

2020

THE IT'S JUST LUNCH
GUIDE TO DATING



Chapter 4

**The It's Just
Lunchbox of Flirting
Tips and Tools**

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THE IT'S JUST LUNCHBOX OF FLIRTING TIPS AND TOOLS

Now that you're armed and ready with a great dating attitude, the lowdown on your options and places to go, it's time to get out and meet some people.

In this chapter we'll tackle the whole process from getting noticed to closing the deal in four simple steps.

Step 1: The Preliminaries

Rules of Attraction

Divide and Conquer

Ladies, break up the pack. Men will never approach you when you are surrounded by your posse of girlfriends. And men, not many women will stride up to a bunch of guys and shoulder her way through to you — no matter how cute you are. If you want to attract the opposite sex, make room for them to approach.



Smile

It lights up your face and will make you appear more friendly and open. If your attitude projects “speak to me at your own risk,” people will stay away. Nobody likes rejection, so whoever appears most welcoming and friendly will be approached the most.

Use a Prop

What better way to bolster a conversation! Props come in an infinite variety of packages, so carry one, wear one or bring one along at all times. For example, dogs are people magnets and natural-born flirts. Skilled at reading body language, they will walk right up to someone they’re interested in and say hello (well sort of, since sniffing is basically the same thing), and they never take rejection personally. If you love sports, show your pride by wearing something with your favorite team’s logo. It can be a great way to spark conversation. Another great flirting prop is a book — especially when the subject has a controversial or intriguing title. Hey, why not sit somewhere where you can be noticed and flash the cover of this book. That should get you some attention.

Step 2: The Approach

You spot someone across the room, your eyes lock, you feel a little giddy and there’s a rush of blood to the head. Time to let them know you’re interested, and at this stage of “the flirt” the eyes have it.

Close Encounters of the Opposite Sex Kind

Eye See You

The most effective flirting tools you have are your eyes. If you catch the eye of someone attractive, and they look back, don’t

become self-conscious and turn away. Women like men who are not afraid and know what they want, and men like women who give them clear signals. So be brave.

Do the glance — linger — look away — then reconnect routine. After a few times, the other person will know you're interested and will hopefully return the eye contact.

Guys, when you catch her eye on the reconnect, stay there until she looks away. Hold her gaze without giving her an awkward stare which means it's held just long enough to say, "I see you and I'm interested in talking to you." Anything longer could scare her off. Then throw her a confident smile.

If a woman smiles at you a few times, this is your invitation to move in her direction. If you're up for it, go ahead. She could, of course, move over toward you, so smile and welcome her approach. Keep the eye-to-eye contact going and start putting those conversation skills to work.

Instant Confidence

There they are, sitting at the end of the bar, looking great, looking out of your league. You approach, hoping you won't get blown off quickly. Stop right there! Try this quick psychological booster. Instead of thinking 'What will they think of me?' turn it around to 'Will I like them?' Changing your thinking will adjust your body language and your conversation from timid to friendly and self-assured.

Feeling better? Okay, proceed to establishing contact.

You Had Them at Hello... Er — Maybe Not!

Walking up to a total stranger and starting a conversation can feel ominous, but if you don't learn to overcome your fear and wait for them to approach you first, you might end up waiting in



the wings forever. Remember, they have the same fears and desires as you, so go ahead and take a few risks.

Yes, we know for some, it can be tough. Don't make it a big deal. If you don't get a favorable response, just say, "nice to meet you," and move on — no harm done. Not everyone is going to be intrigued, so don't try to force things or be too pushy — but know that most people are polite and the consequence of approaching someone is always worse in our minds than it is in real life. Just be yourself, be friendly and smile. The confidence and warmth you exude when you approach someone will determine how successful you will be with your introduction. A sense of humor is always appreciated, but it's also important to be sincere.

Your goal is to generate good conversation, relate to people and get them interested — and to find out if you're interested in what they have to say. No matter how much you stumble or stammer in your initial approach, you will do 100% better than those who do nothing at all.

Avoid predictable opening lines like: "Where are you from?" OR "What do you do for a living?" OR "What do you do for fun?" Those questions are boring. You can do better than that! Find questions that would engage your interest and go from there. There's no perfect opener, so trust your instincts and do what works best for you.

Observe first, so you can get some information to use as an opening line. For example, "Great party! Did you try the cocktail/wine/beer?" If they haven't, then offer to go with them and get one.

Or try a compliment: "I love your tie/jacket/ring." Then tell them

why you like it, “It reminds me of...”

In a class or a volunteer group, it's easier to find a subject to talk about. Steer the conversation toward something personal so you don't remain in neutral forever — like, “Great night! What inspired you to join (name of event or class)?” This way you move the conversation to a more emotional connection.

Confidence always gets the girl or boy, so if you don't let fear get in the way of romance, try this great ice-breaker: “It just occurred to me that a third person wasn't going to introduce us. Hi, my name is...”

One last thought on opening lines — don't get too caught up in getting it right. When you get into a conversation with someone, unless you say something offensive right off the bat, you'll probably get to a few more sentences. Those are what will keep the conversation going.

All right! You've made contact. Now it's time to flirt.

People know within the first few minutes of interacting with you whether or not you're confident. It's all about your voice tone and body language. If you're not sure whether you project this persona, chances are you don't. So, what's one to do? These four basic skills will instantly make you irresistible:

Lesson One: Learn how to hold eye contact. Don't gawk, cold stare, or use darting eye glances. Just gently hold his or her gaze until s/he looks away. Avoiding eye contact suggests insecurity.

Lesson Two: A potential partner looks first at your attire and second at how you hold yourself. Keep your body posture in a stance that says, “I own this place.” Suck in your stomach, hold your head up, chest out, shoulders back...and generally hold



yourself like you're the most powerful person you've ever known. We know it seems a little awkward at first, but trust us, it'll work. Carry yourself with confidence and men and women will have a positive subconscious, and then conscious, reaction to you.

Lesson Three: Slow down. Confident people are not in a hurry. Fidgeting or nervous behavior shows insecurity and self-consciousness. Always project an attitude that you know what you're doing and where you're going.

Lesson Four: Speak slower, articulate your words, pause more...it creates anticipation, which is sexy. If you talk too fast and too much when you get nervous, take a deep breath, let it out slowly, and relax.

Step 3: The Flirt

It's Saturday night in a crowded bar. A man and woman are locked in conversation. She's laughing, batting her eyelashes and playing with her hair. He's standing with his head tilted slightly, leaning in toward her and occasionally touching her arm. They're performing a social ritual that's been around for more than 5,000 years — flirting.

Flirting is fun! It's an ego booster that makes you feel more attractive and desirable. Flirt with someone and they feel excited, flattered, appreciated and darn good about themselves. So indulge yourself whenever possible.

Two things are going on when you flirt. The first is the actual conversation, and the second is your body language. Flirting is an enticement and an invitation that lets the other person catch glimpses of your most attractive characteristics and behaviors. These days, it's a lost art, but it's great fun when done well.

Practice flirting with acquaintances or friends of the opposite sex

(without telling them) and see what techniques get the best response.

For those who feel clueless about where to even start, we assure you that flirting is a learned behavior. It's not only possible to pick up the basics, but with a little practice, you can perfect the art. Let's start with the flirting conversation.

Can We Talk?

Flirting is considered a meta-conversation, which means it's three or four degrees of separation from what you're really saying. There's an underlying meaning to everything that's said. You might say directly, "That's really interesting," but the underlying meaning is, "I'm interested in you." There's a lot of unspoken communication going on: suggesting without stating, eye contact, body language, nods, smiles, encouragement and perhaps the start of something big.

Some people believe flirting is teasing encouragement and expect something at the end of it. If this is you, let us set you straight: If a woman flirts with you, or you flirt with her, it's simply an opportunity for an entertaining exchange of playful banter. It doesn't mean you are guaranteed anything — not a dance, a drink, a date and especially not sex!

Flirting is all about showing interest in the other person.

So ask questions and be attentive to the answers.

Sometimes you can get caught up in the seductive aspect of flirting and find yourself stuck without a word to say. If this happens, there is a very powerful technique you can use called active listening. It's easy and will help you think of topics to discuss in any situation.

The most interesting people are usually the ones who are most



interested in others. Suppose your date (or potential date) tells you about her day and she mentions that she bought plants for her garden. You can use that to move into a fun conversation.

A Few Conversation Dos

Do be sincere. If his or her smile lights up the room, then tell them, but don't say something just for the sake of it. Insincere compliments are transparent.

Do be yourself. Whatever's on your mind and in your heart will be the most natural thing you can talk about. Remember, they'll either like you or not. If they like you, great, if not... next! Why waste time trying to get someone's approval?

Do be funny. Being light with a sense of humor helps people let their guard down, which could allow you more room to make a connection!

Do say their name a few times; it'll make them feel special. But don't say it too much, or you'll sound like you just attended a cheesy sales seminar.

Do keep it positive. Stick to your best attributes and the things you are most positive about. People become sexier as they talk excitedly and passionately about things that interest them.

Do have fun with it. It's all about play!

A Few Conversation Don'ts

Don't criticize personal choices, like wearing fur or who they voted for in the last election.

Don't dominate the conversation. It should flow back and forth like a tennis volley — you hit, they return.

Don't start talking about marriage or commitment on the first three dates.

Don't use cheesy opening lines like, "Are you an Aquarius?"

WARNING: AVOID THESE DANGER ZONES

Don't talk about politics, religion, or sex.

Don't ask them whether they want to get married on the first date. Keep it light. Nobody wants the pressure regardless of their long term goals.

Don't compliment below the neck.

Don't go overboard with the bravado. Bragging about past conquests, thinking you know more about his or her anatomy/job/family than s/he does, or trying to impress him or her with your salary and net worth will leave you solo. Confidence is alluring — cockiness is not.

Don't "self-reject." Deciding that someone is out of your league and failing to make a move will ensure you never get rejected or accepted. Why? Because you rejected yourself first!

The Language of Love

Want to know if that person you've been flirting with all night really likes you? Even if you're chatting about the weather, how people hold their bodies will tell you more than they want you to know.

Rules of Attraction:

When couples are connecting deeply, they subconsciously mimic each other's body movements (called mirroring). If she leans forward, he'll likely do the same thing. If he touches his hair, she'll flip or stroke her own without even realizing it. Even blink rates and breathing will synchronize. Check out couples who are locked in seduction mode next time you're in a restaurant or bar setting.

Signals He Sends When He's Interested

Adjusting or stroking his tie, fiddling with his collar or his hand



combing his hair.

Partly unbuttoning his shirt or loosening his tie.

Walking you through a room with his arm around the small of your back or holding your elbow.

Standing with his head cocked slightly to one side fully engaged and listening.

Signals She Sends When She's Interested

Smiles. Lots of them. If she laughs at your jokes, too, she really likes you.

Holding your gaze signals a strong sexual interest.

Licking or biting her lips or running her tongue across her front teeth draws your attention to her mouth and is intriguing.

Leaning forward and touching your arm is her way of bestowing affection on you — she's inviting you into her personal space.

She plays with her jewelry

Signals You Both Send

Accidental touches

Leaning forward

Eye contact

Smiles

Open body position

Laughing

Chivalry (pulling out the chair, opening doors)

Road-Tested Flirting Techniques

Being a skillful flirt is all about using the correct body language and the right amount of attitude. Here are 10 steps to help you perfect the art of flirting.

Make meaningful eye contact and smile. Let your eyes linger on his or her eyes while you're talking, then smile immediately

when you feel a connection.

Get interested in them and they'll get interested in you. What is it that people like to talk about most? Themselves, of course. Ask questions about where they like to go, what they like to do, who interests them, and why they do what they do and you'll be talking all night.

Deliver a compliment. Flattery may not get you everywhere, but it does open doors. Keep it sincere.

Listen attentively. Being a good listener is a potent aphrodisiac.

Tell it like it is. Being vulnerable and honest is the slam-dunk, sexiest thing a man or woman can be. Getting "real" with someone is not only easier than the pretense most people create, it also saves you unnecessary angst in the long run. Just don't get too personal, too soon.

Be enthusiastic. As a flirt, you want the person you're flirting with to feel good about you and to experience you as a fun, happy, great-to-be-with person. If you feel that you are, it shows. If you sit next to them thinking, I'm having fun, this is great, I'm so glad to be here, it is obvious to the other person too.

Draw them in. Lean forward, not because you want to show off your cleavage or your muscles, but to convey interest. Talk to them actively, showing that you like them. Then start talking more quietly and intimately. They'll need to get closer to hear you so draw them in with your voice. Guys, gauge her "personal zone" and then encroach on it just an inch. Leaning in too far can seem too forceful.

Touch him or her. The sense of touch heightens during flirting



and can actually send tingles through a person's body. Realize this power and watch for ways to use it. Once you've become comfortable, lightly brush shoulders, or touch their hand or arm if they said something funny. This can work wonders if the signals are there.

Step 4: The Proposition

You've spent the entire evening flirting with someone. You're on fire, loving life, feeling wanted and bursting to know if they share your reaction. They haven't made any moves to leave and scope out other prospects. The best way to find out if the feeling's mutual is by going on a date.

What's stopping you?

Oh... you have to ask first.

You may yet be rejected, but if you don't make a move, they'll never know how you feel. What's worse, someone else might take the plunge first and you know you'll hate yourself if that happens.

It's a dilemma. So, what should you do? You can start by briefing yourself on the following tips for popping the question:

What to Say

First, relax. Try not to view it as a date, look at asking him/her out as an invitation instead. Better still — take the pressure off by not using the “D” word altogether. Don't ask for a date and don't call it a date. It starts to get significant when that word appears, so focus on the activity and position it in the same informal way you would ask a friend.

Keep the invitation light and casual. The whole reason It's Just Lunch is the success it is today, arranging more than 50,000 first dates each month, is because we do just that.

A lunch date is low pressure — it has a beginning and an end, and both occur within an hour or so. It's easy to say goodbye, there's no goodnight kiss, no obligation, and so the pressure is off.

If you're dating through It's Just Lunch, we do the first date asking for you, so it's really easy. But if you want to ask for a second date or if you're going it alone from the start, there are a few things to keep in mind...

Here's What Not to Say

Don't ask, "You want to go out sometime?" It's too open-ended and can lead to an awkward follow-up conversation.

Don't ask, "What are you doing Friday night?" It's too vague and it might leave your potential date wondering if you're just curious about what he or she is doing on Friday night, or if you want to do something together.

Don't use a sexually suggestive line like, "I'd love to have breakfast with you. Should I call you or nudge you?" It might be funny if you see it in a book, but in the real world, it's liable to get you a speedy rejection. These types of lines don't show that you're genuinely interested in a person — they make you seem a little too slick.

What Works Best?

Before you ask, consider the following:

Be a friend first, not a potential date. If you really want to get to know someone better, the key is to relax and allow your own personality to shine through. There really is no need to be a smart-ass, or make them laugh out loud. You just need to be good company, because the more comfortable you both feel, the easier it is to recognize any chemistry between you. In short, forget the pickup lines. Show an interest in them, and they will



only be flattered.

Create an opportunity for your date. Once you know more about what that person likes to do, you can offer something. After all, a date is an invitation. If they love art, ask them to the latest big museum exhibition; if they like sports, offer tickets to a basketball game. If they enjoy wine, ask them to a wine tasting. You catch the drift.

Drop a hint. Ask about a subject and drop a hint. Say something like, “What do you like to do on the weekends?” As she responds, look for something you like to do too. If she says she loves to hike, respond with, “We should go hiking together sometime,” then move on in the conversation and ask about her favorite hiking spots.

You’ve just dropped a big hint, so let it sink in for a while. Listen carefully to his/her response and gauge her enthusiasm. If they stay upbeat and positive, ask if they would like to go hiking with you next weekend.

Keep it casual. If you feel uncomfortable saying, “Would you like to go to dinner Friday night?” try something like this:

“I am going for a ride along the boardwalk on Sunday. Would you like to go with me?” Pose the question as if you’re already going and they can join you, if interested. This will make you feel less insecure and take the pressure off them if they say no.

Be specific when asking for the date. “I’d like to take you for coffee this Thursday” is more powerful than asking if she’d like to “go out sometime.”

Of course, you could always invite the person on a group date, since that really takes the pressure off. Invite them bowling, to play volleyball, or to join a bunch of friends for a drink or to a party. As soon as you say, “A bunch of us are going to...” it takes

the pressure off. “Us” is the operative word here.

Read the situation. If you’ve hung out for a while and all the signs suggest your potential date shares your feelings, then either a) you won’t be able to keep your hands off each other, or b) you’ll be able to suggest meeting up for an evening out knowing that’s what they want, too! If that vibe isn’t happening, at the very least you’ll have made a new friend.

So remember, when you are asking someone out, plan ahead and be specific.

Know what you are going to say AND what you want to suggest doing on the date. Your prospective dates will be much more comfortable if they know exactly what you want to do.

Just try to relax and enjoy yourself. Worst case scenario — they’ll say they can’t go out. And that will bring you one step closer to someone who can. Someone who appreciates you and where the chemistry connection is reciprocated and the sparks really fly. Let’s face it, getting to that special someone inevitably means dealing with a few duds along the way. It’ll be worth it in the end.

Should She Ask?

Absolutely! It’s no longer fashionable to leave it up to the man. Most men will be flattered, impressed, and relieved if you have the courage to ask them out. These days, men appreciate women who take the initiative and go after what they want in life. Guys find confident women extremely sexy. It may seem hard to initiate a request for a date if you’re not used to it, but do it a few times and it’ll become a piece of cake.

Getting a No or Saying No

Dating is a numbers game. You may have several misses before you get a hit. Don’t take it personally or assume you did something wrong. View each rejection as bringing you one step



closer to your ideal mate.

If you're the one who isn't interested, most of all, be kind. Say something nice about them and then end it with "no, thank you."

Try not to be overly sensitive to rejection or get overly emotionally invested with the other person too soon. Either makes a rebuff become equally, if not more, painful. Simply move on!