



Online Dating Services

Online dating services have become very popular - they match you up according to age, social status, likes, dislikes, geographic location, religious preferences, sexual orientation, etc. There are several, so you will need to ask questions about each one and see which one meets your needs.

Safety Tips

- Use a throwaway e-mail account. Sign up for a free account (Hotmail, Yahoo!, or Google, eg.) and use just that for your online dating.
- Be careful when filling out the questionnaire that the service requires. There is no need to tell them everything about yourself. Do not give your real name or your address: a nick name and your state and country will do.
- You may also be asked to include a photograph. This is not a good idea. Exchange pictures with the person you are going to meet once you have made that decision. This keeps you interesting and safe at the same time.
- You will communicate initially through emails and then progress to phone calls (be sure to block your number or use a public phone). Take your time - meeting in person should be delayed until you have gotten to know the person for a length of time, and done your homework.
- If you are seriously interested in meeting, do a background check (many good ones are offered online for a fee); or hire a private detective to do a more thorough background check.
- Bring a family member or friend with you to the meeting. Meet in a public place, where there are people around. Tell the person you are going to meet, that these are your terms for the meeting.
- Don't be afraid to say no! If someone makes you uncomfortable, document your communications and report it to the dating agency.

Resource:

[Online Dating Magazine](#) has excellent articles on safely navigating through the process of dating online.