

Looking for an online date?

Hang on, just wait ...

We love that online dating is so convenient and gives you the choice of dates around the world. But we'd also very much like you to do it safely and securely, and not fall for any of the hazards which can trip you up if you don't follow a few simple precautions.

That's why we've put together a set of expert tips to help you protect yourself, your finances, your identity and your personal safety.

Make sure you read them before you next go online to find love.
Visit www.getsafeonline.org/datesafe
#datesafe

www.getsafeonline.org

west sussex county council

Hang on, just wait... and read these tips from Get Safe Online, in partnership with WSCC, to make sure your online dating is safe and secure

If you're online dating, you're joining millions of people around the world who are looking for anything from a fun, arms-length relationship to a lifelong partnership. You can search for and chat with your date while you're on the bus, in the supermarket or walking the dog. With all the choice in the world ... literally.

We love that online dating brings you so much convenience and choice of dates. But we'd also very much like you to do it safely and securely, and not fall for any of the hazards which, unfortunately, can trip you up if you don't follow a few simple precautions.

That's why our experts have put together a set of tips to help you protect yourself, your finances, your identity and your personal safety.

- Pick a reputable dating service and don't move the conversation away from the website or app's messaging service until you're confident the person is who they say they are, and that their motives are honourable.
- Check that the person is genuine by putting their name, profile pictures or any repeatedly used phrases and the term 'dating scam', 'romance scam' or 'catfish' into your search engine. Do a reverse image search to see if the photo is actually of somebody else.

- Get to know the person, not the profile. Ask plenty of questions, don't let your heart rule your head and don't rush into anything. This may also help you avoid becoming a victim of a false relationship where you're simply being used for sex.
- Never send money, your bank details or other passwords to someone you've met online, no matter how convincing the reason they give for needing it, nor how long you've been speaking to them. Banks usually do their best to track and recover your payment, but aren't responsible for your losses if the request is fraudulent.
- Don't overshare personal details. Revealing your full name, date of birth, home address or workplace could lead to fraud, identity theft or even personal harm. Protect the names, details and locations of your children and family members.
- Be wary about sending intimate images or videos of yourself to someone you've met online. This could lead to problems later on, and you can never be sure who will get to view the content.
- Be wary of anyone you meet online who tells you not to mention them to your friends and family. Fraudsters and sexual predators work by isolating their victims.
- Before meeting someone in person for the first time, tell a friend or family member that you're meeting, and where. Keep your mobile phone switched on, and think about arranging for someone to call you during the date to give you the opportunity to make your excuses and leave early.
- Exercise digital responsibility: don't use dating services to ask for money, promote products, encourage illegal or irresponsible behaviour, spread ideologies or carry out recruitment of any kind.
- If you become a victim of romance fraud, don't be embarrassed but report it immediately to Action Fraud on www.actionfraud.police.uk or on 0300 123 2040 - as well as the dating site where you met the perpetrator. Report any assaults to the police.

Resources:

For more advice visit <https://www.getsafeonline.org> .

Have you signed up to WSCC's Staying Safe Online E-newsletter? To do so, click here (https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKWSCC/subscriber/new?topic_id=UKWSCC_120) Simply enter your email address on the following page, and subscribe to 'Staying Safe Online' in the 'E-newsletter' section.

If you're interested in joining Neighbourhood Watch, or want to find out more, visit www.sussexnwfed.org.uk or send an email to enquiries@sussexnwfed.org.uk.