

## 7 Ways to Date Smarter, According to Modern Matchmakers



by HANNAH HICKOK | 111 SHARES | 2 WEEKS AGO



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When **Patti Stanger** of Bravo fame was in her “Millionaire Matchmaker” heyday (circa 2010), I rarely missed an episode, and delighted in watching it with a friends while guzzling wine and eating takeout pad thai. We got the same kick out of it that we do from the equally low-quality but highly entertaining “Bachelor” franchise—i.e. watching single people try to find love on the most public of platforms and often in the most embarrassing of ways. It’s the mildly schadenfreude experience of feeling sheepishly grateful that your own problems aren’t quite as bad as the people on the screen’s.

But even if the show itself was shallow entertainment, Stanger regularly doled out pretty solid wisdom, like “most people can’t find love because they’re picky, they overanalyze, and they find things wrong in people,” and “I don’t care who you are—if you treat women like crap... you’re out.” Basically, she was willing to say the things about dating and compatibility that are sometimes too painful or awkward to acknowledge, but almost always true—and clients and viewers alike ate it up.

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That’s the beauty of a matchmaker: They’re paid to tell us what we don’t always want to hear because their livelihood *depends* on helping single people end up in successful relationships. Hence why their advice is a lot more valuable than the nuggets you get from your friends, mom, or random aunt. In that spirit, I spoke to two matchmakers at Los Angeles-based personalized matchmaking company [Three Day Rule](#). Below, get seven of their best tips for weeding out incompatible prospects and finding someone who’s likely to be a real match.

### **Pay Attention to Energy.**

I don’t mean woo-woo energetic vibes, but actual physical energy levels. “Energy levels are really important when it comes to matching,” says **Morgan Jones**, matchmaker at Three Day Rule. “We like to match people with more ‘Treble’—or higher energy—with someone with more ‘Bass’ tendencies—or less energy.” It’s the whole opposites attract thing, plus you can balance each other out. So if you notice that one of you is peppier and chattier on dates, don’t take it as a sign of disinterest that the other person isn’t as talkative—some people enjoy sitting back and letting ‘Trebles’ make decisions and come up with ideas. Just make sure the difference isn’t *too* extreme. I know a woman who regularly runs marathons and is constantly traveling for work, while her partner can barely be bothered to exercise at the end of a long workday. That in itself isn’t a problem, but it translates to a larger energetic gap between them, one that’s been tough to navigate in the long term. Paying attention to this earlier than later could save you some time.

### **Look for Someone Who’s Emotionally Like-Minded.**

When it comes to emotional tendencies, people with contrasting styles *can* overcome their differences (read more about how [here](#)) but it’s challenging, and objectively less likely to work out than if you’re on the same emotional wavelength. “In matching, many people ask for a partner who’s compatible with them emotionally,” says **Marisa Reisel**, matchmaker at Three Day Rule. “We pay attention and ask questions in order to match two people who are like-minded in either their desires to discuss sensitive emotions right away, or who prefer to keep things light at first before delving into deeper topics.” When you’re single and looking for a serious relationship, it’s simply more efficient to try to look for people who are more emotionally like you in terms of what they like to talk about and how they share their feelings—but it doesn’t mean that if you’re super drawn to someone who’s your emotional opposite, you’re not meant to be.

### **Don’t Dive in Too Fast.**

You’ve heard it before, but take it from the pros: Taking your time when you’re dating someone new will pay off—especially if you want it to go somewhere. “Sometimes, when we’re very excited about the prospect of a new partner, we forget that building a new relationship takes time,” says Reisel. “Remember that it’s key to be patient.” So if you worry that things are moving too slowly or one of you might still be seeing other people, resist the urge to rush into a [define-the-relationship conversation](#) too early. It could backfire on you. And if you and someone you’re dating are both diving into things feet-first, don’t forget that if this is meant to go somewhere, hitting the brakes a little bit isn’t going to prevent your connection from blossoming. “I see men and women ditch their normal routines and friends for their new relationship,” says Jones. “Don’t lose yourself or your friends just because someone new is in your life.”

### **Have a Two-Date Rule.**

Sometimes it might be super-clear after a single date that you’re not attracted to someone or interested in seeing them again. But if it’s a matter of not being sure you have enough in common, or worrying that your lifestyles might not be compatible, it’s wise to give it at least one more shot, say the matchmakers. “I always recommend going on a second date, even if you didn’t think there was a spark on your first date,” says Jones. “It takes time to create chemistry with someone, and people have layers, so it takes a few dates to see their true colors.” Reisel agrees that another date never hurts. “One more hour of getting to know someone helps you determine how you feel.” And hey, if he or she isn’t a match, then you can feel good knowing that you gave the person a real shot—and move on to the next.

### **Be Open-Minded.**

Sometimes I’ll hear smart, successful single women rattling off a long list of the qualities they’re looking for in a partner: tall, attractive, athletic, successful, ambitious, funny, sweet, from a great family, et cetera... And it’s not bad to have a sense of what’s really important to you in a relationship. But you can’t control and anticipate everything that might unexpectedly work for you. I never predicted I’d end up with a guy who’s super-logical and left-brained (we couldn’t be more emotionally opposite), but there was a strong connection from the start, so I gave it a chance, and now it works. “Say yes, and smile!” says Reisel. “Being open and positive is the best strategy for having a fantastic time dating.” So even if your Bumble date is five inches shorter than he looked in his photos, have another drink and focus on whether there’s a spark. You might be surprised.

### **Listen to Your Instincts.**

It’s smart to generally [do this in life](#), but don’t forget how helpful it can be with dating, specifically. “I tell my clients and matches to acknowledge, but not to act on, first impulses, impressions, and gut instincts,” says Reisel. “These things tell us more about ourselves than our date, and it’s helpful to recognize them as personal.” For instance, do you have a feeling that a guy might be the type to ghost on you? OK—valid (plenty of them do), but realize that fear could be also be rooted in your past experiences or even your own insecurities—so don’t go dismissing your date just because he doesn’t seem like the type to commit. At least not yet. On the other hand, sometimes it pays off to defer completely to your gut feelings—especially when it comes to safety. Case in point: I once had drinks with a guy who asked me out in Starbucks. The way he first approached me was a little intense, and he had a bit of an aggressive air on our date. I googled him afterwards, and it turns out he had a very public record of angry behavior—he’d once slashed someone’s tires. (Yeah, another rule should be googling someone *before* you go out.)

### **Don’t Work Too Hard.**

Even though there can be obstacles early on when getting to know someone, they should feel like potholes in the road, not car crash-inducing bumps. In other words, it should be fairly happy and exciting—not feel like a stressful chore. “If you need to work on your relationship in the early stages, things aren’t looking good for the long term,” says Jones. “The beginning of a relationship should be fun and easy. Life only gets harder and more complicated, so make sure you’re with someone you’re truly compatible with.” When a guy shows you in the first several dates that he has an obnoxiously big ego, takes himself too seriously, or a mean sense of humor, for instance—peace the hell out. “When matching, we see that compatible partners most often share laughter and have similar goals for the future,” says Reisel. “In the early stages of dating, if you find that you are not laughing, having fun, or moving towards similar goals—those are definitely red flags.”