



# Daters, WAITERS, AND Loophole Creators

*When it comes to dating, different people have different questions. How would you answer them?*

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**A**t the *New Era* we hear a lot of questions from young people about all kinds of topics. One of the most common areas of confusion (or aggravation—we can't always tell which) is dating.

The questions about dating seem to come from three basic types of questioners: daters, waiters, and loophole creators. These three groups have different backgrounds and motivations for their questions, but all of them deserve answers so that they can find peace and guidance. And you can help.

Here are some examples of questions from these three groups, as well as a copy of the “Dating” section of *For the Strength of Youth*. See if you can match up the questions to the statements in that section that give an answer. Or, if you know other answers from the scriptures or general conference, add those. It's a good exercise to see how well you know the guidelines and how well you can answer questions for yourself or others.

## BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- Have an attitude of faith.
- Try to see the issue from an eternal perspective.
- Go to the right sources—the scriptures, prophets, parents, and leaders, as well as asking Heavenly Father for the guidance of the Spirit.
- Be kind—a part of the answer to any question regarding how to deal with others.

## Daters

When these people grew old enough, they decided to try out this dating thing. They've had some experiences, and as a result, they have some questions.

Here are a few of them:

For questions like these, you can sometimes find the answers right in *For the Strength of Youth*. But you may also need to talk to some people with a little experience who can offer some ideas for how to deal with people and situations both faithfully and tactfully.

## MY ANSWERS

HOW CAN I HOLD TO OUR DATING STANDARDS WHEN MOST PEOPLE I KNOW DON'T ADHERE TO THEM—EVEN THE LDS ONES?

WHEN YOU'RE ON A DATE, HOW CAN YOU KEEP THE FUN AND CONVERSATION GOING SMOOTHLY WITHOUT IT GETTING AWKWARD?

IS IT OK TO DATE SOMEONE WHO'S NOT LDS?

I RECENTLY TOOK SOMEONE OUT FOR FUN, BUT NOW SHE WANTS A RELATIONSHIP. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

HOW CAN I AVOID STEADY DATING?

Everybody else does it. And they think dating different people is like 'cheating.'

At what age can we start going on one-on-one dates instead of in groups?



# WAITERS

No, these are not servers at restaurants. They're people who are old enough and are either (a) choosing to wait a while before dating or (b) waiting for someone to finally ask them out on a date.

## Here are their questions:

Some of these questions are a little harder to answer by quoting *For the Strength of Youth*. You'll need compassion, understanding, and sensitivity. Those choosing not to date aren't breaking any commandments, and those not being asked out don't have anything wrong with them. But people are still feeling anxious and hurt. You may want to talk to parents, older siblings, leaders, and others who can lend a sympathetic ear and offer good advice and perspective.

## Dating

*Virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light.*  
Doctrine and Covenants 88:40

A date is a planned activity that allows a young man and a young woman to get to know each other better. In cultures where dating is acceptable, it can help you learn and practice social skills, develop friendships, have wholesome fun, and eventually find an eternal companion.

You should not date until you are at least 16 years old. When you begin dating, go with one or more additional couples. Avoid going on frequent dates with the same person. Developing serious relationships too early in life can limit the number of other people you meet and can perhaps lead to immorality. Invite your parents to become acquainted with those you date.

Choose to date only those who have high moral standards and in whose company you can maintain your standards. Remember that a young man and a young woman on a date are responsible to protect each other's honor and virtue.

Plan dating activities that are safe, positive, and inexpensive and that will help you get to know each other. Go only to places where you can maintain your standards and remain close to the Spirit.

Young men generally take the initiative in asking for and planning dates. Always be kind and respectful when you ask for a date or when you accept or decline one. While on a date, be courteous as you listen to others and express your own feelings.

As you enter your adult years, make dating and marriage a high priority. Seek a companion who is worthy to go to the temple to be sealed to you for time and all eternity. Marrying in the temple and creating an eternal family are essential in God's plan of happiness.

I'M OLD ENOUGH,  
BUT I DON'T REALLY  
FEEL LIKE DATING YET.  
IS THAT OK?

I'VE BEEN REJECTED  
BY GIRLS. AND I DON'T  
WANT TO ASK ANYONE  
ON A DATE ANYMORE.  
IS THAT OK?

Why date as a  
teenager? What's  
the point?

The LDS young  
men in my area are my  
friends, but they aren't  
asking me on dates.  
Why?

I'M ALMOST 18  
AND I'VE NEVER BEEN  
ASKED OUT ON A DATE.  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH GUYS?



## MY ANSWERS

# Loophole Creators

People in this group can be anywhere from 12 to 18 years old, and their questions are all over the map. They're definitely sincere and deserve answers. But basically, they seem to be trying to carve out an exception to the rules so that they can feel good about doing what they want to do.

Here's just a sampling of their many questions:

Even if your initial reaction to some of these questions is some variation of "No," "No way," or "What are you thinking?" try to have understanding. These are sincere questions from people who really want an answer, so we don't want to be brusque or dismissive. Look at *For the Strength of Youth* and see how you might begin to form an answer. The key is not to just repeat the standard but to focus on the *why* behind the standard. *Why* no frequent dates with the same person? *Why* wait until you're older to date?

## MY ANSWERS

WHAT'S THE DEFINITION OF A "DATE"?

IF I'M NOT OLD ENOUGH TO DATE YET, CAN I SPEND MOST OF MY TIME WITH A PERSON AS LONG AS WE'RE NOT DATING?

If I'm old enough to date and the person I want to go with isn't, is it OK to go out as long as they're not LDS so they won't be breaking their standards?

HOW MANY DATES WITH OTHER PEOPLE DO I NEED TO GO ON IN BETWEEN DATES WITH THE PERSON I REALLY LIKE?

IS IT OK TO HAVE A BOYFRIEND OR GIRLFRIEND AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT DATING?

IS IT OK TO KISS WHEN YOU'RE YOUNGER AS LONG AS YOU'RE NOT DATING?

