

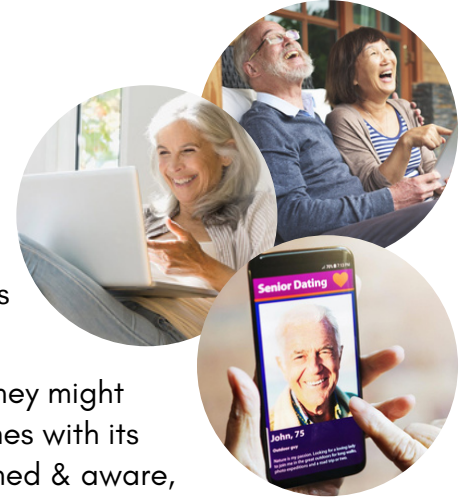


Older Adults Online

Dating Safety & Support

Looking for companionship can be intimidating & challenging at any age, but senior dating may feel particularly daunting for many older adults. Senior singles might begin their search for romance or friendship after a divorce or becoming widowed and find that meeting & dating has changed quite a bit from when they were seeking partners in the past.

Older adults now have a myriad of options, thanks to online dating, but they might find themselves dealing with a big learning curve, too. Online dating comes with its own set of risks, social etiquette, & safety considerations. By being informed & aware, older adults can make their online dating experiences a little safer & less intimidating.



Online Dating Is Not Without Risk...

We can mitigate, avoid, or accept the risks when we know they exist. While nothing can be 100% safe, it can be *safer*, then if we flung ourselves into an adventure without any preparation.

-  **get informed**
-  **be aware of red flags**
-  **don't let the  overrule your head**
-  **maintain privacy**

get informed

- Seniors' dating sites have many practical tips
- Google what sites are good for what you're seeking
- Ask friends/family what sites they like & why?
- Learn about romance scams
- Not all sites are reputable

beware red flags

- Give outlandish stories why they're 'away'
- A profile is too good to be true
- Wanting to move too fast
- They break promises to meet
- They ask for money
- The site only allows you to pay w/ non traditional methods

lead with your head

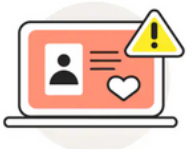
- Keep a level head.
- *New Relationship Energy* can be intoxicating, but it's not the time to make major life/ financial decisions
- Don't let fear of loneliness result in settling for less
- Set reasonable expectations

maintain privacy

- Look to make sure the site is reputable & secure
- Do not share personal data with people online
- Beware those who ask invasive questions or want you to share more than you're comfortable with

How Romance Scams Work

Never underestimate how convincing a criminal can be...



A scammer creates a fake profile to court victims online



The relationship moves fast & trust is gained quickly



The scammer asks their victim for money, receives it, & disappears

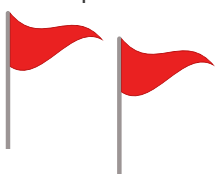


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Online dating sites can be overwhelming. It will take time to get used to the site interface & how it works so be patient with yourself. To give yourself the best chance of success, focus on building a profile worth the read accompanied by some great current photos. Dedicate a little time every day or most days to browsing, messaging, & replying. Remember that finding a suitable partner can take time and just focus on connecting with interesting people.

Getting Ready for Online Dating

- Make protecting your anonymity a priority.
- Set up a separate email for sign up to dating sites & receiving notifications.
- Have recent great photos of yourself.
- Be clear about what type of relationship you're seeking.
- Research what sites may be ideal for finding a partner & costs to participate.
- Have someone supportive who can proof your profile & provide advice/act as a sounding board as you embark on this process.



Identifying RED FLAGS

AVOID anyone who keeps pushing your stated boundaries or who asks you many invasive questions.

AVOID anyone who won't accept your 'NO'. Consent is important.

AVOID getting too emotionally invested in people you haven't met & haven't really gotten to know well.

TRUST your instincts. If anyone makes you feel unsafe, they act creepy, rude, or treat you badly, report & block them.

In fact, you can block anyone, for any reason. Don't be afraid to use this tool that exists to make your online experience safer.



Q Tips for dating profile photos X

Online dating photos are a key part to the first impression you make online. Enlist friends/family to take pictures if you don't have any & keep in mind:

- Only use current actual photos of yourself.
- Smile!
- Use well lit, non blurry photos only.
- Have a clean, tidy background.
- No photos with other people, but feel free to include pets.
- Show off the things you love doing.
- No nudity, but do include photos that honestly represent your body type.

Q Help with writing a dating profile X

Be honest. Don't change your age or try to pretend to be someone you're not. It can be difficult to write about yourself so try thinking about:

- Telling the story of YOU without sharing personal identifying information.
 - values or beliefs that are important to you
 - what are you passionate about? what do you look forward to in your life?
- Identify what you're looking for & what you offer in return. Try to keep it short.
- Spelling & grammar do count - have someone who knows you, read it to give you feedback!

Getting Ready to Meet in Person

- Always set a first meeting in a public place
- Have a way to get there & back home on your own
- Set up a 'safe call' with someone you trust

