52 First Dates



A Plural Dating Game

By the Spindrift Crew

52 First Dates

52 First Dates is a rules-light tabletop roleplaying game for 4 or more players about going on 52 blind dates while plural.

Well. You probably won't play out 52 dates in one session (or even ever)! More likely you'll just play out a few, either a pre-arranged number or until the players agree they've enjoyed playing and are ready to stop.

What You Need

Okay, you need to get the following together:

- · At least three players; preferably four to six, and usually no more than eight
- Two decks of standard poker cards; they should have different backs
- One copy of the System Sheet
- One copy of the Outside Interference Sheet
- One Date Sheet per player
- One Headmate Sheet per player
- · One Game Reference Sheet per player
- Pencils
- · optional, but recommended Extra paper for notetaking

The Purpose of 52 First Dates

This game attempts to do four things at once. It's up to you, the players, to determine if it succeeds at any of those. The four goals are to be a game that:

- 1. Has multiple players playing the same character
- 2. Educates about plural systems
- 3. Functions as an interesting dating sim
- 4. Is actually fun to play

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Game Design Philosophy

Our take on indie game design¹ is that of an ongoing conversation where a number of different voices weave in and out with their contributions that answer the question, "What *is* a roleplaying game? What *can* a roleplaying game *be*?"

All of our games are made with that in mind: this is our part in the conversation, right here, right now. We may have more to add later, but this is what we want to say now.

Very few concepts in the game are *completely* new. For example, card-based games have long been a part of the hobby, to varying degrees of success. Romance/dating sim tabletop RPGs aren't as common, but they're out there – most notably by Emily Care Boss in her *Romance Trilogy*.

Games where many players run the same character are even more rare; and I don't know of any that address it from the standpoint of a plural, shared character. If you do, let me know!

But just as nobody invents all the words they speak, the magic isn't in the parts you use but how you assemble them – or even beyond that, in what you *actually* say with those words.

Hopefully we'll be able to communicate our message to you as you play 52 First Dates!

A System Introduction

Like many tabletop roleplaying games, 52 First Dates is a collaboration between a group of people. Unlike many, that group are all in the same body.

Hello! We're the Spindrift Crew!

This is a departure from the way we normally write TTRPGs, which is to try and maintain a consistent voice throughout. We're purposely doing things differently for 52 First Dates because we think it's important for this game, and thematically sound.

Rather than interjecting comments into the flow of the text, we decided to use sidenotes in the gutters, each signed with an emoji so you know you who's speaking.

1. Dera totally wrote this section, she's so wordy

No Fascists

If you're a fascist, you're not welcome to play this game. It's against the rules. ²

If you're reading this and thinking, "You just call everyone you disagree with a fascist," then you're probably a fascist, or incapable of drawing inferences from context and acknowledging a dangerous political climate that causes the oppressed to be hyperbolic.

Don't play this game. Heal yourself. Grow. Learn. Watch some Mister Roger's Neighborhood or something.

This is who we are:

- Oadera Spindrift, primary fronter and project coordinator (she/her)
- ➤ Dera, our analytical headmate and game mechanics wonk (she/her)
- Carline Stone, social justice druid and in-house sensitivity reader (she/her)
- 🌹 Aura, flirty lesbian disaster (she/her)
- Valorie, generally quiet protector (she/her)
- who doesn't speak or write except in emojis; not a fox (fae/him/it/them)

Credits

52 First Dates was created by Cadera Spindrift ^{3 4} as part of the Otherships Jam 3 hosted by Metaparadox.

The contents of the game are covered by the *Anti-Capitalist Attribution Cooperative License*, written by Takuma Okada]{.spin}; a copy of which can be found at the end of the rules.

Cover image from Wikimedia Commons, licensed under CreativeCommons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0).

No Fascists rule by Olivia Hill, licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike 4.0.

"More Than One: A Plural 101" by anonymous at MoreThanOne.info; used under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license. (Retrieved June 20, 2021.)

- 2. No, really, we mean it. This isn't for fascists.
- 3. You might notice that there's a lot of the game manual that we didn't write ourselves such as the TTRPG Safety Toolkit, More Than One, the definitions in the Lexicon, and the Anti-Capitalist Attribution Cooperative License. This wasn't to save time or to increase the page count, but because we think these are important topics, and we doubt we could do them justice ourselves. 5
- 4. Aura, you can't put a footnote on a footnote.⁶
- 5. see, I told you she's wordy! \$\\\\\$6. oh, yeah? just watch me! \$\\\\\$

The TTRPG Safety Toolkit is a resource co-curated by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk. The TTRPG Safety Toolkit is a compilation of safety tools that have been designed by members of the tabletop roleplaying games community for use by players and GMs at the table. You can find it at bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit. Specific items in the toolkit are credited as follows:

- The TTRPG Safety Toolkit Quick Reference Guide was created by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk
- · Lines and Veils were designed by Ron Edwards
- The X card was designed by John Stavropoulos
- The O card was designed by Kira Magrann
- The N card was designed by Mysty Vander and Adam Cleaver, based on the Support Flower by Taylor Stokes
- The Script Change RPG Toolbox was designed by Beau Jágr Sheldon
- The Luxton Technique was originally written by P.H.Lee and reposted by Beau Jágr Sheldon
- The Open Door was designed by Eirik Fatland
- · Stars and Wishes was designed by Lu Quade

Definitions in the Lexicon are adapted from Pluralpedia, the collaborative plurality dictionary. and are used under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported license. (Retrieved 2021-06-20)



Instead of dice like many tabletop roleplaying games, 52 First Dates uses playing cards.

Game Mechanics

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Choosing a Player

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Playing a Card

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Suit	Positive Uses	Negative Uses
Clubs	Direct and clear	Blunt and tactless
Diamonds	Flirty and coy	Evasive and guarded
Hearts	Earnest and heartfelt	Thoughtless and inconsiderate
Spades	Clever and witty	Mocking and hurtful

Ending a Date

A date ends when the cards match one of these:

Cards



Matching a Color

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Testing a Quality

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Part 1: The Set-Up

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Game Safely

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The Meaning of Intimacy

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Setting and Themes

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Creating the System

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gravida metus, at vestibulum erat augue vel ante.

- 1. Name
- 2. Appearance -> one per player
- 3. Pronouns?

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Gender and Sexuality

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Neurodiversity, Race, and Disability

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Creating the Headmates

Once you've created the System, you need to create Headmates.

- 1. Write down a name or nickname for the headmate.
- 2. Write down pronouns for the headmate.
- 3. Write down a sexuality for the headmate.
- 4. Write down something that interests the headmate.
- 5. Write down the general demeanor or personality of the headmate.
- 6. Write down one quality the headmate is looking for in a potential partner.
- 7. Introduce us to this headmate.

Part 2: Date Night

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Determining Roles

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Setting the Scene

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Creating the Date Character

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Personality Cards

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Playing as the Date

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Playing the Fronter

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Switching Fronters

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Playing the Outside Interference

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Named NPCs

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Recurring NPCs

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I Just Met You and This Song is Ableist

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When the Date Ends

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Date-Ending Events

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Achieving Intimacy

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- 7. The title of that song is ableist.
 8. Oh c'mon Carline, you know it's a joke ♥
 9. ... an ableist joke.
 10. She's right, you know.
 11. write what is right?
- 11. wait, *who* is right? ♥
 12. Not you. ★
 13. :p ♥

13

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A Second Date

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Getting Ghosted

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Playing Another Round

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The Second Date

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Despite the name of the game, it's entirely possible to get a second date. If the Date didn't ghost you, and the players reach consensus on going out again, play a second date (amd all subsequent dates) with these changes:

- Switch Roles Select a new player to play the Date role, from the
 players who didn't play the Date. Then select another player to
 play the Outside Interference who hasn't played the Outside
 Interference in this game.
- Keep the Date's Personality Cards You don't have to remove them
 from the Date Deck, just note them down on the on the Second
 Date part of the Date Sheet. These serve as guidelines for
 roleplaying as the Date.
- Draw Two More Personality Cards for the DAte In a second date, you're usually going to be past the initial awkwardness, and you can find out there's more to your date than you original assumed.
- Decide What Happened Between Dates Lorem ipsum dolor sit
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Going Steady

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If the Date is up for a third date, then you are officially Going Steady. Unless the system (or its members) are lesbians – in which case you're moving in together.

Part 3: The Wrap-Up

After a game session of 52 First Dates, it's very strongly recommended that you have a wrap-up discussion. Some groups might want to do this after every date, to reflect and talk about whatever issues arose.

Aftercare

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Topics of Discussion

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Wait, Am I Plural?

For some people, playing 52 First Dates might line up some dots in your life, and you might question whether not you might be plural yourself. Before we go any further, we want to say something very important:

This game was not designed for helping you discover if you're plural or not. We didn't design it that way. ¹⁴ 52 First Dates is a simulation that might give you empathy for what it's like being plural, and reading the game materials could educate you – especially the More Than One section.

That said, if you want to investigate further, the Plural Resources appendix has a number of links that can help you learn more about the plural experience and what it might mean in your life.¹⁵

- 14. Among other reasons, we don't have the expertise to do so.
- 15. If this game does play a role in any way determining if you're plural or not! drop us an email!

Variants and Hacks

This section presents alternate rules for playing []{.gamename] in different ways.

System to System

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Singlet on Singlet Action

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Queerplatonic Relationships

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Appendix: Plural Resources

A number of resources on plurality are linked on the More Than One site. Those links and others are presented here for easy reference.

- · Countering DID Myths by Sarah K. Reece
- Does it work? by Vickis
- · Healthy Multiplicity, an extensive selves-help resource for plurality
- · How do I know I'm multiple? by Sarah K. Reece
- How to Write Multi by LB Lee
- · I am Mr. Robot by pluraldoxa
- I am not Sarah and Love by Sarah K. Reece
- MPD For You and Me by LB Lee
- · MoreThanOne.Info by anonymous
- Non-Binary Plural: Language/Concepts for OSDD and Median Experience by cedars
- Plural Dictionary by Mala
- · Our Plural Experience by Yavari of Sylvans
- · Plural Etiquette Questionnaire by Hungry Ghosts
- Plurality Playbook by Freyas and Irenes
- Plurality Resource by Eclectic Tech
- Pluralpedia, the collaborative plurality dictionary, a wiki
- Quick'n'Dirty Plural History by LB Lee
- · Rules of Engagement by Em, Hess, and Kerry of Sylvans
- The power of naming by Vickis

Appendix: A Plural Lexicon

These are important terms about plural systems that you may to understand in order to play the game. These definitions are adapted from Pluralpedia, the collaborative plurality dictionary.

- **Amnesiac System** An amnesiac system is one with limited or no memory sharing. Headmates don't remember the time while other headmates are fronting and may experience this gap as time loss.
- **Blending** Blending is when the boundary between headmates becomes blurred, and it can be hard to tell them apart, or even who is present. This can happen to the active fronters, or to anyone else who is co-conscious at the time.
- **Blurian** Blurian refers to easier or complete memory sharing, having a lack of significant amnesic barriers. This term is usually paired with other terms to describe a system, and itself has no correlation to the identities within the given system.
 - Blurian is usually paired up with the terms median or multiple, in contrast to partitionary, to indicate both the distinction of system members and memory sharing.
- **Co-Conscious** Co-conscious (also called "co-aware") refers to when multiple headmates are active at once. This is distinct from co-fronting in that these headmates aren't necessarily fronting, they may be in headspace or otherwise experiencing the outside world such as through internal communication.
- **Co-Fronting** Co-fronting is when two or more headmates are fronting. This can result in them having to coordinate actions, or for their personalities to blend together.
- **Core** The core is a headmate with a direct connection to the body's pre-plural self. Not every system has one, and not every system had a point at which they were not plural. The core often inherits the personality, identity, and/or memories of the pre-plural self.
- **Endogenic** Endogenic is an umbrella term that refers to all systems that are not completely traumagenic in origin, it encompasses many experiences. It is often seen as the opposite to the pathologized views of plurality, although can exist in harmony, even within the same system.

- **Fronting** Fronting is an activity performed by one or more headmates, where they take control of the body and handle daily activities and communication. This can often include allowing other headmates to speak via internal communication. In some cases, it's possible for no one to be fronting, in which case some type of default behavior takes over the body. This can surface in multiple ways, such as becoming unresponsive.
- **Frontstuck** A headmate is frontstuck when they are in front and unable to leave. More than one headmate may be stuck at once.
- **Front Trigger** Front triggers are the people, places, things, ideas, and scenarios that may cause a system member to front or be drawn near the front. These can be both negative and positive.
- **Forced Fronting** Forced fronting is when one headmate takes front against the will of others in the system. This is not the same as frontstuck as the headmate is not unable to leave front; they simply don't want to.
- **Headmate** A headmate is a singular person or entity in a plural system or collective. They can be clearly separated (like in DID or OSDD-1b, called a multiple or partitionary system) or more blurry and fluid (like in median or OSDD-1a).
- **Headspace** A headspace (also known as inner world or wonderland) is a place that members of a system can visit or inhabit, where they can talk to other headmates. Not every system has one, but many do. It is also not unique to systems. Singlets may have a headspace as well.
- **Host** A host is the headmate who is most active, most responsible for day-to-day activities, or otherwise is fronting most often. Not all systems have hosts, and some may have a rotating team for the role. In addition, some do not like the term "host", and choose to use alternatives; specifically, outernaut.
- **Introject** Introjects are headmates who have an original source that their personality, identity, and memories may be based partially or fully on. They can join a system for any number of reasons: having similar traumas to an individual, seeing strengths in the individual that the collective would benefit from, etc.
 - The term can be considered medical terminology and as such may not be used by every system. It should be checked first if a system is comfortable being referred to as such or not.

- **Little** A little is a headmate that behaves or otherwise feels like they are a young age. This often approximately caps at age twelve, but may vary personally between systems based on their body's age.
- **Main** The main is a headmate who is considered by the rest of the system to be one the main or central influences on the system. This doesn't necessarily mean they front often. A main can be a leader, teacher, or another authoritative figure that has an influence over the system. They may also be someone that others draw energy from.
- **Median** A median system (also called midcontinuum) is a system where members are not as distinct or separate from each other. It can be considered being somewhere between multiple and singlet.

Some are dependent on a single individual, or the dependence can be mutual in that there is no central individual. Some median systems feel more blurred between themselves. Others may also be based around a shared identity or kin.

The entities which inhabit a median system are known as "aspects" or "facets". Some median systems may identify as different archetypes. Despite being more fluid and similar, median systems can be very diverse.

Median is often used as opposed to multiple, where members in a multiple system are distinct.

- **Memory Sharing** Memory sharing is a system function whereby headmates can share their own memories with others in the same system. This may happen automatically or may require deliberate action by headmates. Not all systems have memory sharing and those that do may have it to varying degrees.
- **Mixed Origin** Mixed origin refers to a system that has multiple different system origins. This could be because their system formed from a combination of factors, or that not all of their headmates are of the same origin.
- **Multiple** A multiple system is the state of being more than one entity in one physical body where the identites of headmates are more distinct. The term is sometimes used as opposed to median, where distinction between system members is less distinct than with a multiple system.

- **Parogenic** Parogenic refers to systems or headmates that were created using thought-based or metaphysical means, usually deliberately. Tulpamancy is a related concept, but the term is avoided by some systems due to its origins or other reasons. Similarly, parogenic may be avoided by some systems in favor of tulpamancy/tulpagenic.
- **Partitionary** A partitionary system is one where the divisions between headmates are particularly solidly defined. This may include other attributes, like lack of memory sharing, lack of internal communication, or lack of co-consciousness and resulting time loss. Systems may become more or less partitionary over time. It is also possible for different headmates to have different levels of partitioning from the rest of the system or subsystem.
- **Persecutor** A persecutor is a headmate who acts harmfully towards other system members, the body, or to others. This is usually out of a misguided attempt to protect the system. Persecutors often hold internalized trauma and act in reaction to it, and the harm they cause may be unintentional. This can include aligning with abusers, engaging in self-harm or suicidal behaviors, abusing drugs, lashing out, etc.
- **Plurality** Plurality is the state of having multiple headmates collectively sharing a single body. Plural experiences are extremely diverse. Systems may be spiritual in nature or secular, median or partitionary, small systems or ones with thousands of headmates.
- **Pluralphobe** A pluralphobe is someone, typically a singlet, who actively seeks to remove systems and open plurality from their lives, for any number of reasons.
- **Protector** A protector is a headmate whose role is to protect other members of the system from external harm, traumatic memories, harmful members of the system, or other threats.
- **Quoigenic** Quoigenic is an origin term that means the user does not want to share their origins, does not think it's relevant, or thinks it's the wrong question to ask. It's derived from the French word "quoi", which approximately means "what".
- **Role** A role is the position a member takes within their system. This can be something with a specific focus such as a protector or a gatekeeper, or more of a general purpose such as a primary fronter.

Singlet Singlet refers to a person who isn't plural, or in other words doesn't share their body with anyone else. It's not a binary distinction, as people may be questioning being plural, and median can be viewed as a continuum with singlet at one end.

Switching Switching is when the current fronter(s) of the system changes. This can vary between something that happens constantly, or by accident, to something that requires much effort or happens only once a day or once a week. The experience of what switching is like also varies between systems. Switching can also take varying amounts of time, which can sometimes result in blend states in the in-between time.

System A system is the collection of people and entities, often called headmates, that share a single physical plural body. The experiences of plural systems are very diverse, and every system is different.

Systems often have a dedicated name, separate from the body's or members' names. It's common for systems to have names that are more like titles than given names, such as being named after flowers, or cosmic themes, with adjectives applied.

System Exclusionist A system exclusionist is an individual or system that holds strict beliefs about plurality and enforces those ideas on others, often in relation to causation. 'Sysmed' or 'sysmedicalist' is a synonym that refers in particular to systems that apply outdated and misapplied medical ideas about plurality.

Traumagenic Traumagenic refers to a system whose creation/origin is the result of one or more traumatic events. Often, these systems have lingering trauma, and may fall under a diagnosis like DID or OSDD-1.

Tulpamancy Tulpamancy is the art of purposefully creating headmates through various techniques. A headmate created in this way is called a "tulpa". A tulpamancer is a practitioner of tulpamancy. Parogenic is a related concept, but the term may be avoided by some systems in favor of tulpamancy/tulpagenic or tuplamancy/tuplagenic. Similarly, tulpamancy/tulpagenic or tuplamancy/tuplagenic may be avoided by some systems in favor of parogenic.

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52 First Dates System Sheet



52 First Dates Headmate Sheet	52 First Dates Date Sheet		
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