



Carnegie Mellon University
Office for Institutional Equity
and Title IX

Navigating Dating

**In Pittsburgh and
at Carnegie Mellon
University**



institutionalequity@cmu.edu

(412) 268-7125

4615 Forbes Ave, Suite 330

Pittsburgh, PA 15213



Introduction

Everyone has different wants, needs, and values; dating is unique for every person. It is important to use clear and direct communication to ensure that all people involved feel respected and safe.

Dating



In North America, dating often involves spending time together and doing activities as a couple. Engaging in either or both of these doesn't necessarily mean you're in a committed relationship, but if you find yourself doing both, you might start asking yourself some questions about the status of your relationship.

Meeting People

Making connections can happen in various ways! You might share a class with someone you find intriguing or strike up a conversation while grabbing a meal in Tepper. Take advantage of social events on campus, connect through mutual friends, or try out some of the dating apps as a way to get to know more people.



It's always good to ask for clarification, but don't be surprised if they can't define the relationship yet.

Dating & Relationships

Understanding Motives: Cultural norms around relationships vary, so be mindful of how these differences may impact your dynamic. Cultural differences can complicate how we each interpret friendliness or what is flirting. When attempting to date someone from a different culture, it's essential to consider both your own intentions and theirs.

Time Considerations: Recognize that cultural backgrounds can influence perspectives on time and commitment. Discuss openly how cultural expectations may shape your relationship's timeline, progress and dynamics.

Questions To Consider

- What are the common norms for romantic relationships in my culture when dating someone from a different culture?
- How do I, coming from a different cultural background, approach dating when it involves interacting with someone from another culture?
- Is public display of affection, such as holding hands, touching, or kissing, generally accepted in my culture when dating?
- What social activities do I and my partner typically engage in together while dating, considering our diverse cultural backgrounds?





Red Flags



RED FLAGS are Warning Signs of potentially unhealthy or abusive behavior. While RED FLAGS may vary across cultures, the following are some behaviors that individuals in the United States tend to consider unhealthy.

Controlling

- A controlling partner restricts your actions, speech, dress, social interactions, and independence, and may demand access to your location, messages, and personal information.

Isolation

- A partner doesn't allow you to see, call, and/or text your friends or family, or makes you feel guilty when you try to socialize or talk to other people.

Lovebombing

- This is a tactic where someone exhibits intense, overwhelming affection toward you at the beginning of a relationship. This may look like requiring all of your time, expecting to communicate constantly, coordinating large public displays of affection, or buying lavish gifts.

Gaslighting

- Gaslighting is when someone manipulates you into doubting your thoughts, feelings, and reality by denying their actions, making you feel like you're overreacting, or twisting facts to make you doubt yourself.



Green Flags



GREEN FLAGS, on the other hand, are positive, healthy behaviors you want in a partner!

Respect For Boundaries

- Your partner respects your boundaries and doesn't pressure you into doing things you're uncomfortable with. They listen to your needs and they make an effort to create a safe and supportive environment for you.

Supportive Of Personal Growth

- Your partner supports your own growth, offers constructive feedback, and celebrates your successes. They respect your individual goals and are committed to helping you achieve them.

They Ask You About You

- Conversation feels equal - you both can share information about yourself and ask questions about one another, equally! Conversation doesn't feel one-sided.

Comfortable Pace

- You don't feel rushed into the relationship - they are okay taking time to get to know one another. There's no pressure or coercion to develop the relationship before someone's ready.

Fun!

- You enjoy being around this person. They make you feel good about yourself, and you feel free to be your authentic self.

US Dating Terms



The Ball Is in Someone's Court

- If the ball is in someone's court, it means it's their turn to make the next move in the relationship.

Netflix and Chill

- This phrase means to watch Netflix with a romantic prospect, with the eventual expectation of casual sexual activity.

Other phrases for dating

- Seeing someone
- They're together
- They're "a thing"
- Exclusive

Benching

- This refers to the practice of keeping a potential romantic partner on hold in case others don't work out.

Cuffing

- This is another way of saying people are committing to a relationship. Cuffing season is the period during the fall and winter holidays, from Thanksgiving to Valentine's Day, when people are more inclined to pair up in committed romantic relationships.

US Dating Terms Cont.

Sexting

- Sexting involves sending or receiving sexually explicit messages, photos, or videos through digital devices. It's important to ensure consent from both parties and be aware of privacy and legal implications.

Hook Up

- Everyone defines this differently, and it covers anything from kissing to having sex. Clarify what they specifically have in mind and ask for consent.

Ghosting

- Ghosting occurs when you're talking with someone you're interested in or have even have been on a date with, and suddenly, they stop responding or sending messages without any warning or explanation.

Friends With Benefits

- This involves having a sexual relationship with someone you are primarily friends with, without being in a romantic relationship.

Situationship

- A relationship lacking clear boundaries or commitment, often characterized by ambiguity about its nature.



When you're in a relationship, how you show Public Displays of Affection (PDA) can vary among couples. While excessive kissing might be seen as a bit unusual, it's totally normal for partners to hold hands and share embraces in public. Also, open conversations about your romantic relationship are quite common, even if you both don't necessarily view it as super serious at that point.

When interested in a relationship, anyone can ask someone out, no matter their gender identity. There are no rules about who "can" and "can't" ask someone out. However, when it comes to a date, who should pay for the meal, event, etc.? Don't hesitate to talk about it openly—it's a chance to communicate and avoid any awkward money moments!

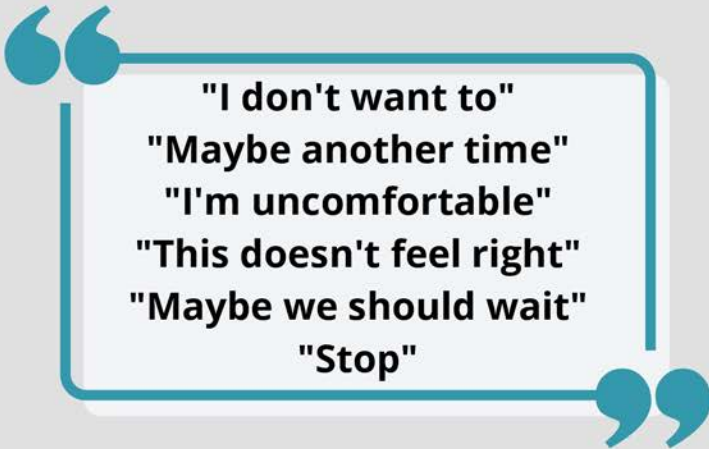


- On that first date, the talk usually revolves around light, enjoyable stuff—like where you're from, your hobbies, and quirky facts. Just be yourself!
- Figuring out the right amount and type of physical touch on a first date varies from person to person. Feel free to go at a pace that suits both of you when it comes to physical contact!

Communication & Consent

Cultural norms significantly influence how we communicate, particularly regarding sensitive topics like sex and consent. In many cultures, discussing sex is considered taboo, and conversations about consent and sexual violence may not be normalized. Moreover, discussing sex in public settings, with elders, or with authority figures can be uncomfortable for some individuals, as they may not be accustomed to it. Also, in some cultures it is considered rude to outright say "No," especially for women.

In U.S. Culture - NO means NO, but so does:



Different individuals may use various words or phrases to express boundaries instead of a straightforward "No," especially when dating someone from another culture. Additionally, some may rely on body language, like avoiding eye contact, stepping back, or crossing arms, to convey consent or discomfort. Recognize that interpretations of body language can vary across cultures.

On Campus Resources

Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion

- The Center supports and connects historically underrepresented students and those who are first in their family to attend college in a setting where students' differences and talents are appreciated and reinforced. The Center offers students support through academic and cultural programming as well as advising and mentoring. (412) 268-2150 csdi@andrew.cmu.edu | www.cmu.edu/student-diversity

Office of Disability Resources

- Provides resources and accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities. (412) 268-6121 access@andrew.cmu.edu | www.cmu.edu/education-office/disability-resources

Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS)*

- Free counseling for students, referrals to community mental health providers, and 24-hour crisis hotline. (412) 268-2922 | <https://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>

University Health Services*

- General health and wellness services, STI testing, pregnancy testing, birth control, and emergency contraception. Offers education and programming including bystander intervention and healthy relationships. (412) 268-2157 www.cmu.edu/health-services

University Police Department

- Emergency response, security, investigation and arrest, and escort to local hospitals. Offers education and programming including R.A.D. and S.A.F.E. courses. (412) 268-2323 | www.cmu.edu/police

*Confidential Resource

Off Campus Resources

Cyber Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI)

- Offers services and support to combat online abuses that threaten civil rights and civil liberties. The CCRI 24/7 Crisis Helpline provides information, guidance related to image documentation and removal, referrals to attorneys, and emotional support to victims of nonconsensual pornography, recorded sexual assault and sextortion. 1-844-878-2274 | <https://www.cybercivilrights.org/>

resolve Crisis Services

- A 24-hour, 365-day crisis service that can be used by all residents of Allegheny County. Services include crisis counseling and support, referrals and intervention services for adults, teens, and their loved ones. 24-hour Help 1-888-796-8226 Walk-In Center @ 333 N. Braddock Ave, Pgh, PA 15208 For Info & non-urgent matters: resolve@upmc.edu | (412) 864-5004

Persad Center

- Human service organization whose mission is to improve the well-being of LGBTQ & HIV/AIDS communities. Provides outreach, prevention, counseling, training and advocacy services. (412) 441-9786 | <https://www.persadcenter.org/>

Center for Victims*

- Counseling, resources, support, emergency housing, medical and legal advocacy, and a 24-hour crisis hotline for survivors of sexual & relationship violence. 1-866-644-2882 | <https://www.centerforvictims.org/>

Off Campus Resources

UPMC Magee Hospital & UPMC Mercy Hospital*

- Local hospitals that provide sexual assault medical examinations and medical care. If this is an emergency, call 911

Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR)*

- Counseling, resources, support, medical and legal advocacy, and a 24-hour crisis hotline for survivors of sexual violence. 1-866-363-7273 | <https://paar.net/>

Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh*

- Counseling, resources, support, emergency housing, medical and legal advocacy, and a 24-hour crisis hotline for survivors of relationship violence (including men). Call (412) 687-8005 | text (412) 744-8445 | <https://wcspittsburgh.org/>

*Confidential Resource

institutionalequity@cmu.edu

(412) 268-7125

4615 Forbes Ave, Suite 330

Pittsburgh, PA 15213



Carnegie Mellon University

Office for Institutional Equity
and Title IX