**13 Great First Date Questions**

The only thing worse is bad small talk. I want to help you banish both from your dates.

Awkward silence is the killer of romance.

According to [the research](https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/in-practice/201304/the-science-intimate-relationships), a flexible communication style—engaging questions, open-mindedness and easy back and forth is most effective.

Below I have outlined my favorite first date (or second, third or fourth) date questions and conversation starters. Here is what they will do for you:

* Help you to more quickly gauge if you have a connection or not.
* Get to know their personality, history and areas of compatibility more quickly.
* Encourage great conversation.

Special Note: These are not meant to be pelted at your date in an interrogational manner. They should come up naturally and (hopefully) lead you on delicious conversational tangents so you can forget the questions entirely.

For some of these questions I have included “Don’t Ask” questions. These are the questions that are so canned, boring and predictable that they should be exiled from good dates.

## Best First Date Conversation Starters:

**1. Are you working on any personal passion projects?**

This is my go-to question and comes up very naturally if someone talks about a) being busy b) what they do for a living c) any hobbies. It can transition you into a nice broad discussion about hobbies and how they spend their time. It’s so much better than “What are your hobbies?”

**2. What’s the best present you ever gave someone? Ever received?**

If it is around the holidays or one of your birthdays you can talk about presents. This is also a great one if there is a birthday in the restaurant you are eating in!

**3. What does a typical day look like for you?**

Don’t ask “What do you do?” Instead, ask them about their typical day. This question will give you much more robust answers and you will learn far more about a person than just “What do you do?” You can find out if they are an early riser, how they spend their free time and typically their job will come up as well. I have found that you don’t really need to ask about their career–it usually comes up naturally.

**4. I was reading this \_\_\_\_\_ and they said\_\_\_\_.**

I am a big fan of bringing up books and articles on first dates. Here are my [favorite books](https://www.scienceofpeople.com/2014/04/10-books-stimulate-best-conversations/%22%20%5Co%20%2210%20Books%20that%20Stimulate%20the%20Best%20Conversations%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) that stimulate interesting conversations.

**5. Is there anything you don’t eat?**

This one comes up really easily if you are ordering food. It can produce some really easy conversation and might provide you with some great tidbits.

**6. What sort of vacations do you like to take?**

People often ask “Have you gone on any vacations recently?” However, someone can very quickly answer it—and they might not have gone anywhere (which results in awkward silence). Instead, try asking what kinds of vacations they like to take. This produces great conversation and ample get to know you responses. Talking about traveling can even get you a second date! Professor Richard Wiseman conducted a study and found that 18% of couples who discussed travel went on a second date compared to only 9% of couples who talked about movies.

**7. Anything surprising happen today?**

Don’t just ask “How was your day?” Instead, ask them about what was surprising about their day. You can also try asking for their high point and low point. This will give you less of a canned response of “fine” or “pretty good.”

* Bonus: You can also use some of our [killer conversation starters](https://www.scienceofpeople.com/2013/10/helpful-conversation-starters/).

**8. What’s the best advice anyone ever gave you?**

Whenever someone shares a piece of advice with me, I typically ask them this question. It is a nice transition and brings up fascinating topics.

**9. Tell me about your closest friends.**

If they bring up a friend or story with friends. This is a great follow-up question and will help you get to know who they spend their time with.

**10. What were you like as a kid?**

Some people ask “Are you close to your family?” but this can be a bit personal for a first date and people usually have a canned answer for it. Instead ask them what they were like as a kid and let them tell you stories about them and their family.

* Bonus: If you are familiar with Birth Order personality types (highly recommend it) you can ask if they have siblings and talk about birth order—do they fit the typical personality types for their order?

**11. I’ve been watching \_\_\_\_ and love it. Have you seen any good movies or TV shows lately?**

This is an easy one and will give you an idea of their viewing tastes.

* **Bonus:**Which fictional character do you relate to the most?

**12. Have you been to any good restaurants recently?**

If you are eating out and talking about the quality of the food/menu/atmosphere this is an easy segue question to find out their dining habits.

**13. Do you have any pet peeves?**

This can come up as annoyances arrive (inevitable)—someone is texting at the next table, someone is speaking too loudly across the room, there is a long line…

**Bonus: Share Secrets**

By sharing personal and emotional exchanges, you can promote connection according to Psychology Professor, Arthur Aron. Take it a step further and discuss controversial topics like your stance on the upcoming presidential election or veganism. These types of conversations fuel the brain and are far more interesting to us than the boring, dull, typical convos, according to Dan Ariely, Duke Psychology Professor.

## Killer Openers:

These openers work great for beginning a conversation. They’re far more interesting than the standard “Where are you from?” type questions, and they are excellent conversation builders.

1. Tell me about you.
2. What’s your story?
3. What personal passion project are you working on right now.
4. Working on anything exciting lately?
5. How do you know the host?
6. Have you been to an event like this before?
7. What was the highlight of your day today?
8. What was the highlight of your week?
9. What was the high-point and low-point of your day so far?
10. Is this your busy season? Is this a busy time for you

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1. What are you doing this weekend…what’s your favorite thing to do on the weekends?
2. What are your favorite restaurants around here?
3. Keeping up with \_\_sport\_\_ recently?
4. Can you recommend any unique cocktails here?
5. All the food looks so good… I’m not sure what to get! What are you thinking? Or what have you tried?
6. What a beautiful/cool/ugly/bizarre venue. Have you been here before?
7. Did you see that viral \_\_\_\_ YouTube video? It was all over my social media today.

## Going Deep:

Be bold. Ask the deep stuff. As the majority of our new conversations hover on surface-level topics, it’s refreshing to talk about more meaningful areas of our lives. These may be a bit forward as your first questions, but if the conversation is progressing well, try one or two of these out.

1. What’s your biggest fear?
2. If you had to pick any character in a book, movie or TV show who is most similar to you, who would you choose? Why?
3. What’s your biggest regret?
4. When you were growing up what was your dream job? Is any part of that still true?

## Event Specific Conversation Starters:

Is there an upcoming holiday or special event? Use these as a base for fun and light-hearted conversations, like “What’s the best fireworks display you’ve seen on the 4th of July?” or “I went to the coolest Irish bar last St. Patrick’s Day. Doing anything fun this year for it?” This is one of the easiest ways to start a fun conversation!

#### Halloween:

1. Best Halloween costume you ever had?
2. Best Halloween costume you’ve ever seen?
3. Do you like haunted houses or scary rides?

#### Christmas:

1. How does your family celebrate?
2. Best Christmas memory you have ever had?
3. What’s an ideal Christmas for you?

#### Birthday:

1. How do you usually celebrate your birthday?
2. What was the best birthday you ever had?
3. What was the best birthday gift you ever had?

Any and all of these will work for you. Most people are so relieved to have you start and continue the conversation anyways! Remember to ask open ended questions—and avoid yes or no answers yourself. Also go for depth on interesting topics. Don’t be afraid to ask more questions and stick to one topic if it interests you. **Most importantly: be interested and interesting.**