
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute English

English for dating online



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Sam

Hello. This is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Sam.

Roy

And I'm Roy.

Sam

Nowadays many people use online dating apps to find love and romance. This involves writing a **dating profile** – a short description of yourself which you hope makes you appear attractive to other people looking for love online.

Roy

Online dating started with the internet, but the idea is not new. In the days before the internet, people put dating adverts in newspapers. Because they paid a price per word, people described themselves in as few words as possible, using abbreviations like GSOH, which meant a Good Sense Of Humour. Eventually, GSOH became a part of everyday English.

Sam

Amazingly, the same thing is now happening in the world of online dating. In this programme we'll be learning some of the newly invented words and phrases being used by people who are looking for love on the internet.

Roy

Every year thousands of romantic relationships start through online dating apps. But as always with information found on the internet, there's a danger that someone's dating profile doesn't tell the whole truth.

Sam

That's right, Roy, so my question is this: According to research, what do men tend to lie about in their dating profile?

Is it: a) their hair? b) their height? or, c) their age?

Roy

Well, most people want to appear younger, so I'll say it's c) their age.

Sam

We'll find out if that's the correct answer later. The person behind the online dating research I mentioned was Dr Nicola Fox Hamilton. She describes herself as cyber-psychologist and has interviewed both men and women about what they hide from potential online dating partners. Listen as she tells BBC Radio 4's, Word of Mouth, what she discovered from her interviews:

Dr Nicola Fox Hamilton

If you're very **deceptive**, so if you have no friends, and you never go to the pub, and you said in your profile that your most fun thing to do is **hanging out** with your friends on a Saturday night, then that becomes a problem because then you've been very deceptive. If you occasionally do it and you made it sound a bit more like you do it all the time, that's more exaggeration – a lot of people do that, where they exaggerate things about themselves to make them seem more attractive. But they're **walking a fine line** in trying to balance between being attractive and not completely disappointing.

Roy

People often exaggerate things about themselves to seem more attractive online, for example that they love hanging out, or spending time with friends. Nicola also says there's a difference between exaggerating and being **deceptive** - deliberately lying and making someone believe things that are not true.

Sam

Nicola says deceptive daters are **walking a fine (or thin) line** – they're finding a balance between two opposing attitudes or ideas.

Roy

Online dating has also created new vocabulary of its own. Here's Nicola Fox Hamilton again explaining the meaning of two new words, **catfishing** and **wokefishing**, to BBC Radio 4's, Word of Mouth.

Dr Nicola Fox Hamilton

Wokefishing is a version of **catfishing**, and **catfishing** is where someone creates a profile that isn't them at all, so a complex false identity usually with the purpose of looking for, or pretending to get into involved in, love or romance. **Wokefishing** is when the person is generally who they say they are, but they say that they're much more liberal in their values and political attitudes than they actually are.

Roy

Catfishing is when someone tries to be more attractive by creating a false profile and pretending to be someone else on social media. Related to this is the term, **wokefishing**. Here someone asks about your political and social opinions, and pretends to share them in order to get closer to you. They may pretend to have more liberal or progressive attitudes than they really do.

Sam

Looking for love is never easy. The internet has helped thousands find romance and created some interesting new vocabulary, but there are dangers and disappointments too

Roy

Speaking of which, it's time to reveal the answer to your question, Sam. You asked what men tend to lie about in their dating profiles. I guessed it was their age.

Sam

You were... wrong. According to research by Dr Fox Hamilton, men tend to lie about their height – and women, about their weight. OK, let's recap the new vocabulary we've learnt in this programme about the language of online romance starting with **dating profile** – a brief written description of yourself which you hope will attract a partner.

Roy

Being **deceptive** means lying so people believe something that is not true.

Sam

Hanging out is an informal way to say spending time with someone, usually friends.

Roy

The phrase, **walking a fine line** means finding a balance between two opposing ideas or attitudes, or between two opposing sides so as not to annoy either side.

Sam

And finally, we learnt two newly invented expressions. **Catfishing** means trying to appear more attractive by pretending to be someone else on social media.

Roy

And **wokefishing** is when someone pretends to share the same opinions as the person they are attracted to. Once again, our six minutes are up. Good luck if you are looking for love online, and remember - there's probably someone out there interested in the real you. Bye for now!

Sam
Bye!