



EnglishLive



THE EF ENGLISH LIVE GUIDE TO:

Dating in English



TOP TIPS

*For making the
right impression*

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INTRODUCTION

*Real English for dating
and relationships*



Arranging a first date can be a daunting experience at the best of times. There are so many ‘what if?’ questions involved:

*What if my date doesn't like me?
What if I choose an awful restaurant or movie? What if we have nothing to say to one another?*

When people consider the last question and then add a language barrier into the equation, they're understandably tempted to expect the worst.

However, dating an English speaker can be one of the most enriching and inspiring ways to gain confidence with the language.

Speaking perfect English is not the most important thing to think about on a first date. It's all about making a good impression overall; and that's just as much about making the right decisions, giving the right signals and asking the right sort of questions, as it is about flawless verbal communication.



PART 1

ASKING SOMEONE OUT ON A DATE

*How to make the
first move*



HOW TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE

Don't worry about saying the wrong thing or your prospective date might end up worrying too!

Just stick to the following:

- Try to maintain an air of confidence throughout the exchange without appearing arrogant.
- Formulate an ideal plan in your mind so you don't flounder on the details.
- Don't just ask the question out of the blue. Engage the other person in pleasant conversation first to ensure a comfortable atmosphere.
- ***Remember: don't worry.***
The worst he or she can do is refuse your offer and neither of you should feel embarrassed about that.



TOP TIPS

When asking someone out

**Stay calm, relaxed
and approachable**



A FEW USEFUL PHRASES

When the time is right, here are a few great ways to ask someone special out on a date:

I wondered if you might like to go for a meal / to the cinema / to the theatre with me?

Are you free next Friday / Saturday?

Which night would suit you best?

Do you like [type of food]? There's a place I love and I think you will too.



STAY POSITIVE AND BE YOURSELF



A FEW USEFUL PHRASES

I was thinking we could go and see [name of film/play].

But if you'd rather see something else, that's no problem.

Would like me to pick you up around 8 – or is that too early?

Great – I'm looking forward to it!

If you're picking your date up, make sure you've got his or her phone number and address details correct.



IMPORTANT

Swap telephone numbers

**So you can get in contact
if plans change**



PART 2

BOOKING THE RESTAURANT

*How to arrange a
memorable meal*



HOW TO ARRANGE A MEMORABLE MEAL

Most first dates involve going out for a meal. Once you've checked that your date is happy with your selection (or has made an alternative suggestion), give the restaurant a call with plenty of notice to ensure the best possible table.

You might need the following questions:

Can I book a table for two people on [date], please?

Is there a table available at 8 o'clock?

And if there isn't one:

When is the nearest availability?

Is it possible to have a table on the balcony / by the window / near the back?

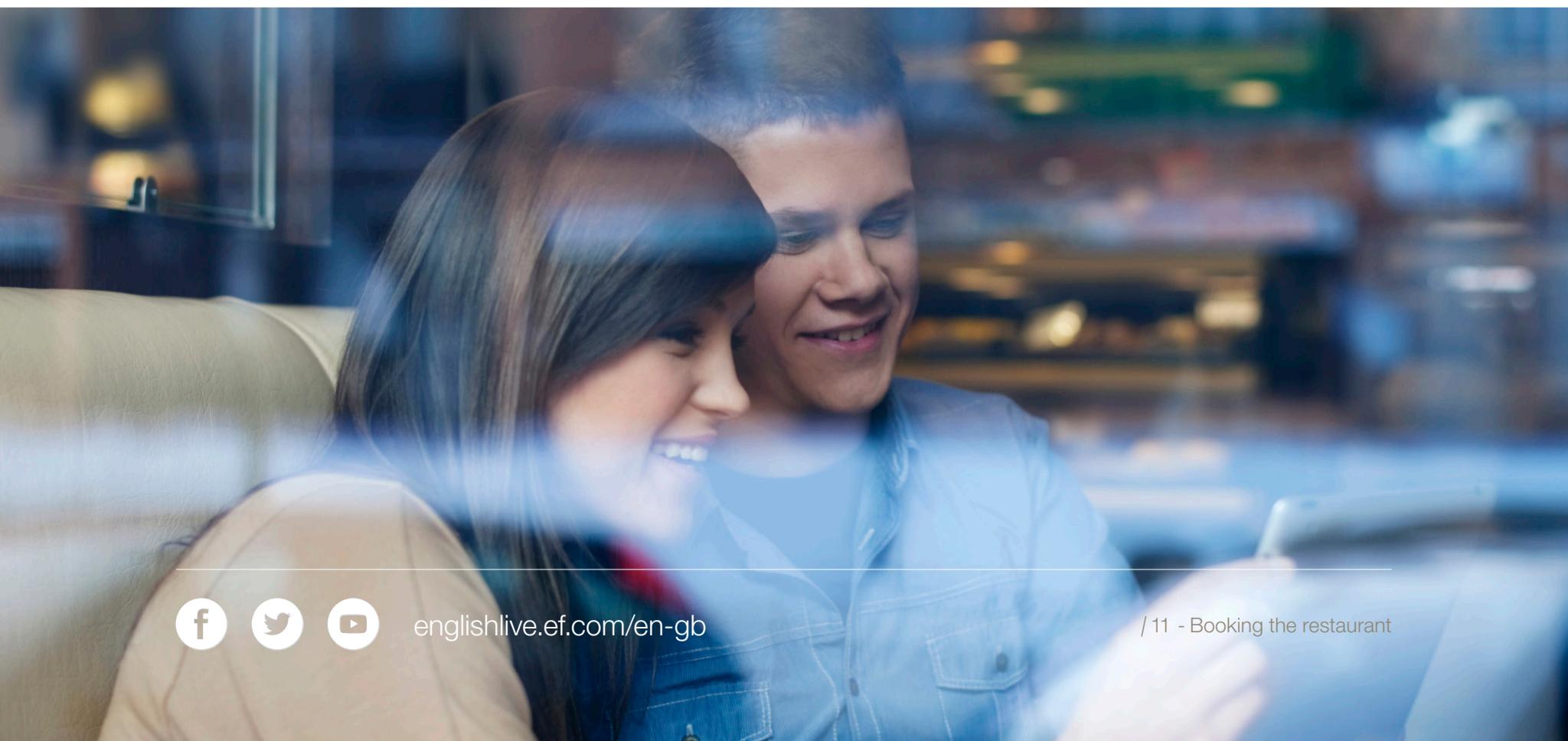
HOW TO ARRANGE A MEMORABLE MEAL

***If you're unfamiliar with the restaurant,
you might want to ask:***

Do you have a dress code?

Do you serve wine or should I bring my own bottle?

Can I request a non-smoking table, please?





PART 3

ARRIVING AND ORDERING

*Etiquette and
essential phrases*



ETIQUETTE AND ESSENTIAL PHRASES

There can be more to remember if you're the male in the couple. However, this gentlemanly etiquette is common in many cultures around the world.

Men may want to consider the following polite gestures:

- ★ Open any doors for the lady.
- ★ Ask if you can help her out of her coat (assuming a waiter or waitress hasn't done this).
- ★ Ensure she is seated and push her chair towards the table if necessary.
- ★ Allow her to order her food or drink before you, and to choose the wine if she desires.
- ★ Offer to pay. This is especially polite if you chose the restaurant. It's acceptable to split the bill but only if the lady insists.



TOP TIPS FOR MEN

How to act in a restaurant

Be a gentleman!

ETIQUETTE AND ESSENTIAL PHRASES

Keeping all these basic rules in mind, both of you can concentrate on the important matter of choosing your food. The below phrases may help:

At the table...

Can we see the menu / wine list, please?

What dish / wine would you recommend?

Can we have five minutes to decide, please?

Do you serve any vegetarian food?

Is it possible to have this dish without fries / mayonnaise / mushrooms?



REMEMBER THESE SIMPLE PHRASES TO
HELP AVOID ANY EMBARRASSMENT

ETIQUETTE AND ESSENTIAL PHRASES

Can we have some salt / pepper / vinegar / mustard, please?

Can we order desserts / coffee, please?

At the end...

Can we have the bill, please?

Do you accept credit cards?

The food / wine was delicious, thank you!





PART 4

MAKING CONVERSATION

*Ask plenty of questions
and listen carefully*



ASK PLENTY OF QUESTIONS AND LISTEN CAREFULLY

Understandably, this is the aspect of the date that causes most concern, particularly for non-native English speakers.

The best advice is to ask plenty of questions and listen carefully to each answer. If you don't understand something, be sure to speak up. This will not only improve your English, but also your understanding of the person sitting opposite you.

You can also demonstrate your understanding by saying things like:

I see what you mean.

That's very true.

That's interesting.

You have a good point there.

Do you really think so?

I never thought about it that way before.

ASK PLENTY OF QUESTIONS AND LISTEN CAREFULLY

The following questions are great conversation starters. Use them to help you get to know your companion better.

Have you always lived in [place name]?

Why / when did you move here?

**Have you been to [your country]? What did you think?
Where else have you travelled to?**

What did you do during the day today?

What do you normally do at weekends?

You can follow this up by asking:

If cinema:

What are your favourite films?

Or if sport:

What team do you support?

Who is your favourite player?





ASK PLENTY OF QUESTIONS AND LISTEN CAREFULLY

A few other conversation starters can be:

Are most of your friends from work / university?

Tell me a bit more about what you do.

How are you finding the food here?

What do you normally like to eat?

Have you tried [food type] before?

What have you got planned for next week?



PART 5

PARTING WAYS

Key phrases to end your date on the right note



KEY PHRASES TO END YOUR DATE ON THE RIGHT NOTE

You'll probably get a strong sense throughout the first date if a second date is likely. However, the last question you ask is an important one.

Asking the correct question will help you know whether or not your date is keen to see you again.

To find out for sure, some of the following phrases might prove handy:

I had a lovely time tonight. Have you?

We should try one of your favourite restaurants another time.

Maybe you'd like to go to the cinema sometime during the week?

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