Ten Tips for Online Dating Safety by James Lawrie

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Safety first is an essential principle when it comes to online dating. Dating site users should remember that the vast majority of people in all walks of life are decent and have honorable intentions. Nonetheless there is always that small minority of people with bad intentions. Donâ€™t let then spoil your experience of dating sites but do be alert and follow our ten simple steps to protect yourself.

1) Keep your computer safe and if someone sends you a data or picture file then scan it for viruses.

2) Donâ€™t post personal data that might compromise you safety in your online dating site profile.

3) Use a reputable site. There are many sites to choose from. Check to see if they have an active policy of deleting the profiles of scammers and potential predators. Of course that doesnâ€™t mean the dating site owners will root out every fake profile or ill-intentioned member but it should mean a safer and more pleasant experience.

4) Research all the usual scams and donâ€™t be too naÃ¯ve. If a proposition sounds too good to be true then it probably is. If someone 20 years younger with a beautiful model like photo expresses early undying love for you then the alarm bells should ring. Requests for money should also be an early warning sign.

5) Do chat to your potential dating partner over the â€˜phone, in Skype or Yahoo before meeting to see if they are who they depict themselves to be in their profile. Follow your intuition and if something does not feel right then maybe you are quite right to be wary.

6) Always meet in a public place and tell a friend or family member where you are going and the time you will be returning.

7) Take you mobile phone with you and ask a friend to call you in the middle of the date. If it is not going well and you feel uneasy this provides the perfect opportunity for you say something has cropped up and you can give your excuses and leave.

8) Donâ€™t be shy to bring along a friend to a first date.

9) Watch your drink closely and donâ€™t give any opportunity for anyone to slip something into it.

10) Be assertive, if your date on the first meeting asks you to go for a drive or somewhere out of your comfort zone you can and should say no thank-you.

Online dating is the modern and ideal way for people from all walks of life to meet dating partners or even their soulmate. It can and should be fun but stay alert to the minority who can spoil it. Trust your gut instinct and use common sense at all times.

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James Lawrie - About Author:
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