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Internet Dating: Pluses and Minuses by [Anthony Peter](#)

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More than twenty million people world-wide are estimated to be looking for on-line friendship, romantic relationships, permanent or short-term, across geographies and age-groups, financial or ethnic background.

Keeping this in mind, it's important for first-time on-line daters to understand the advantages and disadvantages of Internet dating. Staying comfortable and safe is top priority since the initial contact you have with the person is via the Net, which is notorious for its ability to mislead people and emotional/financial scams.

The pluses of on-line dating:

Much more choice! If you live in a remote area or a small town where you don't get much opportunity to meet people who share your interests, going on-line in search of a date is a great idea. Additionally, most people who lead busy professional lives, with a lot of travel and stress, may find it impossible to go through the conventional way of finding a suitable relationship.

Geography doesn't matter. You could be located a few blocks away or a continent away from Mr or Ms Right and it's the Internet that makes it possible to find them. Setting up personal meetings could be arranged according to mutual convenience.

Less awkward. On-line dating sites filter people according to their profiles, so you don't have to waste precious time trying to figure out whether the person shares your passion for art or mountain-biking! You can browse through thousands of profiles, short-list those whom you think suitable and proceed to contact some or all of them simultaneously without any awkwardness or inconvenience.

Rejection Fears. If you're afraid of facing rejection or disappointment, the Net offers enough anonymity for you to feel stress-free about trying out on-line conversations and options with different people. It's only when you feel truly comfortable with your on-line date that you need to meet them personally. Additionally, you can set up web-cam chats, video chats or virtual dates to increase your comfort levels.

Some minus points:

Misrepresentation is a big disadvantage on the Net and people may turn out to be quite different from what they'd portrayed themselves to be on-line. Age, financial background, appearance, ethnicity, profession, education, motives or marital status can all remain hidden till it's too late.

Phising/Internet Scams are a huge hazard when you go on-line. There are thousands of people who go on dating websites to collect personal information which can be misused. If you're indiscreet about revealing financial information, you could also end up losing big money.

Commitment: If you're looking for a serious relationship, you might have to go through several disappointing on-line dates before you find the right one.

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