, nervous, or need a little bit more time.

The important thing to note is that you've made your intentions known- she knows you like her. If she's receptive, great! If not, that's ok too.

In those instances, roll back into conversation with her for a while. Then consider attempting the kiss again before the end of the date. Often all women need is a little more time to feel comfortable and the second attempt is a success.

Wrapping Up

You now have everything you need to get your mind right, make a good impression, create a connection through conversation, flirt, and escalate- all the makings of a great first date. Follow the advice in here and I'm confident you'll see significant improvements.

If you'd like clarification on anything I mentioned in the book or have any questions, feel free to write me at nick@nicknotas.com.

I also encourage you to check out nicknotas.com/services: Some men get tired of the nagging self-doubt, fear, and anxiety controlling their lives, and when they get honest, they know they need help leveling up. If you think this could be a good fit for you, click [here](#) to learn more.

Best of luck out there- now go get some dates!

-Nick Notas