

Columnists debate first date tactics

sex and the ville

with
Lauren Miller
and guest columnist
Joel Andersen



Lauren: Usually, I am very wary to say absolutes such as “every.” And there usually is an exception. However, in passing experience I have come to find that every first date is designed to decide whether that first date also is your last date. No exceptions.

Granted, every first date will have an awkward moment or two, but the defining memory of the date should not be the moment you randomly asked your date what his favorite color was, and he replied, “Light purple, bordering on pink.” I quickly realized he was serious and spent the next five minutes silently staring at the table. That was the moment that defined my very first, first date. An awkward, tedious and very worrisome event.

I’ve been on many more first dates since then, and I have found that the one absolute in first dates is that every aspect must fit together. Like a math equation, if one part is off, those awkward moments will negate the positives, and your first date will end up as your last.

The equation comes in three parts: asking, going and closing. Without a doubt, asking is the hardest. It is the point where your chance of rejection is the highest, and your dream, fantasy first date is squashed before reality could actually ruin it anyway. But, I am a girl, and I avoid actually asking at all costs, which is why I’ve recruited Joel. Not that he really is going to be that much help, as I am sure most of his first dates also were last dates seeing that he is still single – not that I judge.

Joel: She’s right of course, most of my first dates do end up being last dates, but that doesn’t stop me from making a fool of myself on a semi-regular basis. Asking a girl out is the easiest thing in the world next to giving yourself a tracheotomy. It’s almost as painful but not so bloody.

The first step to asking a girl out is to freak out. Pace around your room until you’ve burned a tread in the carpet, satisfy your oral fixation by chewing through a couple of pencils, and garner support from your friends

by whining incessantly about the situation. Although pacing, chewing and whining won’t actually get you closer to your goal of asking the girl out, you might burn a few excess calories and lose some weight in the process, thus making you a bit more attractive to that small demographic of girls who go swoony for the emaciated, nervous-wreck type.

Those who work up the courage to ask a girl out need to remember that women smell fear faster than they pick up on that cheap cologne, which by the way, you should really get rid of too. So how does one rid himself of fear? The illegal methods are highly effective yet usually result in trying to fly off the nearest building. The legal method is simply to stop caring. It’s not the end of the world if you get shot down, so stop pretending like it is. Be casual, don’t swallow your tongue, and you’re more or less halfway there.

Lauren: You’re well more than halfway if you can manage not to turn bright red and sputter your way to “d-d-dinnner, and muh-muh-maybe a movie” like Elmer Fudd. Girls appreciate a show of confidence as well as staying dry while you’re trying to spit it all out. The truth is that you guys can be dense, and chances are we have been “baiting” you to ask us out for the past week, month or year, depending on how desperate we are.

Joel: If you’re going to use a fishing analogy, you might as well “bait” with dynamite because we really don’t notice those shiny lures.

Lauren: Truthfully, you really don’t notice a whole lot (minus cleavage). Maybe I should call it subliminal hinting in hopes you get the idea to ask us out. These hints come in small packages such as eyelash fluttering, hair flipping and skin baring.

Joel: What are you talking about? I read ‘cleavage’ and got distracted. Seriously though, we do not pick up on those types of things.

“What are you talking about? I read ‘cleavage’ and got distracted.”

Lauren: Obviously not. Back to asking – really what you should take away from this is that your chance of getting shot down is a lot less than you think. Unless you are Joel. But the rest of you guys, go for it. We will at least be flattered.

Joel: Lauren tends to show that she’s flattered by pulling out restraining orders, but that’s beside the point. If you can get past the asking portion, the actual date is really the easiest part of this whole convoluted process. At that point, you only have yourself to sabotage. Once again, it’s a safe bet to remain calm and collected. Bring a brown paper bag in case you feel like hyperventilating, though it’s in poor taste to do this at the table while eating.

Lauren: Definitely tacky. Both guys and girls, basic manners are a must. This is why I contested that a fraternity party is a no-no in a previous column. Although a brown paper bag there is completely acceptable, it is usually for holding a fifth of something and then throwing up in the bag after. Once again, tacky.

Joel: Yes, talking with your mouth full tends to be a deal breaker for any date, regardless of how suave you might be. Basically you need to be perfect. In subsequent dates it’s OK to fall from grace, but not on that first one unless you want it to be your last one. Mind your manners.

Lauren: That fall from grace is inevitable, unless of course you are

me. I might be kidding. No, for real, the place people fall and trip the most is during the closing, unless of course you’re a guy whose favorite color is “light purple, bordering on pink” or your name happens to be Joel.

The closing must be perfect so both parties leave the date knowing where this blossoming love is going – either down the crapper or on to an only slightly less awkward second date. Example: My friend went on this date that seemed to be going well. Getting out of the car, the guy gave her a high-five. What the heck is that? Honestly, I want to know.

Joel: He’s either completely inept, or he wasn’t that interested. I can’t say I recommend the high-five maneuver.

A goodnight kiss is a good way to gauge just how poorly you did. When dropping dates off, the key is to linger in front of the door just long enough to give them time to bolt. Don’t wait too long, or they’ll just leave anyway. Resist the urge to bolt yourself.

It all boils down to arrogance – I mean, confidence. You have to know that your date wants to be kissed goodnight. If you don’t approach it like that, there’s a good chance you’ll have a classic awkward moment defined by a really sweaty hug with no body contact, some stammering and fleeing the country. Any of the aforementioned flaws will result in no future dates.

Lauren: I tried to flee the country and only got as far as Macon. Although I would take a goodnight kiss over a high-five any time, either way confidence is needed. It’s harder to fake than it looks, so the easiest thing is to be real on your date.

Be yourself, and play up your strong points, or if you are like Joel with a lack of strong points, downplay your overall social awkwardness. Remember, if you actually get the person to go on a date in the first place, that means there is potential. Relationship potential is what we are all searching for, and an abundance or lack of it will determine whether that first date is also your last date.

Technological hobby “caches” in on unusual prizes

Lauren Miller
Staff Reporter

X doesn’t mark the spot. It is similar to a treasure hunt, only minus the secret map. This treasure hunt involves an Internet blog and Global Positioning Satellite system.

The prizes are a number of various items hidden in locations from Kirksville to South Africa for anyone to find and then re-hide. It is called geocaching, and it is the newest craze to hit the Internet for technology lovers.

Players visit <http://www.geocaching.com> and search for caches hidden in their general area. Included with the description of the cache is a GPS coordinate and a hint.

Senior biology major Will Klutho said he got involved when his girlfriend found the Web site and started playing.

“Most caches are like a little gift exchange,” Klutho said. “You can either hide what you found somewhere else or trade something else out for what you found.”

Some caches have themes, Klutho said. Although he doesn’t keep what he has found, he does still have a couple of army men he found during a series of caches, he said.

All a person needs is access to the Internet and a GPS system, which Klutho said players can get locally.

“The GPS will get you within 20 or 30 yards, and then the hint will direct you to the exact spot although the hints tend to be pretty vague,” Klutho said.

Biology majors use GPS systems

when they need to use specific coordinates for things such as animal trapings, Klutho said.

GPS systems work off of about 25 satellites that orbit the earth, said Donald Bindner, visiting assistant professor of mathematics. He said that from any point on Earth, the satellites create a line of sight.

“The satellites transmit information to the GPS receiver,” Bindner said. “Based on the amount of time it takes for the information to travel, the GPS can get you roughly around 20 feet of whatever you are seeking.”

He said the new geocaching craze reminds him of amateur radio groups.

“It is like when they would hide a small radio transmitter, and the teams would go out with directional radio antennas,” Bindner said. “They would use [trigonometry] to zero in to the spot.”

Bindner said geocaching is nice because the GPS systems are easier and do not require math like the old radio treasure hunts. Because the object is not moving, it is easier to find, so the hiding spots tend to be more elaborate, Bindner said.

“You can be creative with that stuff since it is all for fun,” he said.

Similar to geocaching are money tracing at <http://www.wheresgeorge.com> and book crossing at www.book-crossing.com.

Bindner said he has participated in the book crossing where someone marks a book with a number and entry and then purposely loses it. Someone then finds it, he said, and continues to write in the log book.



Design by Lindsay Koski/Index

Although he participated in book crossing, he said he probably would not participate in geocaching.

“I liked the idea initially and was going to put something out there,” Bindner said. “Then I thought, ‘Where would I put it?’ My wife would not be too keen on hiding something on our property.”

Bindner said he thinks the trails

at Thousand Hills State Park or even Truman’s campus would be reasonable hiding spots.

Junior Jason DuPont said he thought of the exact same spot.

“I would go hide something back in the woods of the trails at Thousand Hills,” DuPont said.

As a computer science major, DuPont said he has seen geocaching grow

recently on the Internet. Although he didn’t hear about it until winter break, he said he thinks it will continue to grow as more people hear about it and tell their friends.

“It’s really neat to go outside and hide these things,” DuPont said. “It’s like, ‘Hey, cool – look at what I’ve found in the middle of nowhere, and other people have found, too.’”

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