

Making Everything Easier!™

3rd Edition

Dating

FOR

DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Safely navigate social networking and online dating sites
- Avoid common dating missteps
- Get back into the dating scene after divorce
- Deal with differences in age

Dr. Joy Browne, PhD

Nationally syndicated radio host WOR Radio



Get More and Do More at Dummies.com®



Start with **FREE** Cheat Sheets

Cheat Sheets include

- Checklists
- Charts
- Common Instructions
- And Other Good Stuff!

To access the Cheat Sheet created specifically for this book, go to
www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/dating

Get Smart at Dummies.com

Dummies.com makes your life easier with 1,000s of answers on everything from removing wallpaper to using the latest version of Windows.

Check out our

- Videos
- Illustrated Articles
- Step-by-Step Instructions

Plus, each month you can win valuable prizes by entering our Dummies.com sweepstakes.*

Want a weekly dose of Dummies? Sign up for Newsletters on

- Digital Photography
- Microsoft Windows & Office
- Personal Finance & Investing
- Health & Wellness
- Computing, iPods & Cell Phones
- eBay
- Internet
- Food, Home & Garden

Find out "HOW" at Dummies.com

*Sweepstakes not currently available in all countries; visit Dummies.com for official rules.



Dating
FOR
DUMMIES®
3RD EDITION

Dating
FOR
DUMMIES[®]
3RD EDITION

by Dr. Joy Browne, PhD



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Dating For Dummies®, 3rd Edition

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
111 River St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774
www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2011 by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana
Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, (978) 750-8400, fax (978) 646-8600. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

Trademarks: Wiley, the Wiley Publishing logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Dummies Daily, The Fun and Easy Way, Dummies.com, Making Everything Easier, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHOR MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION WARRANTIES OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE ADVICE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR EVERY SITUATION. THIS WORK IS SOLD WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLISHER IS NOT ENGAGED IN RENDERING LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. IF PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED, THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL PERSON SHOULD BE SOUGHT. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. THE FACT THAT AN ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE IS REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK AS A CITATION AND/OR A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE AUTHOR OR THE PUBLISHER ENDORSES THE INFORMATION THE ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE MAY PROVIDE OR RECOMMENDATIONS IT MAY MAKE. FURTHER, READERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT INTERNET WEBSITES LISTED IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE CHANGED OR DISAPPEARED BETWEEN WHEN THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN AND WHEN IT IS READ.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit www.wiley.com/techsupport.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010942115

ISBN: 978-0-470-89205-3

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



About the Author

Dr. Joy Browne, PhD is not only a dating guru, but also a licensed clinical psychologist who has hosted her own nationally and internationally syndicated talk show since dirt was invented. She has won numerous awards, including back-to-back female “Talk Show Host of the Year”; was nominated for the Marconi award for best talk show host; was named one of *USA Today*’s 10 most influential broadcasters; and is a member of *Vanity Fair*’s Radio Hall of Fame. The American Psychological Association has awarded her the President’s Award, and she is number 10 on the list of the 25 Greatest Radio Talk Show Hosts of all Time. She is the author of 14 books and counting. In her spare time she has appeared on everyone’s television show, including her own on CBS and Discovery Health. Dr. Joy enjoys hot air ballooning, yoga, and helping people to improve their lives. She has appeared in two Broadway shows, as well as several well-reviewed documentaries, and has made her singing debut at the Friar Club. Can Hollywood be far behind?

She’s gotten her dating experience on the front lines, by watching, listening, and doing, and is always working on a book about relationships.

Dedication

To everyone who's out there giving it the old camper's try — courage!

Author's Acknowledgments

Writing is hard, lonely work, which is why this section is so often over the top in sentiment. People who were there when you were going through the labor, saw you sweaty and cranky, and still stuck by you are much to be valued, and this group certainly qualifies.

Tami Booth was the midwife, if ever there was one. From moment one, she stayed the course, even with elements that seemed part of a cruel joke. Kathy Welton backed the project, even if it meant taking on the gods of conformity and wrestling them to the ground. Tracy Barr kept the work feasible when the effort was literally dissolving before everyone's horrified eyes, and I thank her husband and babies for sharing her with me for weeks of phone calls and faxes and really dedicated work. Mary Hogan slapped life into a project that seemed oxygen-deprived and calmed me with her willingness to help and set limits. Kevin Thornton rode in on his trusty white horse to shepherd the project to the final glory.

For this new edition, Tracy Boggier kept her eye on the project even when it gave her a headache, as is the nature of her commitment. Chrissy Guthrie made online editing fun and a whole lot less scary. Having a team that is smart and also makes you feel smart is a true blessing.

I also want to thank all my callers who've shared their tales of woe or wonder; friends and family members (you know who you are) who've called at 2 a.m. to cry or celebrate; and certainly all the guys who've made me part of the great dating experience.

If you see yourself in this book, think kindly of both of us, because, after all, when it comes to dating, we're all dummies.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

Acquisitions, Editorial, and Media Development

Project Editor: Christina Guthrie
(*Previous Editions: Tracy Barr, Alissa Schwipps*)

Acquisitions Editor: Tracy Boggier

Assistant Editor: David Lutton

Technical Editor: April Braswell

Editorial Manager: Christine Meloy Beck

Editorial Assistants: Rachelle Amick,
Jennette ElNaggar

Cover Photos: © iStockphoto.com /
aleksandar velasevic

Cartoons: Rich Tennant
(www.the5thwave.com)

Composition Services

Project Coordinator: Sheree Montgomery

Layout and Graphics: Stephanie D, Jumper

Proofreader: Toni Settle

Indexer: Cheryl Duksta

Publishing and Editorial for Consumer Dummies

Diane Graves Steele, Vice President and Publisher, Consumer Dummies

Kristin Ferguson-Wagstaffe, Product Development Director, Consumer Dummies

Ensley Eikenburg, Associate Publisher, Travel

Kelly Regan, Editorial Director, Travel

Publishing for Technology Dummies

Andy Cummings, Vice President and Publisher, Dummies Technology/General User

Composition Services

Debbie Stailey, Director of Composition Services

Contents at a Glance

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Part I: The Starring Roles: Who Am I and Whom Do I Want?</i>	11
Chapter 1: Thoroughly Modern Dating	13
Chapter 2: Being Confident.....	39
Chapter 3: Polishing Your Social Self	49
Chapter 4: Finding Out What Makes You Tick	73
Chapter 5: The Perfect Date: Person and Place	87
<i>Part II: Setting Up the Date</i>	105
Chapter 6: Asking for a Date.....	107
Chapter 7: Plotting the Perfect (Sorta) First Date	125
<i>Part III: The Big Day: Preparation and Action</i>	137
Chapter 8: Getting Your Outside Ready.....	139
Chapter 9: Getting Your Inside Ready.....	159
Chapter 10: Impressions: First and Lasting	173
Chapter 11: Having a Way Cool Time.....	187
Chapter 12: Not Having a Way Cool Time.....	207
<i>Part IV: The Day After and Beyond</i>	227
Chapter 13: The Next Day.....	229
Chapter 14: The Second Date	241
Chapter 15: To Blab or Not to Blab: Sharing Personal Info	251
Chapter 16: Speed Bumps on Life's Highway	265
Chapter 17: Getting to Serious	277
Chapter 18: Breaking Up	289
Chapter 19: Rebound.....	311
<i>Part V: Playing It Safe and Keeping It Fresh</i>	321
Chapter 20: Safety First	323
Chapter 21: Dating Sight Unseen.....	339
Chapter 22: Keeping It Fresh, Alive, and Healthy.....	345

<i>Part VI: The Part of Tens</i>	355
Chapter 23: Ten+ Do's and Don'ts of Internet Dating.....	357
Chapter 24: Ten Ways to Know You're in Love	363
Chapter 25: Ten Sexual Commandments of Dating	369
Chapter 26: Ten Ways to Make You and Your Date Miserable	375
<i>Appendix: Catch Phrases</i>	381
<i>Index</i>	385

Table of Contents

.....

<i>Introduction</i>	1
About This Book	2
Conventions Used in This Book	3
What's Not Required Reading	3
Assumptions about You	4
How This Book Is Organized	5
Part I: The Starring Roles: Who Am I and Whom Do I Want?	5
Part II: Setting Up the Date	6
Part III: The Big Day: Preparation and Action	6
Part IV: The Day After and Beyond	6
Part V: Playing It Safe and Keeping It Fresh	7
Part VI: The Part of Tens	7
Appendix	7
Icons Used in This Book	8
Where to Go from Here	8

<i>Part I: The Starring Roles: Who Am I and Whom Do I Want?</i>	11
--	-----------

Chapter 1: Thoroughly Modern Dating	13
Scoping Out the Changing Dating World	14
Speed bumps	14
Changing definitions of marriage: When and why	14
Fantasies and realities	15
Terrorism, war, and recession	16
Gadgets, gadgets everywhere!	16
Online dating	17
Instant messaging	18
Chat rooms	18
Social networking sites	18
Cell phones	19
Money matters	20
Sex	20
Safety	21
Dating in the Age of Facebook	21
Privacy versus publicity: Protection or prudery?	21
Avoiding the nostalgia trip trap	23
Computer common sense	23
Being aware of the pitfalls of "friending" a date	24
Dealing with Specialized Dating Situations	25
One of you is a lot older or younger	25
Tradition and actuarial tables	25
Sexual viability	26

Sexual compatibility	26
Health	27
Common interests.....	27
Personal preference.....	27
You're different	28
Religion.....	28
Ethnicity	29
Social status	29
Education	30
Income	30
You're gay	31
You're in a long-distance relationship	32
You're involved in an office romance.....	32
You're a single parent	33
You're dating your best friend's ex.....	34
You're dating your relative's ex.....	35
You're a senior	35
You're married	36
Keeping a Dating Notebook.....	37

Chapter 2: Being Confident 39

Handling Fear	39
Winning the Confidence Game.....	41
Appearing confident	42
Confidence on the inside	44
Confidence on the outside.....	44
Confidence builders.....	46
When you're confident enough to date.....	47
False Confidence.....	48

Chapter 3: Polishing Your Social Self 49

Self-Assessment 101	49
♥♥♥Three-Heart Ideas	51
Taking yourself off house arrest	51
Making friends	53
A friend indeed	53
Are you friend material?.....	54
♥♥Two-Heart Ideas	57
Charm practice.....	57
Reading the personals	58
Writing a personal ad for practice or real	59
♥One-Heart Ideas	62
Making a good first impression.....	62
Considering a mini-makeover	62
The wardrobe department.....	63
Mirror, mirror	64

Learning from past experiences 65
 Turning your fantasy self to reality 66
 ♥Broken Heart Ideas 69
 Comparing yourself to others 69
 Throwing pity parties 69
 Vowing never again 70
 Beating yourself up 70
 Beating up Mom 71
 Putting yourself under house arrest 71
 Whining 72

Chapter 4: Finding Out What Makes You Tick 73

Starting with Mom and Dad 74
 How Mom and Dad can still ground you 74
 Escaping parental haunting 75
 Looking for Patterns 76
 Who Am I? 77
 Describing an Ideal Match 78
 Being the real you 79
 A personal ad with no purse strings attached 80
 Figuring Out If the Time Is Right for You 82
 The wrong time 83
 The right time 85

Chapter 5: The Perfect Date: Person and Place 87

A Word about Attitude — Yours 88
 Searching for the Best Places to Meet Someone 89
 The halls of academia 90
 The people in your neighborhood 90
 Parties, vacations, and other fun stuff 91
 Grocery stores, bus stops, and other public places 92
 Spirituality and altruism — a dating duo 93
 Good sports win big 94
 Friends, relatives, and — believe it or not — exes 95
 The personals: Online and off 96
 Avoiding Certain Places like the Plague 97
 Planning a Cool Approach 99
 The eyes have it 99
 From your mouth 99
 Using what works 99
 Avoiding what doesn't work 100
 A word on compliments 100
 Admitting you're not perfect 103
 Perking up pick-up lines 103

Part II: Setting Up the Date 105**Chapter 6: Asking for a Date. 107**

Risking Rejection	108
Improving Your Odds.....	109
Never ask for a first date for a Friday or Saturday night	110
Never say, “Would you like to go out sometime?”	110
Always offer options about the date	110
Remember that timing is everything.....	111
Always go for it if you’re having a good hair (or anything else) day.....	111
The Invitation: Sending the Message	112
Knowing What to Do with the Answer You Receive	114
Dealing with a no.....	114
Getting some feedback.....	115
Asking for a Phone Number	115
You want to get in touch with the person.....	116
You want to keep your options open.....	117
You’re not interested but don’t want to be rude.....	119
Giving Your Phone Number	119
You’d like to see the person again.....	120
You’re not sure whether you’re interested	120
No way, Jose	121
Deciding whether to give out your home phone number	121
Life-saving cells	122
Phone number alternatives	123
Talking Once You’re on the Phone.....	123

Chapter 7: Plotting the Perfect (Sorta) First Date 125

Ten Rules for Planning a First Date	125
Rule 1: Pick an activity that you enjoy.....	126
Rule 2: Pick an activity that you can easily afford.....	126
Rule 3: Do something that doesn’t require new clothes.....	126
Rule 4: Go where you can talk without getting thrown out.....	127
Rule 5: Go to a place that’s easy to get to.....	127
Rule 6: Do something that isn’t competitive	127
Rule 7: Pick an activity that doesn’t involve a lot of alcohol	128
Rule 8: Leave time to get to know each other	128
Rule 9: Do something that doesn’t involve high-ticket others.....	128
Rule 10: Find an activity that doesn’t last more than a couple of hours	129
Exploring First Date Ideas	129
Good places for a first date	129
So-so ideas	131
Places and things to avoid.....	132
Doing the Restaurant Thing the Right Way.....	133
General considerations.....	133
Specific considerations.....	134
Who Pays?	135

***Part III: The Big Day: Preparation and Action* 137**

Chapter 8: Getting Your Outside Ready139

Suiting Up 141
 Dressing for real-world dates 142
 What do I look good in? 143
 What do I feel good in? 145
 Where am I going? 145
 Did I pay attention to detail? 145
 Have I figured my date into the equation? 146
 Bearing other factors in mind 147
 Putting together an emergency repair kit 148
 Cleanliness Is Next to Dateliness 148
 Don't sweat it 149
 Hair apparent 150
 D-day hygiene checklist 151
 Taking Care of Business: Practical Details before You Leave Home 152
 Time 152
 Transportation 153
 Money 154
 Directions 154
 One Final Checklist 155
 Ten Minutes to Lift-Off 156

Chapter 9: Getting Your Inside Ready159

Understanding the Psychology of Stress 159
 The stress wall 160
 Creating chaos 162
 Easing Your Mind 162
 Mind over what's-the-matter 163
 Looking at every dater's fears 164
 Relaxing into your sweet self 165
 Relaxing Your Body 166
 Step 1: Heavy breathing 166
 Step 2: Progressive relaxation 167
 Step 3: Visualization 170
 Pre-Date Affirmations: Sweet Talking to Yourself 171

Chapter 10: Impressions: First and Lasting173

Before You Begin 173
 Say What? Knowing What to Say 174
 Opening gambits 174
 Small talk 177
 Safe subjects 178
 Avoiding Taboo Topics 178
 Sex 179
 Exes 179
 Politics 179
 Religion 180

Flirting Fun	180
Interpreting Body Language.....	181
Positive signs.....	182
Negative signs	183
Mirroring.....	184
Listening Attentively and Effectively	185
Chapter 11: Having a Way Cool Time	187
Enjoying Yourself.....	187
Making the Most of the Place You Picked	188
Restaurants.....	188
Order food you eat with a fork.....	188
Don't drink	189
Eat!	190
Mind your manners.....	191
Movies or plays	192
Concerts	192
Sporting events	192
Special events.....	193
Fielding the Curve Balls	193
Surviving dating's most embarrassing moments.....	194
Lighten up.....	196
Picking Up the Check	197
Ending the Date Gracefully.....	197
Successful date.....	198
So-so date.....	198
Disaster date.....	199
The Contact Issue: Handshakes, Hugs, or Liplocks	199
Keeping your lips to yourself	200
It's in his (or her) kiss	201
The signs.....	202
Her signs.....	202
His signs	202
What about sex on the first date?	204
Post-Date.....	204
Gaining a little perspective.....	205
Chilling out.....	205
Chapter 12: Not Having a Way Cool Time	207
Your Date Hates You.....	207
Me, paranoid?.....	208
Reading the signs.....	209
Getting more info	210
No whining!.....	210
Ending on a positive note	211
Tuition for Dating 101.....	212
You Hate Your Date.....	214
Making it to the (not) bitter end	214
Avoiding blame	215

Being polite..... 216
 Proclaiming truth: Honesty is a tricky policy..... 217
 Using tact 217
 Telling the whole truth and nothing
 but the truth, sort of 218
 Handling hurt feelings 218
 Chalking it up to experience..... 219
 You Hate Each Other..... 220
 Facing facts 220
 Speed bumps 221
 Total turnoffs..... 222
 Acknowledging the moment of truth..... 223
 Exiting with style..... 223
 Reviewing expectations 224
 Starting Over 225

Part IV: The Day After and Beyond 227

Chapter 13: The Next Day 229

Second Thoughts on First Impressions 229
 After an Icky Date 230
 Paying life’s tuition 231
 Restoring your confidence..... 231
 After a So-So Date 232
 Valium for the soul 232
 All the right moves 233
 After the Perfect Date..... 234
 Testosterone versus Estrogen Central..... 235
 Nine hints for limbo and surviving the wait 237
 Men’s ten-day morphing into two-week rule 238
 Believe in fate 239
 Nix the gossip..... 240

Chapter 14: The Second Date 241

Is It Really a Second Date?..... 241
 Dates versus date-ettes..... 242
 Anatomy of a true second date..... 242
 In Between Dates One and Two 244
 Date Expectations..... 245
 Good places for a second date..... 245
 Mind over what’s-the-matter 246
 Old patterns, new people..... 247
 The First Fifteen Minutes of a Second Date..... 247
 Getting to Know You 248
 Trust or Consequences..... 249
 The Last Fifteen Minutes of a Second Date 250

Chapter 15: To Blab or Not to Blab: Sharing Personal Info	251
Volunteering Information	252
Things to tell immediately	253
Things to tell eventually	254
Things to tell before sex	256
Things to tell if asked or pushed	257
Sharing Feelings	258
Keeping Mum	260
Past sexual experiences	261
Past relationships	262
Showing Interest	262
Good questions to ask	262
The Spanish Inquisition phenomenon	263
Avoiding Pitfalls	264
Chapter 16: Speed Bumps on Life's Highway	265
Scoping Out the Four Stages of Attachment:	
The Gospel According to Dr. Joy	266
Applying the Brakes	267
Putting Off Sex	269
Baring your soul	270
Trusting your emotions	271
Not Getting Ahead of Yourself	272
Being Patient: You Can't Hurry Love	274
Chapter 17: Getting to Serious	277
Casual versus Serious versus Heavy Dating	277
Casual dating	277
Serious dating	278
Heavy dating	278
The Role of Sex in a Relationship	280
What sex isn't	280
What sex is	280
The Thing about Sex	281
Identifying the right time	282
Saying yes	284
Saying no	285
Soul Mates: Fact or Fiction?	285
Fish or Cut Bait: Relationship Evaluation	286
Chapter 18: Breaking Up	289
Decoding Warning Signs	290
Dealing with Evidence of Problems	292
Understanding the Break Up	293
Timing	293
Incompatibility	294
Hauntings by ghosts	295
Geography	296

Sex..... 296
 Money..... 296
 Friends and family 297
 Kids 297
 Work 298
 Health 299
 Substance abuse 299
 Lack of trust..... 299
 Violence..... 300
 Making Last-Ditch Efforts 300
 Apologizing 300
 Taking responsibility..... 301
 Keeping your fantasies to yourself..... 301
 Avoiding ship-sinking mistakes..... 301
 Taking time out 302
 Making a Clean Break..... 303
 Avoiding blame 303
 Don't ask why 303
 Beyond the Breakup..... 304
 Looking for patterns..... 304
 Accepting that things don't last forever 305
 Always looking forward..... 306
 Scrutinizing the details..... 307
 Spending time alone 307
 Sidestepping emotional pitfalls..... 307
 Our song..... 308
 Our place..... 308
 Being friends 308
 Pity parties 309
 Stalking 309
 Violence..... 310

Chapter 19: Rebound 311

Loosening the Ties That Bind 312
 Defining Rebound 313
 Using the Time Productively..... 314
 Waiting It Out 317
 Avoiding the Still Married, Separated, and Newly Divorced..... 319

Part V: Playing It Safe and Keeping It Fresh 321

Chapter 20: Safety First 323

Telling Somebody Where You're Going..... 324
 Getting Your Date's Name, Rank, and Serial Number 324
 Finding a Safe Haven 326
 Meeting there 326
 Meeting at your workplace or school 327
 Meeting in your 'hood 328

Taking Cash	328
Achieving Safety in Numbers	328
Paying Attention to Your Intuition	329
Intuition is	329
Intuition versus paranoia.....	330
It's okay to get the heck out	330
Date Rape.....	331
Myths and facts about date rape	332
How to protect yourself if you're a man	333
How to protect yourself if you're a woman	333
How to protect yourself from the date rape drug	334
Stalking.....	335
Looking for signs of obsession.....	336
Profile of a stalker	336
How to protect yourself from a stalker	337
Chapter 21: Dating Sight Unseen	339
Online Connections	339
Personal Ads	341
Blind Dates	343
Chapter 22: Keeping It Fresh, Alive, and Healthy	345
Send Flowers for No Reason	346
Write a Love Note.....	348
Reminisce about Your First Mutual Date	348
Share Baby Pictures and Stories	349
Give a Massage.....	349
Shampoo and Bathe Your Love	350
Clean Your Love's Place	351
Give a "Generous Soul" Gift Certificate.....	351
Plan a Mystery Date	352
Take a Hike to Someplace New	353
Part VI: The Part of Tens	355
Chapter 23: Ten+ Do's and Don'ts of Internet Dating	357
The To-Do List of Online Dating	357
Be precise	357
Make your English teacher proud	358
Keep the fibs to a minimum.....	358
Use an appropriate photo.....	359
Provide only a cell phone number.....	359
Date within a 25-mile radius	360
Meet publicly and make sure someone knows where you are	360
The Never-Do List of Online Dating.....	360
Don't stay online too long before a meeting	361
Never online date on an office computer	361
Don't get seduced in online "shopping"	362
Don't rely on humor or sexual innuendo.....	362

Chapter 24: Ten Ways to Know You're in Love	363
You Actually Want to Meet the Parents	363
You're Willing to Explain Why You Don't Want to Date Others	363
You'll Ditch Your Little Black Book.....	364
You Breathe Easier When He or She Is Around	364
You Hum Love Songs under Your Breath.....	365
You're Full of Energy.....	365
You're Willing to Go Somewhere You Hate.....	366
You're Willing to Save If You're a Spendthrift and Spend If You're Chintzy	366
The Idea of Doing Nothing Together Sounds Terrific	367
You're Willing to Risk Being Yourself	367
Chapter 25: Ten Sexual Commandments of Dating	369
Don't Get Naked Too Soon	369
No House Calls until Sex.....	370
Slow Down	370
No Sleeping Together Until You're Ready for Sex.....	371
Don't Have Unprotected Sex	371
Don't Assume Your Date Is Responsible Sexually.....	372
Beware of Back Rubs.....	372
Don't Confess	373
Don't Fake It	373
Don't Compare.....	374
Chapter 26: Ten Ways to Make You and Your Date Miserable	375
Whine	376
Blame.....	376
Compare	377
Pout	377
Holler.....	378
Swear	378
Say "You Always . . ." or "You Never . . ."	379
Complain.....	379
Be Passive.....	380
Find Fault	380
<i>Appendix: Catch Phrases</i>	381
<i>Index</i>.....	385

Introduction

Dating makes everybody feel like a dummy, whether you're 15 or 115, going out on your first date or rejoining the dating scene after your grandkids have started dating. "It's still the same old story" — as sung by Dooley Wilson (or as you probably know him, Sam) in *Casablanca* — "a search for love and glory," and there really *are* some fundamental things that do apply. I lay them all out for you, not so that you can be a stud muffin or the hottest kid on the block, but so that you can understand a bit more about yourself, your date to be, and the whole process. Then maybe the old palms will sweat less, and believe it or not, you may actually have some fun.

After all, dating should be fun. It's not like your whole life or livelihood depends on one date or several dates. The purpose of dating is simple: getting to know someone and letting that person get to know you so that you can decide whether you're interested in spending any more time together. Nothing more, nothing less. Put aside the notion that you're looking for a mate or a one-night stand or someone to please your mom. You're just dating so that you can get to know somebody a bit and let him or her get to know you.

So what are the ironclad follow-these-steps-and-you'll-never-fail, step-on-a-crack-and-you'll-break-your-mother's-back rules of dating? They don't exist. There are some guidelines, suggestions, and observations, but this whole experience is a bit free form since you're unique and so is everyone you'll ever date. So this book is about helping you understand who you are and what you want — some commonly held assumptions, traits, and perils that will allow you to be exactly the person you are. That way, if you're having fun and your date is having fun, you're going to want to do it again.

So why such sweaty palms if this is supposed to be fun? Men and women have been getting together for thousands of years after all. No, it's not because you're the nerd of the universe and everybody else is way cool. It's because the way people date — their expectations and assumptions and goals — have changed with the times.

Adam and Eve were the original blind date (and we know who fixed them up). It's been a lot rockier ever since (ever wonder who Cain and Abel dated?). In the caves, dating was mostly about who had the biggest club (no, not that club) and could carry off the choice woman. I don't think flowers and candy played a very big part. A few eons passed, and we moved from caves and plains to hamlets to villages to towns to cities, and our courting rituals evolved, but still dating really wasn't allowed. Marriages were arranged by families for political and economic reasons. Not only did women have no say, but neither did the men.

Today, not only do we get to pick who we want to marry (at least in this country), but we get to audition them, which brings us to dating. In its purest form, dating is auditioning for mating (and auditioning means we may or may not get the part). Not only has dating gotten complicated (women can ask guys out), but mating has gotten really complicated as well. And then there's romance, truly *the* plague of the 21st century. Romance has made expectations completely unrealistic.

With dating, we're talking individual style — you and your little quirks, which are going to change over time and from person to person, at least a bit. You're going to be a slightly different soul depending on whether you're going out with somebody you met at a bus stop, your best friend's little sister, or your mom's law partner's nephew. So don't go for somebody else's style. If you're determined to mimic your incredibly cool friend, adapt the moves to your style and your partner. The key is to stay light on your feet, be willing to improvise, and believe down to the bottom of your shapely toes that your style is the one that's right for you. (And if it hasn't worked so well in the past, this book can help you figure out why and what you need to do to fine-tune your style so that you're cookin'.)

Before you find yourself hyperventilating over the prospect of dating, remember that there is no single, right way to date or to ask somebody out. And there is no such thing as a perfect experience that will make someone fall madly and passionately in love with you. A date is a unicorn, an imaginary beast that is unique in every situation. But not to worry: This book helps you get it all sorted out so that you can feel like you know what you're doing, have some sense of direction and some idea of what your date is doing and thinking, and even have some fun.

About This Book

Lots of books have been written about how to be the perfect date — how to mold yourself into a package that no one of the opposite sex will be able to resist. *I want you to resist this notion strenuously.* Think about it for a minute: If you pretend to be a stud muffin or a Barbie doll or a pretty woman or a man in black and that's not the real you, and if your date *likes* what you're pretending to be, you have to continue pretending endlessly or, when the real you emerges, the deal is blown. Even if you decide to be your best possible self, are you going to be able to maintain that posture endlessly? If not, when you let yourself unwind you may find your date hurt, angry, and confused about how you presented yourself initially and who you are now. The whole thing about dating is maintainability.

I wrote this book to be about *real-life* dating:

- ✓ In this book, I tell you where to find members of the opposite sex, explain the difference between good and bad pick-up lines, give you

pointers on what to wear and what to avoid, describe the perfect place to begin scouting for the perfect date and the perfect date place, and offer a lot of other information, including how much happier you'll be if you don't worry about the "perfect" anything. After all, a little imperfection makes the world go round.

- ✓ The time frame of this book spans from the time you decide you want to date (or date smarter) until six to nine months after your first date, which is the watershed period: the time when most daters either break up, which means they go back to the beginning, or go on to couplehood. That's a fair amount of leeway, and it depends on lots of factors that I discuss in the chapters that follow.

Dating stops when couplehood begins; relationships deal with commitment and the M word (marriage) and cheating and money and parents and babies and all that sort of stuff.

Remember: The nice thing about a date is that *it's just a date*. It's an opportunity, a time, a place, and a situation for one person to get to know another person. It's not an invitation for sex or marriage or to meet Mom or to find someone to produce a child with or to impress your friends or to get your folks off your back or to prove that you're not a loner. Dating is no big deal. But it can feel really, really scary because it has to do with big-ticket items: the opposite sex and rejection. Yikes! I don't promise to take all the adrenaline out of dating 'cause that would also remove the fun, but at least I can try to smooth out some of the panic and show you why your palms are sweating and the origin of those tummy butterflies so you can enjoy the ride.

Conventions Used in This Book

The following conventions are used throughout the text to make things consistent and easy to understand:

- ✓ All Web addresses appear in `monofont`.
- ✓ New terms appear in *italic* and are closely followed by an easy-to-understand definition.
- ✓ **Bold** is used to highlight the action parts of numbered steps.

What's Not Required Reading

I've written this book so that you can 1) find information easily and 2) easily understand what you find. And although I'd like to believe that you want to pore over every last word between the two yellow and black covers, I actually make it easy for you to identify "skippable" material. This information

is the stuff that, although interesting and related to the topic at hand, isn't essential for you to know. (That means no pop quiz, but I did go to a lot of trouble to write it, so I hope you read every word. If you don't, okay — sniff, sniff —whatever makes you happy.)

- ✔ **Text in sidebars:** The sidebars are the shaded boxes that appear here and there. They share cool ideas, personal stories, and observations, but aren't critical.
- ✔ **Text next to the biology icon:** I went to medical school; I love mind-body connections. Realistically, technically you don't have to read this stuff, but I love it and hope you will too.
- ✔ **The stuff on the copyright page:** No kidding. You'll find nothing here of interest unless you're inexplicably enamored by legal language and Library of Congress numbers. Even I have been known to bypass this stuff after being sure my name is spelled correctly.

Assumptions about You

In writing this book, I made some assumptions about you:

- ✔ **You are straight, that is, heterosexual:** Statistically, most people are heterosexual, and my goal is to reach the widest audience. Also, many of the issues between opposite-sex dating and same-sex dating are similar, and most are identical. If you find something that I've overlooked, write and tell me what works and what doesn't for you at www.drjoy.com. You can also see current pictures of me there, find out where and when to hear or see me on the radio and television, get my take on current movies and theatre, and see if I've written anything new that might interest you.
- ✔ **You are above the age of consent:** This book is a grown-up look at a subject that involves us from childhood, so in reading it, remember that when it comes to the sexual parts, I want you over the age of consent — 18, in most cases. Sex is for adult, responsible folk. If you're a minor, read the stuff about sex as something you're going to do someday, but not now (and when you do, take it seriously and respectfully); the rest of the stuff should be pretty useful to you now.
- ✔ **You are dating in the United States:** Because dating customs vary widely in different parts of the world, writing a book on dating worldwide is a whole different project. As an anthropologist (yeah, I have degrees in just about everything), I, too, am fascinated by cross-cultural stuff. This book focuses on what I know best: U.S. dating customs. If you are not from the United States, consider this book as a sort of insider's guide to American dating practices, a kind of roundabout way to see how dating in the United States works.

- ✔ **You are not a predator:** You genuinely care about yourself as well as others and getting to know another human being in an intimate and meaningful way.
- ✔ **You wish this book came in a plain brown wrapper:** If anybody sees you with it, you say you're buying it for a friend or you heard my radio program and bought it for a giggle. Even my daughter has been tempted to disown me when a date sees my book in her bookcase.

How This Book Is Organized

I organized this book so that you can find information easily, whether you're using it like a reference or reading it front to back. I've divided it into six parts, each part containing chapters relevant to that specific topic. In addition, I've included an appendix of terms and meanings because I think they're useful but not worth a whole chapter.

Part I: The Starring Roles: Who Am I and Whom Do I Want?

Any successful dating experience starts with you; that's why the focus in Part I is *you* — getting you ready to begin the glorious adventure of dating. In this part, I give you pointers on being confident, even if confidence is the last thing you feel; getting yourself ready to venture forth into the dating world; and uncovering some of the less than helpful patterns you may have fallen into so that you can be aware and active and can take more control of your behavior. Also in this part, I help you figure out whether now is a good time to begin dating or not.

If you're new to dating, have been away from the dating scene for a while, or aren't happy with the way your dates have been turning out lately, this part is where you want to begin. Even if you read only this part, you'll still find tons of good information about being a happier and emotionally healthier person.

After you figure yourself out, the next item on the agenda is figuring out who you want, where you can find that person, and how you can make your approach so that you two can get together. I give you the lowdown on great places to meet a potential date and pointers on how to approach Mr. or Ms. Intriguing once you do find them.

Making the initial approach is probably one of the toughest parts of meeting someone new — will he like me? Will she turn away? Will I make a fool of myself? I share tips on what works, what doesn't work, and how you can maneuver gracefully through the encounter, no matter how it turns out.

Part II: Setting Up the Date

You've met someone, you think you two click, and now you're at the next step: setting up a date. In Part II, you can find surefire tips on how to ask for a date so that you get the answer you want or, if the answer is no, so that you can bow out gracefully with your dignity intact. I also tell you how to deal with the potentially sticky situation of getting (or giving out) a phone number, and what to look for in the place you pick for the date.

Part III: The Big Day: Preparation and Action

It's date day. You're probably feeling anxious, excited, hopeful, giddy, and a little queasy. This part takes you through getting ready, from the outside to the inside to the last-minute things you do. In this part, I give pointers on everything from what to wear (and what not to wear) to the things you should carry out the door with you to how you can relax and prepare yourself mentally for a great time.

In this part, I also give you the information you need to make it over the first (generally awkward) minutes of a first date: things like what to talk about and what to avoid, how to flirt, how to listen, and how to gauge how things are going by being aware of body language.

Also in this part, you can find information dealing with just about every scenario you may encounter on a first date. I cover how you can turn an ordinary date into something extraordinary and how you can turn that great time into date number two. I also give pointers on how to navigate through potentially embarrassing or awkward moments, how to end the date, how to deal with the kiss questions (do you or don't you and how can you tell whether your date wants to, and even how to), and how to step back after it's over and gain a sense of perspective on the evening.

Since not all dates go wonderfully, I explain how to read the signs of a date going south, and how to handle those not-so-great dates so that you come out looking like the prince or princess you are.

Part IV: The Day After and Beyond

Every date — good, bad, or indifferent — has a day after, and in this part, you can find out how to handle the next day, the next date, and everything that can potentially come after. I also list what things you need to share (and what things you must keep quiet) if your date is turning into a relationship-to-be and when you should share them. I explain the differences between casual, serious,