

OCTOBER 21, 2013

Online Dating & Relationships

One in ten Americans have used an online dating site or mobile dating app; 66% of these online daters have gone on a date with someone they met through a dating site or app, and 23% have met a spouse or long term partner through these sites. Public attitudes toward online dating have become more positive in recent years, but many users also report negative experiences.

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<http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Online-Dating.aspx>

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Summary of Findings

One in ten Americans have used an online dating site or mobile dating app themselves, and many people now know someone else who uses online dating or who has found a spouse or long-term partner via online dating. General public attitudes towards online dating have become much more positive in recent years, and social networking sites are now playing a prominent role when it comes to navigating and documenting romantic relationships. These are among the key findings of a national survey of dating and relationships in the digital era, the first dedicated study of this subject by the Pew Research Center's Internet Project since 2005.

11% of American adults—and 38% of those who are currently “single and looking” for a partner—have used online dating sites or mobile dating apps

One in every ten American adults has used an online dating site or a mobile dating app. We refer to these individuals throughout this report as “online daters,” and we define them in the following way:

- 11% of internet users (representing 9% of all adults) say that they have personally used an online dating site such as Match.com, eHarmony, or OK Cupid.
- 7% of cell phone apps users (representing 3% of all adults) say that they have used a dating app on their cell phone.

Taken together, 11% of all American adults have done one or both of these activities and are classified as “online daters.” In terms of demographics, online dating is most common among Americans in their mid-20's through mid-40's. Some 22% of 25-34 year olds and 17% of 35-44 year olds are online daters. Online dating is also relatively popular among the college-educated, as well as among urban and suburban residents. And 38% of Americans who are single and actively looking for a partner have used online dating at one point or another.

66% of online daters have gone on a date with someone they met through a dating site or app, and 23% of online daters say they have met a spouse or long term relationship through these sites

Compared with eight years ago, online daters in 2013 are more likely to actually go out on dates with the people they meet on these sites. Some 66% of online daters have gone on a date with someone they met through an online dating site or app, up from 43% of online daters who had done so when we first asked this question in 2005. Moving beyond dates, one quarter of online daters (23%) say that they themselves have entered into a marriage or long-term relationship with someone they met through a dating site or app. That is statistically similar to the 17% of online daters who said that this had happened to them when we first asked this question in 2005.

Attitudes towards online dating are becoming more positive over time

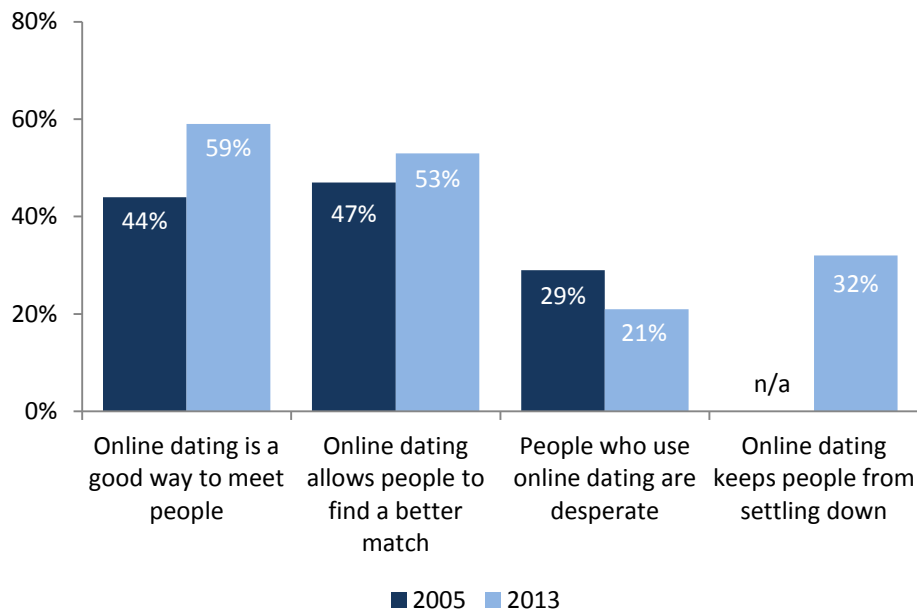
Even today, online dating is not universally seen as a positive activity—a significant minority of the public views online dating skeptically. At the same time, public attitudes towards online dating have grown more positive in the last eight years:

- 59% of all internet users agree with the statement that “online dating is a good way to meet people,” a 15-point increase from the 44% who said so in 2005.
- 53% of internet users agree with the statement that “online dating allows people to find a better match for themselves” because they can get to know a lot more people,” a 6-point increase from the 47% who said so in 2005.
- 21% of internet users agree with the statement that “people who use online dating sites are desperate,” an 8-point decline from the 29% who said so in 2005.

Additionally, 32% of internet users agree with the statement that “online dating keeps people from settling down because they always have options for people to date.” This is the first time we have asked this question.

Opinions of online dating, 2005-2013

% of internet users who agree with each of the following statements



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. 2005 survey was conducted September 14-December 8, 2005, n=3,215 adults ages 18+.

In general, online daters themselves give the experience high marks. Some 79% of online daters agree that online dating is a good way to meet people, and 70% of them agree that it helps people find a better romantic match because they have access to a wide range of potential partners. Yet even some pewinternet.org

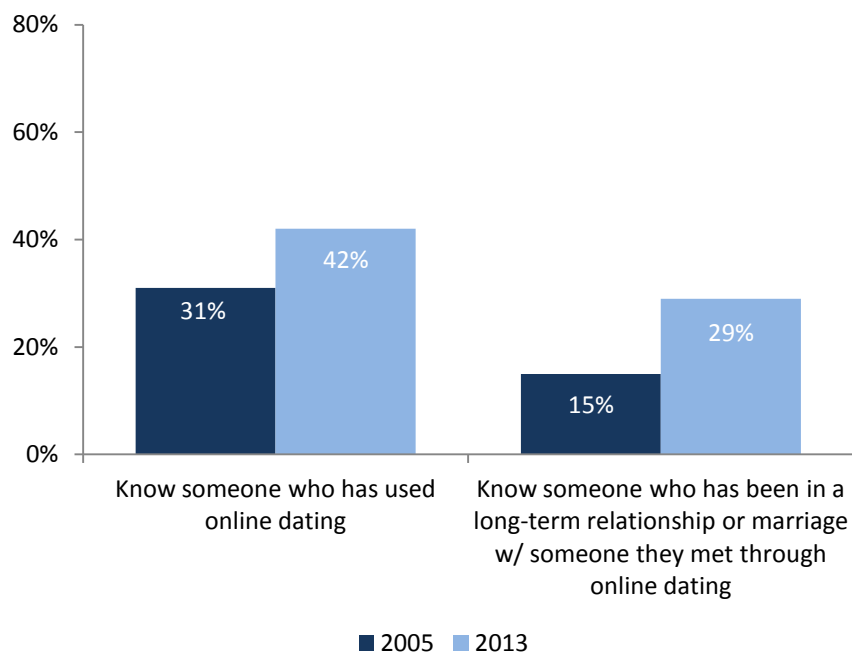
online daters view the process itself and the individuals they encounter on these sites somewhat negatively. Around one in ten online daters (13%) agree with the statement that “people who use online dating sites are desperate,” and 29% agree that online dating “keeps people from settling down because they always have options for people to date.”

42% of all Americans know an online dater, and 29% know someone who has used online dating to find a spouse or other long-term relationship

Familiarity with online dating through usage by friends or family members has increased dramatically since our last survey of online dating in 2005. Some 42% of Americans know someone who has used online dating, up from 31% in 2005. And 29% of Americans now know someone who met a spouse or other long-term partner through online dating, up from just 15% in 2005.

Familiarity with online dating through others, 2005-2013

% of American adults who...



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. 2005 survey was conducted September 14-December 8, 2005, n=3,215 adults ages 18+.

People in nearly every major demographic group—old and young, men and women, urbanites and rural dwellers—are more likely to know someone who uses online dating (or met a long term partner through online dating) than was the case eight years ago. And this is especially true for those at the upper end of the socio-economic spectrum:

- 57% of all college graduates know someone who uses online dating, and 41% know someone who has met a spouse or other long-term partner through online dating.

- 57% of Americans with an annual household income of \$75,000 or more know someone who uses online dating, and 40% know someone who met a spouse or partner this way.

Negative experiences on online dating sites are relatively common

Even as online daters have largely positive opinions of the process, many have had negative experiences using online dating. Half (54%) of online daters have felt that someone else seriously misrepresented themselves in their profile. And more seriously, 28% of online daters have been contacted by someone through an online dating site or app in a way that made them feel harassed or uncomfortable. Women are much more likely than men to have experienced uncomfortable contact via online dating sites or apps: some 42% of female online daters have experienced this type of contact at one point or another, compared with 17% of men.

40% of online daters have used dating sites designed for people with shared interests or backgrounds, and one in three have paid to use a dating site or app. One in five online daters have asked someone to help them review their profile.

Paid dating sites, and sites for people who are seeking partners with specific characteristics are popular with relatively large numbers of online daters:

- 40% of online daters have used a site or app for people with shared interests or backgrounds.
- 33% of online daters have paid to use an online dating site or app.

Organized outings are much less common, as just 4% of online daters have attended a group outing or other physical event organized by an online dating site.

Additionally, 22% of online daters have asked someone to help them create or review their profile. Women are around twice as likely as men to ask for assistance creating or perfecting their profile—30% of female online daters have done this, compared with 16% of men.

5% of Americans who are currently married or in a long-term partnership met their partner somewhere online. Among those who have been together for ten years or less, 11% met online.

Even today, the vast majority of Americans who are in a marriage, partnership, or other serious relationship say that they met their partner through offline—rather than online—means. At the same time, the proportion of Americans who say that they met their current partner online has doubled in the last eight years. Some 6% of internet users who are in a marriage, partnership, or other committed relationship met their partner online—that is up from 3% of internet users who said this in 2005. On an “all-adults” basis, that means that 5% of all committed relationships in America today began online.

This question was asked of everyone in a marriage or other long-term partnership, including many whose relationships were initiated well before meeting online was an option. Looking only at those committed relationships that started within the last ten years, 11% say that their spouse or partner is someone they met online. Younger adults are also more likely than older ones to say that their relationship began online. Some 8% of 18-29 year olds in a marriage or committed relationship met their

partner online, compared with 7% of 30-49 year olds, 3% of 50-64 year olds, and just 1% of those 65 and older.

In addition, people who have used online dating are significantly more likely to say that their relationship began online than are those who have never used online dating. Fully 34% of Americans who are in a committed relationship and have used online dating sites or dating apps in the past say that they met their spouse or partner online, compared with 3% for those who have not used online dating sites.

Using the internet to flirt, research potential partners, and check up on old flames have all become much more common in recent years

Compared with when we conducted our first study of dating and relationships in 2005, many more Americans are using online tools to check up on people they used to date, and to flirt with potential (or current) love interests:

- 24% of internet users have searched for information online about someone they dated in the past, up from 11% in 2005.
- 24% of internet users have flirted with someone online, up from 15% in 2005.

Young adults are especially likely to flirt online—47% of internet users ages 18-24 have done this before, as have 40% of those ages 25-34. And while younger adults are also more likely than their elders to look up past flames online, this behavior is still relatively common among older cohorts. Some 21% of internet users ages 45-54, and 15% of those ages 55-64, have gone online to look up someone they used to date.

Additionally, 29% of internet users with recent dating experience have gone online to *search for information about someone they were currently dating or about to meet for a first date*. That is more than double the 13% of such internet users who did so when we last asked about this behavior in 2005.

Social networking sites offer a new online venue for navigating the world of dating and relationships

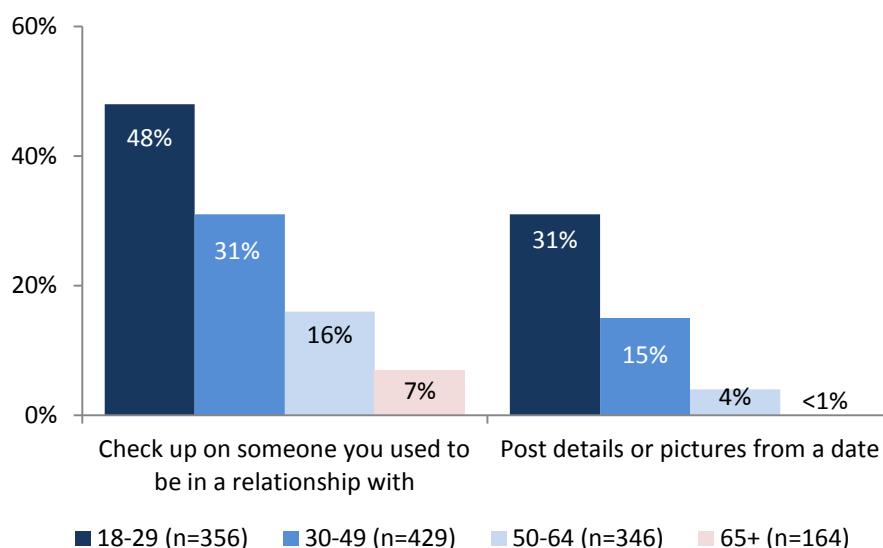
Today six out of every ten Americans use social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook or Twitter, and these sites are often intertwined with the way they experience their past and present romantic relationships:

- One third (31%) of all SNS users have gone on these sites to check up on someone they used to date or be in a relationship with.
- 17% have posted pictures or other details from a date on a social networking site.

Younger adults are especially likely to live out their relationships through social networking sites. Some 48% of SNS users ages 18-29 have used these sites to check up on someone they dated in the past, and 31% have posted details or pictures from a date on a social networking site.

Checking on past relationships and posting details from dates on social networking sites

% of SNS/Twitter users who have used a social networking site to...



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

These sites are also being used as a source of background research on potential romantic partners. Nearly one third (30%) of SNS users with recent dating experience¹ have used a social networking site to *get more information about someone they were interested in dating*. And 12% of SNS users with recent dating experience have friended or followed someone on a social networking site specifically because one of their friends suggested they might want to date that person.

Beyond using these sites as a tool for researching potential partners, some 15% of SNS users with recent dating experience have *asked someone out on a date* using a social networking site.

For young adults especially, social networking sites can be the site of “relationship drama”

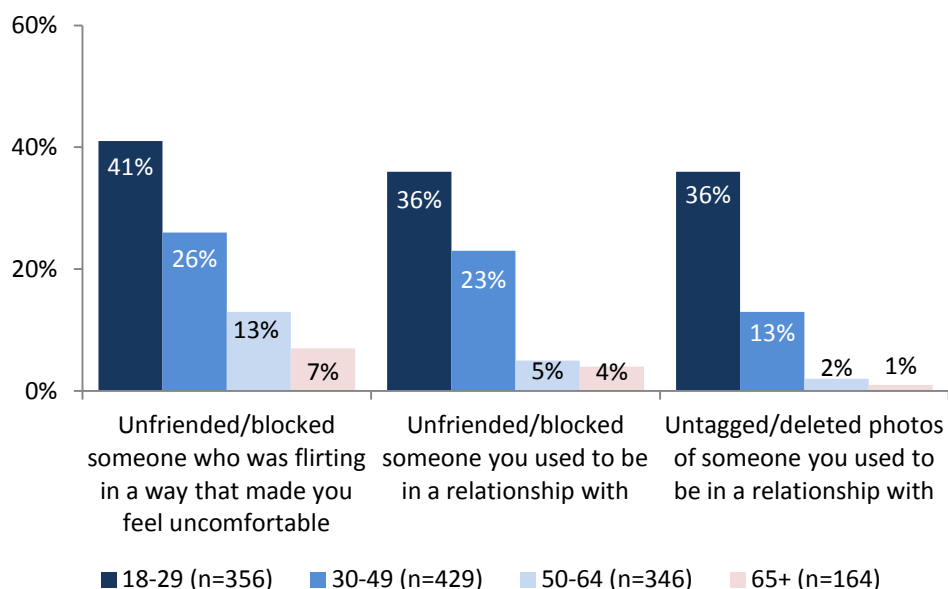
As more and more Americans use social networking sites, these spaces can become the site of potential tension or awkwardness around relationships and dating. Some 27% of all social networking site users have unfriended or blocked someone who was flirting in a way that made them feel uncomfortable, and 22% have unfriended or blocked someone that they were once in a relationship with. These sites can also serve as a lingering reminder of relationships that have ended—17% of social networking site users have untagged or deleted photos on these sites of themselves and someone they used to be in a relationship with.

¹ People with “recent dating experience” include those who are single and actively looking for a partner, as well as those who have been in a committed relationship for ten years or less.

Not surprisingly, young adults—who have near-universal rates of social networking site use and have spent the bulk of their dating lives in the social media era—are significantly more likely than older social media users to have experienced all three of these situations in the past. And women are more likely than men to have blocked or unfriended someone who was flirting in a way that made them uncomfortable.

Negative relationship experiences on social networking sites

% of SNS/Twitter users who have...



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

About this survey

This report is based on the findings of a survey on Americans' use of the Internet. The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International from April 17 to May 19, 2013, among a sample of 2,252 adults, age 18 and older. Telephone interviews were conducted in English and Spanish by landline (1,125) and cell phone (1,127, including 571 without a landline phone). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 2.3 percentage points. For results based on Internet users (n=1,895), the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

Part 1: Introduction

For as long as romantic relationships have existed, people have sought assistance in meeting potential partners using whatever options were at their disposal. Matchmaking and arranged marriages have existed for centuries, and printed personal ads are nearly as old as the newspaper industry itself. More recently, technological developments from the VCR to the (pre-internet era) personal computer have been enlisted, with varying degrees of success, in an effort to connect people with romantic partners.²

In the mid-1990's, online dating sites such as Match.com marked the commercial internet's first foray into dating and relationships. As these sites have evolved in the ensuing years, they have typically assumed one of two forms. Some offer a "personal ads" format, in which users create their own profile and browse the profiles of others on their own (Match.com, OkCupid, and PlentyofFish are common examples of this type of service). Others take on a more active matchmaking role, in which computer algorithms select pre-screened matches for users based on various criteria (eHarmony is the most well-known of these "algorithmic" matching services). More recently, a third model has emerged in the form of cell phone dating apps.

The rise of tech-enabled dating help has been one of the most striking developments of the digital era, and these alternative ways of meeting and mating have arisen at a time of fundamental change in the structure of marriage and divorce in America. The number of Americans getting married has been [steadily declining](#), and today a record-low 51% of the public is currently married (in 1960, 72% of all adults 18 and older were married). Americans are also [waiting until later in life to get married](#), and other living arrangements—such as cohabitation, single person households, and single parenthood—have grown more common in recent decades. At the same time, [marriage still holds wide appeal](#) for those who have not tied the knot. Some 61% of men and women who have never married say they would like to get married eventually, while just 12% say they definitely do not want to marry.

Research into whether online dating actually produces more successful relationships or romantic outcomes than conventional (offline) dating is generally inconclusive, although these sites clearly offer a qualitatively different experience compared with traditional dating. Some of these differences include: the ability to search from a deep pool of potential partners outside of one's existing social networks; the ability to communicate online or via email prior to arranging for a face-to-face interaction; and matching algorithms that allow users to filter potential partners based on pre-existing criteria.³ Other research has indicated that the efficiency of online dating and the size of the potential dating pool compared with traditional methods make the process especially useful for people (such as gays and lesbians, or middle aged heterosexuals) who may have limited options for meeting people within their immediate geographic area or social circle.⁴ Still others have speculated that the rise of online dating has

² Finkel, E., Eastwick, P., Karney, B., Reis, H., and Sprecher, S., "Online Dating: A Critical Analysis From the Perspective of Psychological Science," *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, January 2012, vol. 13. Available at <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/journals/pspi/online-dating.html>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Rosenfeld, M., and Thomas, R., "Searching For a Mate: The Rise of the Internet as a Social Intermediary," *American Sociological Review*, 77(4): 523:547. Available at http://www.stanford.edu/~mrosenfe/Rosenfeld_How_Couples_Meet_Working_Paper.pdf

encouraged young adults, especially men, to forego marriage because they can always find women to date and that lowers their interest in committing to long term relationships.⁵

The report that follows is based on survey data from the Pew Research Center’s second national telephone survey of online dating. The Center last conducted a detailed survey of the internet’s impact on dating and relationships in 2005, and a primary goal of this study is to update key trends on the internet and dating—such as the overall prevalence of online dating, how attitudes towards online dating have changed over time, and whether or not more people are meeting online than in the past. At the same time, the broader technological environment has changed dramatically since our last survey on this subject, and this has greatly impacted the ways in which people can seek out, research, meet, and interact with potential partners.

The first change involves mobile technologies, particularly smartphones. When we conducted our first study of online dating, the release of the iPhone was still two years in the future. Today more than half of all American adults are smartphone owners, and dating—like many other aspects of modern life—is increasingly conducted on the go. The online dating sites that we studied in 2005 continue to exist and play a prominent role, but are now supplemented by mobile apps from which users can do everything from browsing profiles to setting up real-time dates from the comfort of their smartphones. This study incorporates these dating apps into our definition of an “online dating user,” and also examines the ways in which cell phones are becoming intertwined in the broader dating environment.

The second major change involves the widespread adoption of social networking sites. In 2005, MySpace was the dominant player in the social networking field, Facebook was not yet open to the entire public, and Twitter did not exist. Today roughly three-quarters of online adults use sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and the impact of these online social networks on the dating process is potentially profound. This study looks at the ways in which online social networks provide new avenues for meeting “friends of friends” or for researching potential partners before meeting them in person, as well as some of the ways in which awkwardness or “drama” can develop in these highly public venues.

Chapter One of this report looks specifically at online dating sites and dating apps. Chapter Two looks more broadly at the online dating environment, and updates certain key trends from our 2005 study—such as how many relationships begin online, or how many people have flirted with someone online. And Chapter Three examines how people are using social networking sites and cell phones to navigate the world of dating and relationships.

A note on relationship status groups analyzed in this report

Throughout this report, we will refer to several different types of Americans based on their current relationship status and whether or not they are actively seeking a partner at the moment. In particular, much of the analysis will focus on one or more the following groups:

- Group #1, “Married or in a committed relationship for ten years or less” – This group includes

⁵ Dan Slater, “A Million First Dates,” *The Atlantic*, January 2, 2013. Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/01/a-million-first-dates/309195/>

people who are either married, living with a partner, or in some other type of committed romantic relationship, and who have been in their current relationship for **ten years or less**. It makes up 28% of the total adult population.

- Group #2, “Married or in a committed relationship for more than ten years” – Similar to group one, but includes people who have been in their current relationship for **more than ten years**. It makes up 38% of the total adult population.
- Group #3, “Single and looking” – This group includes people who are not married or in a relationship, but **are** currently looking for a romantic partner. It makes up 7% of the total adult population.
- Group #4, “Single but not looking” – This group includes people who are not married or in a relationship, but **are not** currently looking for a romantic partner. It makes up 28% of the total adult population.

Additional demographic details of each group can be found in the Appendix at the end of this report.

A large portion of the behaviors and attitudes we examined in this survey have broad applicability to adults of all kinds, and as a result were asked of everyone regardless of their relationship status. For other dating-related activities, we focused on a narrower subset of the population: specifically, those who are “single and looking” (Group 3 above) and those who have been in a committed relationship for ten years or less (Group 1 above). Throughout this report, we will refer to these two groups collectively as people with recent dating experience.

For those questions asked only of those with recent dating experience, we excluded people in longer-term relationships because technology was almost by definition not part of their dating lives. Someone who has been married since the early 1990s has obviously not broken up with someone via text messaging, for example. On the other hand, we excluded people in the “single but not looking” category in an effort to be sensitive to our survey respondents. Around half of this group is widowed, divorced, or separated, and we did not wish to subject those individuals to undue stress or force them to rehash bad relationship experiences.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Eli Finkel at Northwestern University, Michael Rosenfeld at Stanford University, Lauren Scissors at Northwestern University, and Susan Sprecher at Illinois State University for generously contributing their time and expertise during the development of this survey.

Part 2: Dating Apps and Online Dating Sites

11% of American adults—and 38% of those who are “single and looking”—have used online dating sites or mobile dating apps

One in every ten American adults has used an online dating site or a mobile dating app. We refer to these individuals throughout this report as “online daters,” and we define them in the following way:

- 11% of internet users (representing 9% of all adults) say that they have personally *used an online dating site* such as Match.com, eHarmony, or OK Cupid.
- 7% of cell phone apps users (representing 3% of all adults) say that they have *used a dating app on their cell phone*.

Taken together, 11% of all American adults have used either an online dating site or a mobile dating app and are classified as “online daters.”

The questions we have used to measure online dating have evolved over the years, and as a result we cannot directly compare the size of the *total online dating population* to some of our earlier surveys on the subject.⁶ However, the use of *online dating sites*⁷ has become steadily more prevalent in recent years. In 2008 just 3% of all Americans said that they had used an online dating site; by 2009 that figure had risen to 6% of all Americans, and today 9% of the adult population has used an online dating site.

In terms of demographics, online dating is most common among Americans in their mid-20’s through mid-40’s. Some 22% of 25-34 year olds, and 17% of 35-44 year olds are online daters—that is roughly double the rate for those ages 18-24 or those ages 45-54. Urban and suburban residents are more likely than rural residents to use online dating, and those who have attended college are around twice as likely to do so as are those who have not attended college.

⁶ From 2000 to 2005, our questions about online dating were worded much more broadly than in our current survey. For example, our definition of an online dater in our 2005 dating survey was based on the question, “Have you ever gone to an online dating website or other site where you can meet people online?” 11% of internet users said yes to this broader version of the question.

⁷ Excluding mobile dating apps, which we asked about for the first time in this survey.

The demographics of online daters

The % of American adults in each group who have used online dating sites or apps

		% who have used online dating sites or apps
All adults (n=2,252)		11%
a	Men (n=1,029)	13 ^b
b	Women (n=1,223)	9
Race/ethnicity		
a	White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,571)	11
b	Black, Non-Hispanic (n=252)	12
c	Hispanic (n=249)	8
Age		
a	18-24 (n=243)	10 ^f
b	25-34 (n=284)	22 ^{adef}
c	35-44 (n=292)	17 ^{adef}
d	45-54 (n=377)	8 ^f
e	55-64 (n=426)	6 ^f
f	65+ (n=570)	3
Education attainment		
a	No high school diploma (n=168)	7
b	High school grad (n=630)	7
c	Some College (n=588)	15 ^{ab}
d	College + (n=834)	12 ^{ab}
Household income		
a	Less than \$30,000/yr (n=580)	12
b	\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=374)	12
c	\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=298)	16 ^d
d	\$75,000+ (n=582)	9
Urbanity		
a	Urban (n=763)	13 ^c
b	Suburban (n=1,037)	11 ^c
c	Rural (n=450)	6

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Of course, only a portion of the population is in the market for a relationship at any given time. Some are currently in long-standing relationships that predate the adoption of online dating, while others are single but not actively looking for a romantic partner. If we examine only those Americans who are most inclined to online dating—that is, the 7% of the public that is both single and actively looking for a partner—some 38% of these individuals have used online dating sites or dating apps.

Online dating use by relationship type

The % of American adults in each group who have used online dating sites or apps

		% who have used online dating sites or apps
All adults (n=2,252)		11%
Relationship type		
a	Married/committed, 10 yrs or less (n=524)	17 ^{bd}
b	Married/committed, >10 yrs (n=904)	1
c	Single and looking (n=138)	38 ^{abd}
d	Single, not looking (n=686)	10 ^b
Length of partnership (for married/committed)		
a	0-5 years (n=351)	21 ^{bc}
b	6-10 years (n=173)	10 ^c
c	11+ years (n=888)	1

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Focus on dating sites: 9% of American adults use online dating sites

Looking separately at the two distinct elements that make up definition of an online dater, some 11% of internet users say that they have used an online dating site. This does not include users of mobile dating apps, which will be discussed in the next section of the report. Since 85% of the population now goes online, that means that one out of every ten Americans (9%) has used an online dating site at one point or another.

The college-educated and those in their mid-twenties through mid-forties are especially likely to use online dating sites.

Online dating sites

The % of American adults in each group who have used online dating sites

		% who have used online dating sites
All adults (n=2,252)		9%
a	Men (n=1,029)	10
b	Women (n=1,223)	8
Race/ethnicity		
a	White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,571)	11 ^c
b	Black, Non-Hispanic (n=252)	7
c	Hispanic (n=249)	5
Age		
a	18-24(n=243)	8 ^f
b	25-34(n=284)	17 ^{adef}
c	35-44(n=292)	15 ^{adef}
d	45-54(n=377)	8 ^f
e	55-64(n=426)	6
f	65+ (n=570)	3
Education attainment		
a	No high school diploma (n=168)	4
b	High school grad (n=630)	5
c	Some College (n=588)	13 ^{ab}
d	College + (n=834)	12 ^{ab}
Household income		
a	Less than \$30,000/yr (n=580)	10
b	\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=374)	10
c	\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=298)	15 ^{ad}
d	\$75,000+ (n=582)	8
Urbanity		
a	Urban (n=763)	11 ^c
b	Suburban (n=1,037)	9 ^c
c	Rural (n=450)	6

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

As we did in our previous study, we presented online dating site users with an open-ended follow-up question asking which particular dating site(s) they have used. Match.com was the most-mentioned site in both our 2005 and 2013 studies, and eHarmony also ranked highly in both 2005 and 2013.⁸ The five sites with the most mentions in each year are listed below:

Most common online dating sites, 2005 vs. 2013

% of online dating site users who have used the following sites (only top five responses listed)

2005 (n=204)	2013 (n=198)
Match.com (29%)	Match.com (45%)
Yahoo Personals (21%)	eHarmony (23%)
eHarmony (11%)	Plenty of Fish (17%)
MySpace (7%)	OK Cupid (15%)
Adult Friend Finder (4%)	Christian Mingle (2%), Zoosk (2%)

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. 2005 survey was conducted September 14-December 8, 2005.

Focus on apps: 3% of American adults—including one out of every ten between the ages of 25 and 34—use dating apps on their cell phone

The online dating marketplace has undergone dramatic changes since we conducted our first study on this subject in 2005. In particular, many services now offer cell phone apps that allow users to update their profile, search the profiles of others, and find potential dates in their area using their mobile phone.⁹ For the first time in our 2013 survey we asked specifically about the use of these cell phone dating apps.

Among those who use cell phone apps, 7% say that they have specifically used a dating app on their phone. Since 45% of all Americans are app users, that means that 3% of the overall adult population has used a cell phone dating app at one point or another.¹⁰ Similarly, 6% of smartphone owners have used a mobile dating app.

Although online dating sites are relatively common among a range of age cohorts, mobile dating apps are primarily popular with Americans in their mid-20s through mid-30s. One out of every ten 25-34 year olds (11%) has used a dating app—that is double the rate for those ages 18-24 (5% of whom have used dating apps) and for those ages 35-44 (4%). Older adults use online dating sites in at least modest numbers, but dating app usage is effectively non-existent for people in their mid-forties and beyond.

⁸ Comscore monthly visitor data for July 2013 also finds Match.com and its associated sites (which include OK Cupid) as the most-visited online dating site, followed by Zoosk, Plenty of Fish sites, and eHarmony.

⁹ These dating apps include both the mobile versions of general online dating sites such as eHarmony or Match.com, as well as “mobile-only” apps such as Grindr or Tinder.

¹⁰ As with online dating sites, we asked dating app users a follow-up question about which particular apps they use. The number of dating app users in our survey (n=57) was not large enough to report their answers within the body of the report, but their responses are included in the survey questions section of the methodology.

Dating apps

The % of American adults in each group who have used mobile dating apps

		% who have used dating apps
All adults (n=2,252)		3%
a	Men (n=1,029)	4 ^b
b	Women (n=1,223)	2
Race/ethnicity		
a	White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,571)	3
b	Black, Non-Hispanic (n=252)	6 ^a
c	Hispanic (n=249)	4
Age		
a	18-24(n=243)	5 ^{def}
b	25-34(n=284)	11 ^{acdef}
c	35-44(n=292)	4 ^{def}
d	45-54(n=377)	<1
e	55-64(n=426)	1
f	65+ (n=570)	<1
Education attainment		
a	No high school diploma (n=168)	3
b	High school grad (n=630)	4
c	Some College (n=588)	3
d	College + (n=834)	3
Household income		
a	Less than \$30,000/yr (n=580)	4
b	\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=374)	5
c	\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=298)	5
d	\$75,000+ (n=582)	3
Urbanity		
a	Urban (n=763)	4 ^c
b	Suburban (n=1,037)	3
c	Rural (n=450)	2

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note(s): Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

The median ages for online dating site users and dating app users are illustrative in highlighting the age differences between each group. The typical (median) online dating site user is 38 years old, while the typical (median) dating app user is 29 years old—nearly a decade younger.

Americans have significantly greater familiarity with online dating through others than was the case in 2005

Although the proportion of Americans who say that they personally use online dating has not changed dramatically since 2005, familiarity with online dating through others (i.e., knowing someone who uses online dating, or knowing someone who has entered into a relationship via online dating) has increased significantly over that time. Some 42% of Americans now know someone who has used an online dating site or app, up from 31% in 2005. And twice as many people now know someone who has entered into a marriage or long-term relationship after meeting through an online dating site or app—29% of Americans now know someone who met their partner this way, compared with just 15% in 2005.

Overall, college graduates and those with relatively high household incomes are especially likely to know someone who uses online dating sites or apps. However, every major demographic group is now significantly more likely to respond in the affirmative to this question than was the case when we first asked it in 2005. Notably, Americans ages 65 and older are now twice as likely to know someone who uses online dating than they were in 2005 (24% of seniors now know an online dater, compared with 13% who did so eight years ago).

Everyone (knows someone who) is doing it (1 of 2)

The % of American adults who personally know someone who has used an online dating site or app

		2005 ⁺ (n=3,215)	2013 (n=2,252)	% change
All adults		31%	42%	+11
a	Men	28	41	+13
b	Women	33 ^a	44	+11
Race/ethnicity				
a	White, Non-Hispanic	32 ^b	47 ^{bc}	+15
b	Black, Non-Hispanic	21	30	+9
c	Hispanic*	32 ^b	33	+1
Age				
a	18-29	40 ^{cd}	49 ^{cd}	+9
b	30-49	36 ^{cd}	48 ^d	+12
c	50-64	29 ^d	42 ^d	+13
d	65+	13	24	+11

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. 2005 survey was conducted September 14-December 8, 2005.

Note(s): Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age) for that year.

+ Question wording in 2005 was "(Aside from yourself), do you know anyone who has used an online dating website?"

* 2005 data is for English-speaking Hispanics only.

Everyone (knows someone who) is doing it (2 of 2)

The % of American adults who personally know someone who has used an online dating site or app

		2005 ⁺ (n=3,215)	2013 (n=2,252)	% change
All adults		31%	42%	+11
Education attainment				
a	No high school diploma	15	21	+6
b	High school grad	24 ^a	32 ^a	+8
c	Some College	35 ^{ab}	47 ^{ab}	+12
d	College +	45 ^{abc}	57 ^{abc}	+12
Household income				
a	Less than \$30,000/yr	22	31	+9
b	\$30,000-\$49,999	32 ^a	43 ^a	+11
c	\$50,000-\$74,999	39 ^a	54 ^{ab}	+15
d	\$75,000+	43 ^{ab}	57 ^{ab}	+14
Urbanity				
a	Urban	35 ^{bc}	43 ^c	+8
b	Suburban	30	44 ^c	+14
c	Rural	26	36	+10

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. 2005 survey was conducted September 14-December 8, 2005.

Note(s): Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age) for that year.

+ Question wording in 2005 was "(Aside from yourself), do you know anyone who has used an online dating website?"

* 2005 data is for English-speaking Hispanics only.

Similarly, college graduates and the relatively affluent are especially likely to say that they know someone who has met a spouse or long-term partner via online dating—and once again, nearly every major demographic group is more likely to know someone who has done this compared with eight years ago. Seniors are again especially notable in this regard, as 20% of those 65 and older now know someone who has entered into a serious relationship with someone they met via online dating. That is a three-fold increase over the 7% of seniors who said “yes” to this question in 2005.

And that's how we met!

The % of American adults who personally know someone who has been in a long-term relationship or married someone they met through an online dating site or app

		2005 ⁺ (n=3,215)	2013 (n=2,252)	% change
All adults		15%	29%	+14%
a	Men	12	26	+14
b	Women	17 ^a	31 ^a	+14
Race/ethnicity				
a	White, Non-Hispanic	16 ^b	33 ^{bc}	+17
b	Black, Non-Hispanic	7	16	+9
c	Hispanic*	16 ^b	19	+3
Age				
a	18-29	14 ^d	31 ^d	+17
b	30-49	17 ^d	34 ^{cd}	+17
c	50-64	17 ^d	26 ^d	+9
d	65+	7	20	+13
Education attainment				
a	No high school diploma	4	16	+12
b	High school grad	9 ^a	20	+11
c	Some College	15 ^{ab}	32 ^{ab}	+17
d	College +	27 ^{abc}	41 ^{abc}	+14
Household income				
a	Less than \$30,000/yr	9	20	+11
b	\$30,000-\$49,999	17 ^a	31 ^a	+14
c	\$50,000-\$74,999	19 ^a	35 ^a	+16
d	\$75,000+	22 ^{ab}	40 ^{ab}	+18
Urbanity				
a	Urban	17 ^c	29	+12
b	Suburban	15 ^c	29	+14
c	Rural	11	27	+16

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. 2005 survey was conducted September 14-December 8, 2005.

Note(s): Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age) for that year.
+ Question wording in 2005 was "(Aside from yourself), do you know anyone who has been in a long-term relationship or married someone they met through a dating website?"

* 2005 data is for English-speaking Hispanics only.

Online dating is becoming more accepted over time; online daters (and those who know online daters) have more positive attitudes about the process

As we found in our previous research on this subject, Americans' attitudes towards online dating are relatively nuanced. Although a majority of Americans agree with two positive statements about online dating, a sizeable minority agree with two statements casting online dating (or the people who use online dating) in a more negative light. Nonetheless, attitudes towards online dating have progressed in a clearly positive direction in the eight years since our previous study:

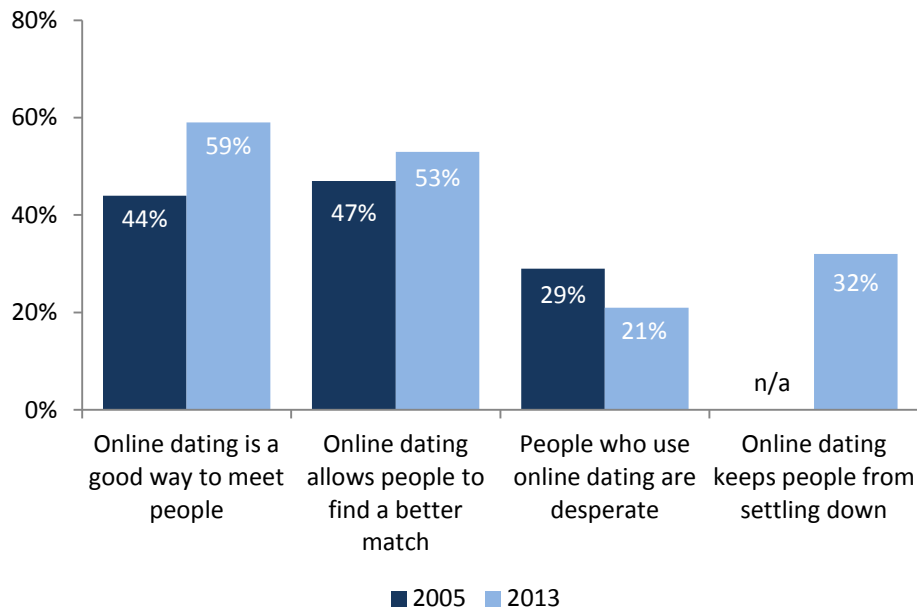
- 59% of internet users¹¹ agree with the statement that “online dating is a good way to meet people,” a 15-point increase from the 44% who said so in 2005.
- 53% of internet users agree with the statement that “online dating allows people to find a better match for themselves because they can get to know a lot more people,” a 6-point increase from the 47% who said so in 2005.
- 21% of internet users agree with the statement that “people who use online dating sites are desperate,” an 8-point decline from the 29% who said so in 2005.

Additionally, one-third of internet users (33%) agree with the statement that “online dating keeps people from settling down because they always have options for people to date.” This is the first time we have asked this question, and therefore we cannot determine how it has changed over time (if at all).

¹¹ In our 2013 survey, this question was asked of all adults. However, we are reporting our findings throughout this section based on internet users in order to be comparable with our 2005 data, which was asked only of those who use the internet. There are only modest differences in our 2013 data when based on all adults as opposed to internet users, and results for both groups can be found in the “survey questions” section at the end of this report.

Opinions of online dating, 2005-2013

% of internet users who agree with each of the following statements



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. 2005 survey was conducted September 14-December 8, 2005, n=3,215 adults ages 18+.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, people who have used online dating themselves have positive views about the process compared with the overall population. Some 79% of online daters agree that online dating is a good way to meet people (compared with 53% of those who are not online daters), and 70% agree that it helps people find a better romantic match because they have access to a wide range of potential partners (compared with 48% of those who are not online daters). And people who know someone who uses online dating sites—or know someone who has met a spouse or partner through those sites—have significantly more positive views about the benefits of online dating than do people with less second-hand exposure to online dating (although these “second hand” users are not quite as positive as are those who use online dating personally).

In a similar vein, online daters (and those who know online daters) are significantly *less* likely than non-users to view aspects of the online dating experience in a negative light. Yet even some online daters seem to find both the process itself—and the individuals they encounter on these sites—distasteful. Around one in ten online daters (13%) agree with the statement that “people who use online dating sites are desperate,” and 29% agree that online dating “keeps people from settling down because they always have options for people to date.”

The online dating experience

In addition to the usage and attitudinal measures discussed above, we also asked the 11% of Americans who have used online dating about some of their specific experiences with online dating sites and mobile dating apps. Each of these is discussed in greater detail in the section that follows. The relatively small number of online daters in our survey makes it impossible to conduct a detailed demographic analysis of these questions. However, our sample size is sufficient to compare men and women, and any statistically significant gender differences are noted where appropriate.

Two-thirds of online daters have gone on a date through these sites, and one quarter have used them to find a marriage or long-term relationship

Compared with eight years ago, online daters in 2013 are much more likely to actually go out on dates with the people they meet on these sites. Some 66% of online daters have gone on a date with someone they met through an online dating site or app, up from 43% when we first asked this question in 2005. Male and female online daters are equally likely to have gone on a date with someone they met through a dating site or app.

Moving beyond dates, one quarter of online daters (23%) say that they themselves have entered into a marriage or long-term relationship with someone they met through a dating site or app. That is statistically similar to the 17% of online daters who said that this had happened to them when we first asked this question in 2005. Male and female online daters are equally likely to translate their experiences with online dating into a long-term relationship.

Substantial numbers of online daters use paid dating sites, or use sites for people with shared interests or backgrounds

A substantial minority of online daters have paid to use an online dating site or app, and “niche” sites for people with specific interests or backgrounds are popular with relatively large numbers of online daters:

- 40% of online daters have *used an online dating site or app designed for people with shared interests or backgrounds*
- 33% of online daters have *paid to use an online dating site or app*

At the same time, just 4% of online daters have attended a group outing or other physical event organized by an online dating site. There are no differences between male and female online daters on any of these behaviors.

Negative experiences with online dating

Although significant numbers of online daters are meeting potential dates and new partners, negative experiences can and do occur. We asked about two specific experiences and found that:

- 54% of online daters have felt that *someone else seriously misrepresented themselves in their profile*.
- 28% of online daters have been *contacted by someone through an online dating site or app in a*

way that made them feel harassed or uncomfortable.

Men and women are equally likely to say that they have encountered others misrepresenting themselves in their profile, but women are much more likely to have experienced uncomfortable or bothersome contact via online dating sites or apps. Some 42% of female online daters have experienced this type of contact at one point or another, compared with 17% of men.¹²

One in five online daters have asked someone to help them with their profile

In addition to asking about the specifically negative experiences discussed above, we also asked about two other possible experiences that people might have with online dating and found that:

- 38% of online daters have been *matched with or come across the profile of someone they already know* while using one of these sites.
- 22% of online daters have *asked someone to help them create or review their profile*.

Interestingly, women are around twice as likely as men to ask for assistance creating or perfecting their profile—30% of female online daters have done this, compared with 16% of men.

Reasons for using online dating sites

All of the behaviors and activities discussed thus far were asked of people who have *ever* used an online dating site or mobile dating app. We also presented people who *currently* have a profile on a dating site or app with a series of questions about why they might use online dating, and asked them to tell us whether each of those was a major reason, a minor reason, or a not a reason for dating online.

- 60% of active online daters say that “meeting people who share similar interests or hobbies” is a major reason they use online dating.
- 52% say that “meeting people who share your beliefs or values” is a major reason they use online dating.
- 46% say that “finding someone for a long-term relationship or marriage” is a major reason they use online dating.
- 33% say that “having a schedule that makes it hard to meet interesting people in other ways” is a major reason they use online dating.
- 25% say that “meeting people who just want to have fun without being in a serious relationship” is a major reason they use online dating.

In addition, we asked active online daters if their profile photo is visible to anyone, and around three quarters of them (73%) said that it was. One in five (20%) said that they control who gets to see their profile photo.

¹² This may be partially because men are more likely than women to initiate contact on dating sites. A study of 6,485 users of a major dating site found that men viewed more than three times as many profiles as women did, and that men on average sent three times as many first-contact emails over the course of the study. See Hitsch, G., Hortacsu, A., and Ariely, D., “Marching and Sorting in Online Dating”, *American Economic Review*, Vol. 100, No. 1 (March 2010), pp. 130-163.

Part 3: The Broader Online Environment around Dating and Relationships

Online dating sites are just one of the ways that people can meet prospective partners online. In this chapter, we examine the wider online landscape around dating and relationships, and the ways in which Americans are using the internet to meet and interact with potential, current, or past love interests.

5% of those Americans who are married or in a long-term partnership—and 11% of those who have been together for ten years or less—met their partner online

Even today, the vast majority of Americans who are in a marriage, partnership, or other serious relationship say that they met their partner through offline—rather than online—means. At the same time, the proportion of online Americans who say that they met their current partner online has doubled in the last eight years. Some 6% of internet users who are in a committed relationship¹³ met their partner online, up from 3% of internet users who said this in 2005. On an “all-adults” basis, that means that 5% of all committed relationships in America today began online.

This question was asked of everyone in a marriage or other long-term partnership, including many whose relationships were initiated well before meeting online was an option. Looking only at those committed relationships that started within the last decade, 11% say that their spouse or partner is someone they met online.¹⁴ By contrast, hardly any relationships that have existed for more than ten years had their genesis online: just 1% of Americans who have been in a committed relationship for more than ten years met their spouse or partner online. Similarly, meeting online is more common among younger age groups. Some 8% of 18-29 year olds in a marriage or committed relationship met their partner online, compared with 7% of 30-49 year olds, 3% of 50-64 year olds, and just 1% of those 65 and older.

Of course, “meeting online” might mean many things—from meeting on an online dating site, to being introduced to a friend of a friend via email, or meeting online in some other online venue not specifically oriented around dating or relationships, such as a fan forum or online gaming site. In an effort to gain more specificity on this question, we presented those individuals who met their spouse or partner online with a follow-up asking about the specific site on which they met. Around two-thirds of those who met their spouse or partner online said that they met via an online dating site, although the results are based on a small number of respondents (n=63) and are not reported here in detail.

Looking at this question in a slightly different way, people who have used online dating are significantly more likely to say that their relationship began online than are those who have never used online

¹³ Here and throughout this report, the term “committed relationship” refers to anyone who is married, living with a partner, or in some other kind of committed romantic relationship.

¹⁴ The “How Couples Meet and Stay Together” survey has found that 6.6% of all couples (and 18.6% of those whose relationship began in 2003 or later) met online. This includes both brand new and uncommitted relationships. For more information see <http://data.stanford.edu/hcmst>

dating. Fully 34% of Americans who are in a committed relationship and have used online dating sites or dating apps in the past say that they met their spouse or partner online, compared with 3% for those who have not used online dating sites.

How I met your...

% of those who are married, living with a partner, or in some other committed relationship who met their spouse/partner ONLINE

		% met spouse/partner online
All married/partnered/committed (n=1,428)		5%
Age		
a	18-29 (n=196)	8 ^{cd}
b	30-49 (n=452)	7 ^{cd}
c	50-64 (n=448)	3 ^d
d	65+ (n=302)	1
Length of partnership		
a	0-5 years (n=351)	12 ^c
b	6-10 years (n=173)	8 ^c
c	11+ years (n=888)	1
Have used online dating sites/apps		
a	Yes (n=99)	34 ^b
b	No (n=1329)	3

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Using the internet to flirt with people—and to research past (or future) love interests—has become much more common in recent years

In our 2005 survey on dating and relationships we asked a series of questions about broad uses of the internet in the realm of dating and relationships. In our 2013 survey we repeated several of these questions and found that a number of them— such as flirting, looking up past love interests, and researching prospective partners—are now significantly more widespread than they were eight years ago.

Two of these behaviors are widely applicable to many different types of people (married, single, divorced, actively looking for a partner, not looking at the moment, etc). Therefore, we asked these questions of all internet users and found that:

- 24% of internet users have *searched for information online about someone they dated in the past*, up from 11% in 2005.
- 24% of internet users have *flirted with someone online*, up from 15% in 2005.

Nearly every demographic group—men and women, young and old, the well-off and financially less secure—is more likely to take part in each of these activities than was true in 2005. However, as in our previous study, each is much more prevalent among younger age groups. This is especially true of flirting online: Nearly half of internet users ages 18-24 (47%), and 40% of those ages 25-34, have flirted with someone online at one point or another.

Looking up past flames and flirting online (1 of 2)

The % of internet users in each group who have done the following...

		Have searched online for info about past relationship	Have flirted online
All internet users (n=1,895)		24%	24%
a	Men (n=874)	22	27 ^b
b	Women (n=1,021)	26 ^a	21
Race/ethnicity			
a	White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,331)	24	22
b	Black, Non-Hispanic (n=207)	27	32 ^a
c	Hispanic (n=196)	22	29
Age			
a	18-24 (n=240)	32 ^{def}	47 ^{cdef}
b	25-34 (n=272)	34 ^{def}	40 ^{cdef}
c	35-44 (n=277)	29 ^{def}	26 ^{def}
d	45-54 (n=349)	21 ^f	13 ^{ef}
e	55-64 (n=352)	15 ^f	8
f	65+ (n=356)	9	6

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Looking up past flames and flirting online (2 of 2)

The % of internet users in each group who have done the following...

		Have searched online for info about past relationship	Have flirted online
All internet users (n=1,895)		24%	24%
Education attainment			
a	No high school diploma (n=99)	24	27
b	High school grad (n=473)	16	20
c	Some College (n=517)	28 ^b	29 ^{bd}
d	College+ (n=790)	28 ^b	22
Household income			
a	Less than \$30,000/yr (n=417)	27	32 ^{bd}
b	\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=320)	25	24
c	\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=279)	24	26
d	\$75,000+ (n=559)	25	20
Urbanity			
a	Urban (n=649)	27 ^c	28 ^c
b	Suburban (n=893)	26 ^c	23 ^c
c	Rural (n=351)	15	18

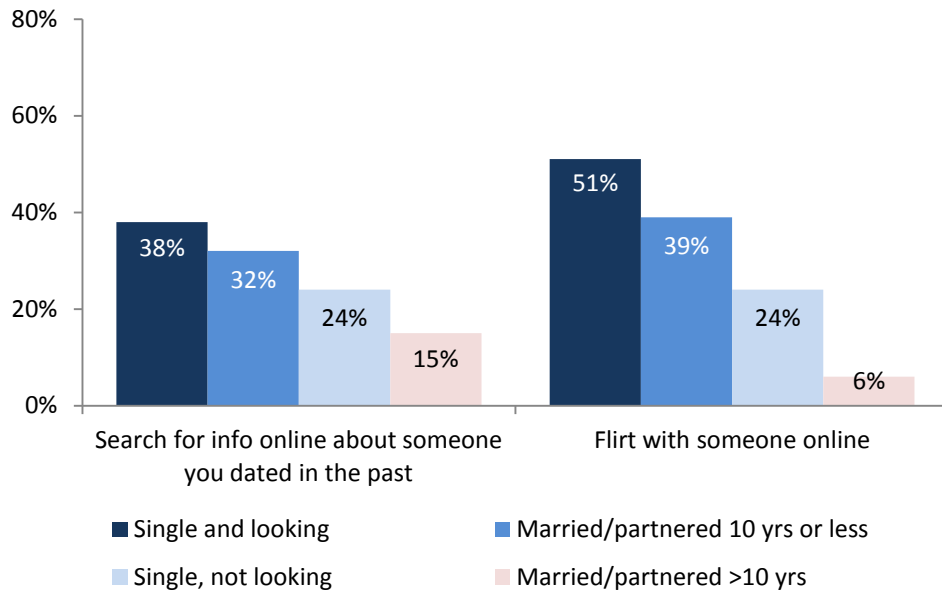
Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Looking up old flames and flirting online are also particularly common among the “single and looking,” as well as among people who have been in a serious committed relationship for a decade or less. Some 38% of singles who are actively seeking a romantic partnership have gone online to look up someone they dated in the past, as have 32% of those who have been married or partnered for a relatively short period of time. And half of the “single and looking” group (and 39% of the short-term married/partnered) have flirted with someone online—just 6% of internet users who have been in a long-term relationship for more than 10 years have done so.

Half of “single and looking” internet users have flirted online

% of internet users in each group who have done the following...



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

In addition to checking in on *past* relationships, many more Americans are now going online to research *potential* (or current) partners than was the case in 2005. We asked this question specifically of internet users with recent dating experience¹⁵ and found that nearly one third of these internet users (29%) have gone online to search for information online about someone they were currently dating or were about to meet for a first date. That is more than double the 13% that did so when we last asked about this behavior in 2005.¹⁶ Women are a bit more likely than men to conduct this type of research, those with a college education are more likely to do so than those who have not attended college, urban and suburbanites are more likely to do so than rural residents, and online daters are more likely to do so than non-online daters.

¹⁵ As noted in the introduction, “recent dating experience” includes people who are either single and actively looking for a romantic partner, or who have been in a committed relationship for ten years or less.

¹⁶ Note: In 2005 we asked this of internet users who were single and looking, or who had been in a marriage or committed relationship for five years or less.

Vetting of current/potential partners online

Among internet users who are single and looking or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less, the % who have searched online for information about someone they were currently dating or about to meet for a first date

		% who have searched online for info about someone dating or about to meet for a date
All internet users who are single/looking, or in a committed relationship of 10 yrs or less (n=616)		29%
a	Men (n=341)	25
b	Women (n=275)	33 ^a
Age		
a	18-29(n=239)	34 ^c
b	30-49(n=237)	29 ^c
c	50-64(n=104)	16
Education attainment		
a	High school grad (n=176)	17
b	Some College (n=171)	37 ^a
c	College + (n=234)	30 ^a
Household income		
a	Less than \$30,000/yr (n=168)	26
b	\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=118)	31
c	\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=94)	34
d	\$75,000+ (n=170)	31
Urbanity		
a	Urban (n=234)	34 ^c
b	Suburban (n=283)	29 ^c
c	Rural (n=98)	15
Have used online dating sites/apps		
a	Yes (n=142)	53 ^b
b	No (n=474)	21

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

One in five internet users with recent dating experience have asked someone out on a first date online; one quarter have used the internet or email to maintain a long-distance relationship

One quarter of internet users with recent dating experience (24%) have used the internet or email to maintain a long-distance romantic relationship. That figure is comparable to the 19% of such internet users who used digital tools to maintain a long-distance relationship when we first asked this question in 2005. This behavior is especially common among online daters, those who have attended college, and younger adults.

A similar number (20%) have asked someone out on a first date online or via email. Men are a bit more likely to have done this than women, and online daters are much more likely to have done so than those who do not use online dating.

First dates and long-distance relationships (1 of 2)

Among internet users who are single and looking or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less, the % who have...

		Used internet or email to maintain a long distance relationship	Asked someone out for a first date online or via email
All internet users who are single/looking, or in a committed relationship of 10 yrs or less (n=616)		24%	20%
a	Men (n=341)	23	23 ^b
b	Women (n=275)	24	16
Age			
a	18-29(n=239)	29 ^c	16
b	30-49(n=237)	23 ^c	24 ^a
c	50-64(n=104)	13	18
Education attainment			
a	High school grad (n=176)	12	16
b	Some College (n=171)	29 ^a	22
c	College + (n=234)	31 ^a	21

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

First dates and long-distance relationships (2 of 2)

Among internet users who are single and looking or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less, the % who have...

		Used internet or email to maintain a long distance relationship	Asked someone out for a first date online or via email
All internet users who are single/looking, or in a committed relationship of 10 yrs or less (n=616)		24%	20%
Household income			
a	Less than \$30,000/yr (n=168)	28	22
b	\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=118)	23	19
c	\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=94)	23	24
d	\$75,000+ (n=170)	24	18
Urbanity			
a	Urban (n=234)	26 ^c	21
b	Suburban (n=283)	25 ^c	21
c	Rural (n=98)	14	16
Have used online dating sites/apps			
a	Yes (n=142)	49 ^b	51 ^b
b	No (n=474)	16	11

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Part 4: Social networking sites, cell phones, dating, and relationships

The technological landscape has changed dramatically since we first studied dating and relationships in the fall of 2005. At the time we conducted our first survey on this topic, the release of the iPhone was still two years in the future, Facebook was in the process of expanding from college campuses to high schools, and just one in ten online adults used social networking sites of any kind. Today six out of every ten Americans use social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook or Twitter, and more than half are smartphone owners. In this chapter, we examine some of the ways in which mobile phones and social networking sites are impacting the world of dating and relationships.

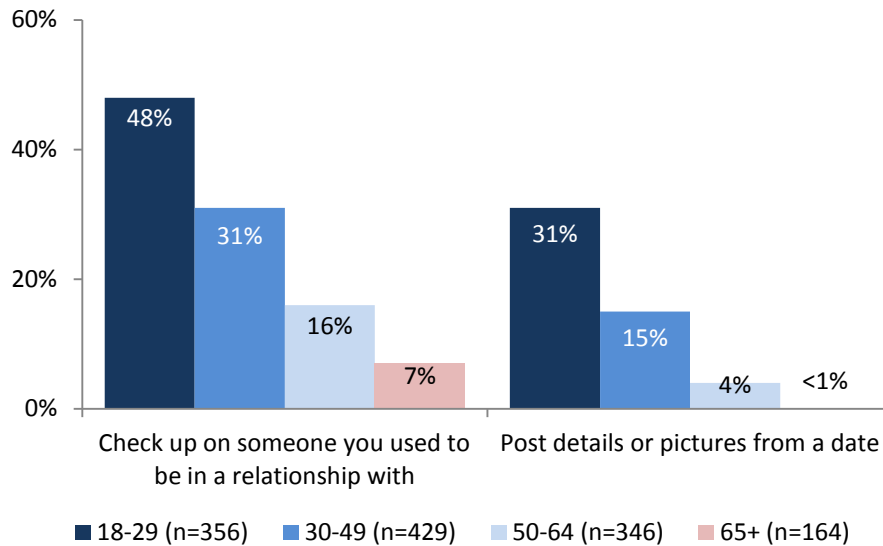
One in three SNS users have checked up on someone they used to be in a relationship with, and one in six have posted pictures or details of a date on a social networking site

Social networking sites offer fertile ground for checking in on past relationships, and also for posting updates about current ones. One third (31%) of all SNS users have gone on these sites to check up on someone they used to date or be in a relationship with, and 17% have posted pictures or other details from a date on a social networking site.

Younger adults are particularly likely to have done both of these activities compared with older adults. Some 48% of SNS users ages 18-29 have used these sites to check up on someone they dated in the past, and 31% have posted details or pictures from a date. Otherwise there are few demographic differences when it comes to either of these behaviors.

Checking on past relationships and posting details from dates on social networking sites

% of SNS/Twitter users who have used a social networking site to...



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

30% of SNS users with recent dating experience have used these sites to research prospective partners; they also offer a venue for linking up with “friends of friends,” and for asking people out on dates.

Social networking profiles often contain a wealth of valuable information to potential suitors—such as personal photos, current relationship status, or information about one’s hobbies and interests—and many users are taking advantage of these sites to research people they are interested in romantically. Nearly one third (30%) of SNS users with recent dating experience¹⁷ have used a social networking site to get more information about someone they were interested in dating. Social networking sites also offer an additional venue for meeting or being introduced to “friends of friends.” Some 12% of SNS users with recent dating experience have friended or followed someone on a social networking site specifically because one of their friends suggested they might want to date that person.

These questions were only asked of a subset of SNS users so our ability to do demographic comparisons is somewhat limited, but younger SNS users clearly stand out when it comes to each of these behaviors. Some 41% of SNS users with recent dating experience in the 18-29 age group have used a social networking site to get more information about a potential partner (compared with 24% of those ages 30-49), and 18% have followed or friended someone specifically because someone suggested they might

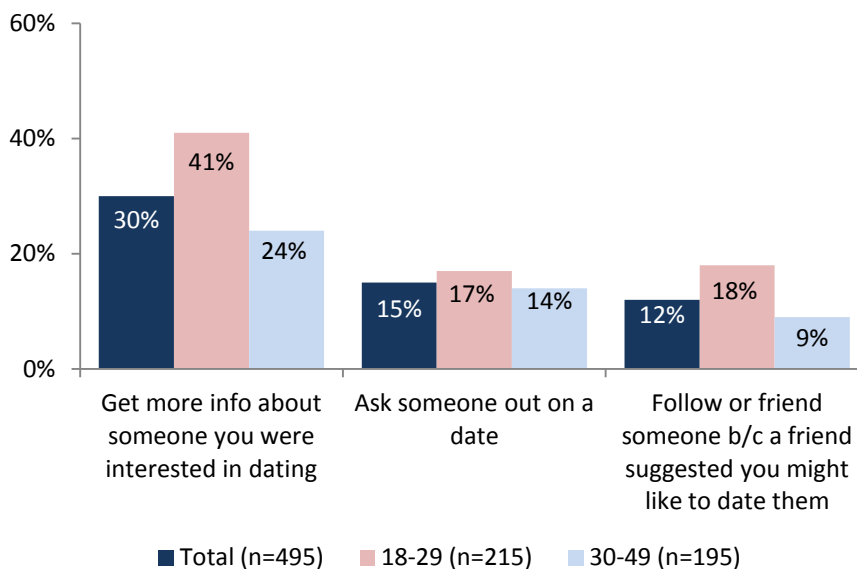
¹⁷ As is the case throughout this report, people with “recent dating experience” include those who are single and actively looking for a partner as well as those who have been in a committed relationship for ten years or less.

like to date that person (double the 9% of 30-49 year olds who have done so).

Beyond using these sites as a tool for researching potential partners, some 15% of SNS users with recent dating experience have actually asked someone out on a date using a social networking site. Men are somewhat more likely than women to have done this (19% vs. 11%) but otherwise this behavior is relatively consistent across demographic groups.

Young adults are especially likely to research prospective love interests on social networking sites

% of SNS/Twitter users with recent dating experience who have used a social networking site to...



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

For young adults especially, relationships and social media can make for a potentially awkward mix

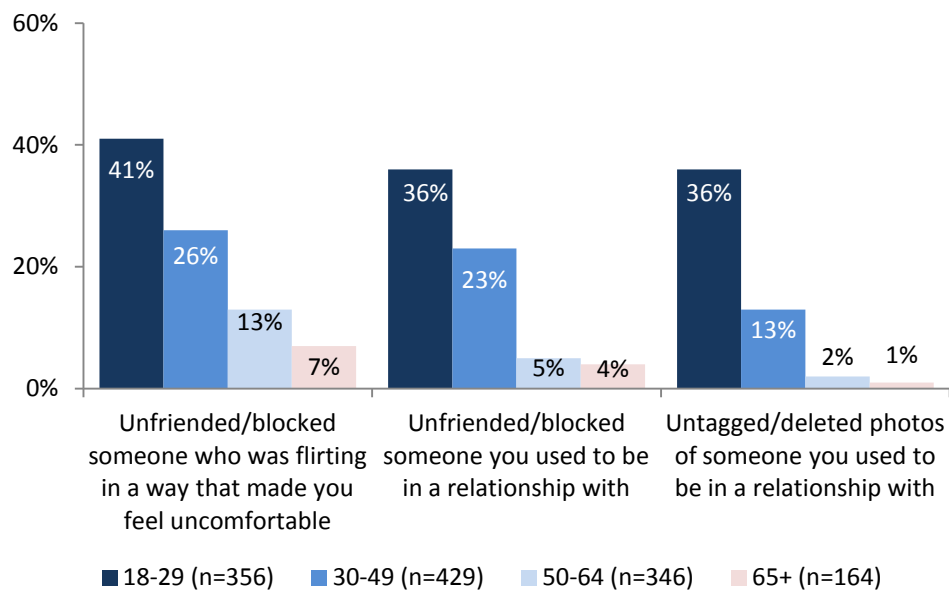
Dating and relationships can produce negative or distressing consequences: Flirting can become uncomfortable, or relationships themselves can end and necessitate a cutting off of contact between parties. And the social networking world is now part of that story. Some 27% of all SNS users have unfriended or blocked someone who was flirting in a way that made them feel uncomfortable, and 22% have unfriended or blocked someone that they were once in a relationship with. These sites can also serve as a lingering reminder of relationships that have ended—17% of social networking site users have untagged or deleted photos on these sites of themselves and someone they used to be in a relationship with.

Not surprisingly, young adults—who have near-universal rates of social networking site use and have

spent the bulk of their dating lives in the social media era—are significantly more likely than older social media users to have experienced all three of these situations in the past.

Negative relationship experiences on social networking sites

% of SNS/Twitter users who have...



Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Along with young adults, women tend to have greater exposure than men to some negative aspects of dating in the social networking era. Female social media users are significantly more likely than males to have blocked or unfriended someone who was flirting in a way that made them feel uncomfortable (33% of female SNS users have done this, compared with 19% of men), although women and men are equally likely to have unfriended a past flame, or to have untagged or deleted photos from a past relationship.

For cell phone owners, asking someone out on a date by calling them is still (somewhat) more common than sending a text message

Text messaging is now used by eight in ten cell owners, but voice calling is still the preferred method for asking someone out on a date—if only by a modest margin. We asked cell phone owners with recent dating experience whether they had ever asked someone out on a date using their cell phone and found that:

- 52% of the cell owners with recent dating experience have asked someone out on a date by **calling** on their cell phone

- 37% have asked someone out on a date by **sending a text message** on their cell phone¹⁸

Younger adults (those ages 18-29) and those in the next age group (ages 30-49) are equally likely to have asked someone out of a date with a voice call. But younger adults are significantly more likely than those in their thirties and forties—by a 47% to 33% margin—to have asked someone out via text message. Interestingly, men and women are equally likely to have asked someone out via text message, but men are much more likely to have done so via voice call.

Call me, maybe?

Among cell owners who are single and looking or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less, the % who have...

		Asked someone out by <u>calling them</u> on your cell phone	Asked someone out by sending a <u>text message</u>
Cell owners who are single/looking, or in a committed relationship of 10 yrs or less (n=571)		52%	37%
a	Men (n=318)	61 ^b	40
b	Women (n=253)	41	34
Age			
a	18-29(n=236)	57 ^c	47 ^{bc}
b	30-49(n=225)	52	33 ^c
c	50-64(n=89)	43	21

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

One in six Americans with recent dating experience have broken up with someone—or had someone break up with them—by text message, email, or sending a message online

Among Americans with recent dating experience who use the internet or own a cell phone:

- 17% have *broken up with someone* they were dating by text message, email, or by sending a message online
- 17% have had someone they were dating *break up with them* by text message, email, or by sending a message online

Younger adults are generally more likely than older adults to have been broken up with (or to have

¹⁸ Figures for asking someone on a date using text messaging are based on cell phone owners who use text messaging

broken up with someone) via digital means.

Digital break-ups

Among internet users or cell owners who are single and looking or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less, the % who have...

		Broken up with someone by email, text, or online message	Had someone break up with <u>you</u> by email, text, or online message
Internet users or cell owners who are single/looking, or in a committed relationship of 10 yrs or less (n=653)		17%	17%
a	Men (n=364)	15	18
b	Women (n=289)	18	17
Age			
a	18-29(n=245)	22 ^c	28 ^{bc}
b	30-49(n=245)	16 ^c	10
c	50-64(n=118)	7	9

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Appendix Tables

Demographic profile Group 1: “Married or in a committed relationship for 10 years or less”

The % of those in Group 1 (n=524) who are...

Sex	
Men	52
Women	48
Race/ethnicity	
White, Non-Hispanic	63
Black, Non-Hispanic	13
Hispanic	15
Age	
18-29	39
30-49	44
50-64	14
65+	2
Education attainment	
No high school diploma	6
High school grad	33
Some College	34
College +	28
Household income	
Less than \$30,000/yr	27
\$30,000-\$49,999	20
\$50,000-\$74,999	15
\$75,000+	27
Urbanity	
Urban	40
Suburban	44
Rural	16

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Demographic profile of Group 2: “Married or in a committed relationship for more than 10 years”

The % of those in Group 2 (n=904) who are...

Sex	
Men	47
Women	53
Race/ethnicity	
White, Non-Hispanic	74
Black, Non-Hispanic	7
Hispanic	11
Age	
18-29	<1
30-49	34
50-64	41
65+	22
Education attainment	
No high school diploma	10
High school grad	30
Some College	27
College +	32
Household income	
Less than \$30,000/yr	16
\$30,000-\$49,999	16
\$50,000-\$74,999	15
\$75,000+	34
Urbanity	
Urban	30
Suburban	49
Rural	21

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Demographic profile of Group 3: “Single and looking for a partner”

The % of those in Group 3 (n=138) who are...

Sex	
Men	66
Women	34
Race/ethnicity	
White, Non-Hispanic	58
Black, Non-Hispanic	10
Hispanic	17
Age	
18-29	45
30-49	29
50-64	20
65+	6
Education attainment	
No high school diploma	15
High school grad	28
Some College	39
College +	18
Household income	
Less than \$30,000/yr	44
\$30,000-\$49,999	18
\$50,000-\$74,999	15
\$75,000+	15
Urbanity	
Urban	35
Suburban	47
Rural	18

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Demographic profile of Group 4: “Single and not looking for a partner”

The % of those in Group 4 (n=686) who are...

Sex	
Men	41
Women	59
Race/ethnicity	
White, Non-Hispanic	54
Black, Non-Hispanic	17
Hispanic	17
Age	
18-29	31
30-49	19
50-64	22
65+	25
Education attainment	
No high school diploma	11
High school grad	35
Some College	30
College +	21
Household income	
Less than \$30,000/yr	42
\$30,000-\$49,999	14
\$50,000-\$74,999	9
\$75,000+	12
Urbanity	
Urban	40
Suburban	42
Rural	17

Source: Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones.

Online dating sites vs. mobile dating apps

The % of American adults in each group who have used online dating sites vs. mobile dating apps

		% who have used online dating sites	% who have used mobile dating apps
All adults (n=2,252)		9%	3%
a	Men (n=1,029)	10	4 ^b
b	Women (n=1,223)	8	2
Race/ethnicity			
a	White, Non-Hispanic (n=1,571)	11 ^c	3
b	Black, Non-Hispanic (n=252)	7	6 ^a
c	Hispanic (n=249)	5	4
Age			
a	18-24(n=243)	8 ^f	5 ^{def}
b	25-34(n=284)	17 ^{adef}	11 ^{acdef}
c	35-44(n=292)	15 ^{adef}	4 ^{def}
d	45-54(n=377)	8 ^f	<1
e	55-64(n=426)	6	1
f	65+ (n=570)	3	<1
Education attainment			
a	No high school diploma (n=168)	4	3
b	High school grad (n=630)	5	4
c	Some College (n=588)	13 ^{ab}	3
d	College + (n=834)	12 ^{ab}	3
Household income			
a	Less than \$30,000/yr (n=580)	10	4
b	\$30,000-\$49,999 (n=374)	10	5
c	\$50,000-\$74,999 (n=298)	15 ^{ad}	5
d	\$75,000+ (n=582)	8	3
Urbanity			
a	Urban (n=763)	11 ^c	4 ^c
b	Suburban (n=1,037)	9 ^c	3
c	Rural (n=450)	6	2

Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project Spring Tracking Survey, April 17 – May 19, 2013. N=2,252 adults ages 18+. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and on landline and cell phones. Margin of error for results based on all adults is +/- 2.3 percentage points.

Note: Percentages marked with a superscript letter (e.g., ^a) indicate a statistically significant difference between that row and the row designated by that superscript letter, among categories of each demographic characteristic (e.g. age).

Survey Questions

Spring 2013 Tracking Survey

Final Topline

5/21/2013

Data for April 17-May 19, 2013

Princeton Survey Research Associates International for
the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project

Sample: n=2,252 national adults, age 18 and older, including 1,127 cell phone interviews
Interviewing dates: 04.17.2013 – 05.19.2013

Margin of error is plus or minus 2.3 percentage points for results based on Total [n=2,252]

Margin of error is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for results based on all internet users [n=1,895]

Margin of error is plus or minus 4.7 percentage points for results based Group #1: Married or in a relationship 10 years or less [n=524]

Margin of error is plus or minus 3.6 percentage points for results based Group #2: Married or in a relationship for more than 10 years [n=904]

Margin of error is plus or minus 9.3 percentage points for results based Group #3: Not married or in relationship, looking [n=138]

Margin of error is plus or minus 4.3 percentage points for results based Group #4: Not married or in relationship, not looking [n=686]

Margin of error is plus or minus 4.2 percentage points for results based Groups #1 and #3 [n=662]

Margin of error is plus or minus 7.4 percentage points for results based on those who have ever used online dating sites or apps [n=223]

MAR Are you currently married, living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, or have you never been married?

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	47	Married
	6	Living with a partner
	10	Divorced
	4	Separated
	7	Widowed
	24	Never been married
	0	Don't know
	1	Refused

MAR2 Are you currently in a committed romantic relationship, or not?

Based on those who are not married or living with a partner [N=1,040]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	25	Yes, in committed romantic relationship
	71	No
	*	Don't know
	3	Refused

MAR3 How many years have you been (married / in your current relationship)? [IF NECESSARY: Just your best guess is fine.]

Based on those who are married, living with a partner or in some other committed relationship [N=1,428]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	4	Under a year
	25	1-5 years
	13	6-10 years
	29	11-25 years
	27	More than 25 years
	0	Don't know
	1	Refused

MAR4 Would you say you are currently looking for a romantic partner, or that you are not currently looking for a partner?

Based on those who are not married, living with a partner or in some other committed relationship

	<u>CURRENT</u>		<u>SEPT 2005B</u>
%	20	Currently looking	21
	75	Currently not looking	74
	2	Don't know	5
	3	Refused	--
	[N=824]		[N=1,058]

MARSUM Marital/Romantic Status Summary Table

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	28	Group #1: Married or in a relationship 10 years or less
	38	Group #2: Married or in a relationship for more than 10 years
	7	Group #3: Not married or in relationship, looking
	28	Group #4: Not married or in relationship, not looking

MEET Overall, would you say it is EASY or DIFFICULT to meet people in the city or town where you live?

Based on Group 3: Single and looking for a partner

	<u>CURRENT</u>		<u>SEPT 2005B</u>
%	50	Easy to meet people	43
	47	Difficult to meet people	55
	1	Don't know	2
	2	Refused	0
	[N=138]		[N=188]

REL1 Is your (spouse / current partner) someone you first met ONLINE or someone you first met OFFLINE?¹⁹

Based on those who are married, living with a partner or in some other committed relationship

	CURRENT TOTAL	CURRENT INTERNET USERS		SEPT 2005B INTERNET USERS
%	5	6	Met online	3
	94	94	Met offline	97
	*	*	Don't know	*
	*	1	Refused	--
	[N=1,428]	[N=1,268]		[N=1,671]

REL2 Did you meet through an online dating site, or some other way?²⁰

Based on those who are married, living with a partner or in some other committed relationship and met their current partner online

	CURRENT TOTAL	CURRENT INTERNET USERS		SEPT 2005B INTERNET USERS
%	63	61	Met through online dating site	41
	36	38	Some other way	56
	0	0	Don't know	3
	1	1	Refused	--
	[N=63]	[N=61]		[N=44]

REL3 On which site did you first meet? [OPEN-END]

Based on those who are married, living with a partner or in some other committed relationship and met their current partner online [N=63]

	CURRENT	
%	83	Gave response (SPECIFY)
	3	Did not meet on any particular website (VOL.)
	12	Don't know
	1	Refused

¹⁹ September 2005B trend was asked of internet users who were married, living with a partner or in some other committed relationship.

²⁰ September 2005B trend was asked of married/committed internet users who met spouse/partner online. Question wording was: "Did you meet through a dating website or some other way?"

INTDATE Have you ever done any of the following things online? (First/Next), have you ever...
 [INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE]?²¹

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
<i>Items A & B: Based on all internet users</i>				
a. Searched for information online about someone you dated in the past ²²				
Current [N=1,895]	24	75	0	*
September 2005B [N=2,252]	11	89	*	--
b. Flirted with someone online ²³				
Current	24	76	*	*
September 2005B	15	85	*	--
<i>Items C-E: Based on internet users in Groups 1,3: Committed relationship 10 years or less - OR- Single and looking²⁴</i>				
c. Searched for information online about someone you were currently dating or were about to meet for a first date ²⁵				
Current [N=616]	29	71	*	*
September 2005B [N=585]	13	87	*	--
d. Asked someone out online or via email for a first date				
Current	20	80	0	*
e. Used the internet or email to maintain a long-distance romantic relationship ²⁶				
Current	24	76	0	*
September 2005B	19	81	*	--

²¹ Sept 2005B question wording was: "Have you ever used the internet or email to do any of the following things? Have you ever used the internet or email to...[INSERT ITEMS; ROTATE]?"

²² Sept 2005B item wording was: "Search for information about someone you dated in the past"

²³ Sept 2005B item wording was: "Flirt with someone"

²⁴ Sept 2005B items were asked of internet users who are married or in a committed relationship FIVE years or less or who are single and looking.

²⁵ Sept 2005B item wording was: "Search for information about someone you were currently dating or were about to meet for a first date"

²⁶ Sept 2005B item wording was: "Maintain a long-distance romantic relationship with someone"

SNSDATE1 Thinking about your experiences on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter... Have you ever used a social networking site to... [INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE]?

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
<i>Items A & B: Based on all SNS or Twitter users [N=1,325]</i>				
a. Check up on someone that you used to date or be in a relationship with	31	68	*	*
b. Post details or pictures from a date	17	83	*	*
<i>Items C-E: Based on SNS or Twitter users in Groups 1,3: Committed relationship 10 years or less -OR- Single and looking [N=495]</i>				
c. Ask someone out on a date	15	85	0	*
d. Get more information about someone you were interested in dating	30	69	*	*
e. 'Follow' or 'friend' someone because one of your friends suggested you might want to date that person	12	87	0	*

SNSDATE2 Still thinking about your experiences on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter... Have you ever... [INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE]?

Based on all SNS or Twitter users [N=1,325]

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Unfriended or blocked someone that you used to be in a relationship with	22	78	*	*
b. Unfriended or blocked someone who was flirting with you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable	27	73	*	*
c. Untagged or deleted photos of you and someone you used to be in a relationship with	17	83	*	*

CELLDATE Now thinking about your cell phone... Have you ever... [INSERT ITEMS;
RANDOMIZE]?

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
<i>Item A: Based on cell phone owners in Groups 1,3: Committed relationship 10 years or less - OR- Single and looking [N=639]</i>				
a. Asked someone out on a date by calling them on your cell phone	52	47	1	*
<i>Item B: Based on cell phone owners who text message in Groups 1,3: Committed relationship 10 years or less -OR- Single and looking [N=571]</i>				
b. Asked someone out on a date by sending them a text message on your cell phone	37	62	*	0

BREAK Have you ever... [INSERT ITEMS IN ORDER]?

Based on internet users or cell phone owners in Groups 1,3: Committed relationship 10 years or less - OR- Single and looking [N=653]

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Broken up with someone you were dating or seeing romantically by text message, email, or by sending them a message online	17	83	0	*
b. Had someone break up with YOU by text message, email, or by sending you a message online	17	82	*	*

[READ TO ALL:] Thinking now about the different ways people might have met their current partner or the ways people might meet someone they'd be interested in dating...

DATE1a Have YOU, personally, ever used an online dating site such as Match.com, eHarmony, or OK Cupid?²⁷

Based on all internet users

	CURRENT		SEPT 2005B
%	11	Yes	11
	89	No	89
	*	Don't know	*
	*	Refused	--
	[N=1,895]		[N=2,252]

²⁷ For the Sept 2005B trend, from September 14 to September 29, question wording was "Do you ever use an online dating website?" Wording was slightly altered during the field period to ensure that all online daters were being captured by the survey, not just those who were currently using online dating websites. Modified wording was: "Have you ever gone to an online dating website or other site where you can meet people online?" Results shown here combine responses to both forms of the question.

DATE1b Which online dating sites have you used? [Probe for additional: "Any others?"] [If says they've tried 'all' or 'most' of them, probe: Could you please tell me which ones you've used?] [DO NOT READ; PRECODED OPEN-END]²⁸

Based on those who have ever used online dating sites

	CURRENT		SEPT 2005B
%	45	Match.com	29
	23	eHarmony	11
	17	Plenty of Fish	n/a
	15	OK Cupid	n/a
	2	Christian Mingle	1
	2	Zoosk	n/a
	1	Adult Friend Finder	4
	1	J Date	2
	1	Date Hookup	n/a
	*	Facebook	n/a
	*	Chemistry.com	n/a
	n/a	Blackplanet	3
	n/a	True.com	2
	n/a	Yahoo Personals	21
	n/a	MySpace.com	7
	n/a	American Singles	4
	n/a	AOL Profiles Page	2
	n/a	Salon Personals	1
	14	Other (SPECIFY)	26
	9	Don't know	19
	*	Refused	--
	[N=198]		[N=204]

Note: Total may exceed 100% due to multiple responses.

DATE2a Have you ever used a dating app on your cell phone?

Based on those who download apps to their cell phone [N=934]

	CURRENT	
%	7	Yes
	93	No
	*	Don't know
	0	Refused

²⁸ Sept 2005B question wording was: "Earlier you said you have used an online dating website. Which dating websites have you used?"

DATE2b Which dating apps have you used? [Probe for additional: "Any others?"] [If says they've tried 'all' or 'most' of them, probe: Could you please tell me which ones you've used?] [DO NOT READ; PRECODED OPEN-END]

Based on those who have ever used a dating app on their cell phone [N=57]

	CURRENT	
%	27	Plenty of Fish
	20	OK Cupid
	10	Match.com
	8	eHarmony
	8	Zoosk
	6	Tagged
	4	Skout
	1	JDate
	1	Tinder
	15	Other (SPECIFY)
	12	Don't know
	3	Refused

Note: Total may exceed 100% due to multiple responses.

DATE3 (Other than yourself,) Do you personally know anyone who has... [INSERT ITEMS IN ORDER]?²⁹

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Used an online dating site or app ³⁰				
Current	42	56	1	*
September 2005B	31	69	1	--
b. Been in a long-term relationship with or married someone they met through an online dating site or app ³¹				
Current	29	70	1	*
September 2005B	15	85	1	--

²⁹ Sept 2005B question wording was: "(Aside from yourself,) Do you know anyone who has...[INSERT ITEMS IN ORDER]?"

³⁰ Sept 2005B item wording was: "Used an online dating website"

³¹ Sept 2005B item wording was: "Been in a long-term relationship with or married someone they met through a dating website"

DATE4 Thinking about your own experiences with online dating... Have you ever... [INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE]?

Based on those who have ever used online dating sites or apps [N=223]

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Paid to use an online dating site (or app)	33	67	0	0
b. Used an online dating site (or app) designed for people with shared interests or backgrounds	40	59	1	0
c. Attended a group outing or event in your area organized by an online dating site	4	96	0	0

DATES Still thinking about your own experiences with online dating... Have you ever... [INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE]?³²

Based on those who have ever used online dating sites or apps

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Gone on a date with someone you met through an online dating site (or app) ³³				
Current [N=223]	66	34	0	0
September 2005B [N=204]	43	56	1	--
b. Been in a long-term relationship or married someone you met through an online dating site (or app) ³⁴				
Current	23	76	*	0
September 2005B	17	82	1	--
c. Been contacted by someone through an online dating site (or app) in a way that made you feel harassed or uncomfortable				
Current	28	72	0	1
d. Felt like someone else seriously misrepresented themselves in their profile				
Current	54	44	2	1
e. Asked someone to help you create or review your profile				
Current	22	78	0	0
f. Been matched with or come across the profile of someone you already know				
Current	38	61	0	*

³² Sept 2005B question was asked of those who have ever used online dating sites

³³ Sept 2005B item wording was: "Gone on a date with someone you met through a dating website"

³⁴ Sept 2005B item wording was: "Been in a long-term relationship with or married someone you met through a dating website"

DATE6 Do you CURRENTLY have a profile posted on any online dating sites (or apps), even if you don't regularly use them?

Based on those who have ever used online dating sites or apps [N=223]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	41	Yes
	56	No
	3	Don't know
	*	Refused

DATE7 Thinking about the profile that you use most often, is your profile photo visible to anyone, or do you control who can see your photo?

Based on those who currently have a profile posted on any online dating sites or apps [N=89]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	73	Photo visible to anyone
	20	Respondent controls who sees photo
	3	Don't know
	5	Refused

DATE8 Next, I'm going to read some reasons people might use online dating. For each one, please tell me if it is a MAJOR reason YOU personally use online dating, a MINOR reason, or not a reason at all for you. (First/Next), [INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE; ALWAYS ASK a-b TOGETHER IN ORDER]? Is this a MAJOR reason you use online dating, a MINOR reason, or not a reason at all for you?

Based on those who currently have a profile posted on any online dating sites or apps [N=89]

	<u>MAJOR REASON</u>	<u>MINOR REASON</u>	<u>NOT A REASON</u>	<u>DON'T KNOW</u>	<u>REFUSED</u>
a. Meeting people who share similar interests or hobbies	60	19	21	0	0
b. Finding someone for a long-term relationship or marriage	46	31	22	1	0
c. Meeting people who share your beliefs or values	52	19	29	0	0
d. Meeting people who just want to have fun without being in a serious relationship	25	42	34	0	0
e. Having a schedule that makes it hard to meet interesting people in other ways	33	43	24	0	1

DATE9 Many people have different opinions about online dating. Please tell me if you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements about online dating. [INSERT ITEMS; RANDOMIZE; ALWAYS ASK a-b TOGETHER, ALWAYS ASK c-d TOGETHER]. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?³⁵

	AGREE	DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a. Online dating is a good way to meet people				
Current Total [N=2,252]	56	36	6	2
Current Internet users [N=1,895]	59	34	6	1
September 2005B Internet users [N=2,252]	44	44	11	1
b. Online dating allows people to find a better match for themselves because they can get to know a lot more people				
Current Total	51	41	7	1
Current Internet users	53	39	6	1
September 2005B Internet users	47	38	15	1
c. People who use online dating sites are desperate ³⁶				
Current Total	23	70	6	1
Current Internet users	21	73	4	1
September 2005B Internet users	29	61	9	1
d. Online dating keeps people from settling down because they always have options for people to date				
Current Total	33	57	9	2
Current Internet users	32	59	8	1

³⁵ Sept 2005B question was asked only of internet users

³⁶ Sept 2005B item wording was: "People who use online dating are desperate"

Methods

This report is based on the findings of a survey on Americans' use of the Internet. The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International from April 17 to May 19, 2013, among a sample of 2,252 adults, age 18 and older. Telephone interviews were conducted in English and Spanish by landline (1,125) and cell phone (1,127, including 571 without a landline phone). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 2.3 percentage points. For results based on Internet users (n=1,895), the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting telephone surveys may introduce some error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. Both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to PSRAI specifications. Numbers for the landline sample were drawn with equal probabilities from active blocks (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings. The cellular sample was not list-assisted, but was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

New sample was released daily and was kept in the field for at least five days. The sample was released in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger population. This ensures that complete call procedures were followed for the entire sample. At least 7 attempts were made to complete an interview at a sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making contact with a potential respondent. Each number received at least one daytime call in an attempt to find someone available. For the landline sample, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult male or female currently at home based on a random rotation. If no male/female was available, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest adult of the other gender. For the cellular sample, interviews were conducted with the person who answered the phone. Interviewers verified that the person was an adult and in a safe place before administering the survey. Cellular sample respondents were offered a post-paid cash incentive for their participation. All interviews completed on any given day were considered to be the final sample for that day.

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that might bias results. A two-stage weighting procedure was used to weight this dual-frame sample. The first-stage corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns. This weighting also adjusts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample.

The second stage of weighting balances sample demographics to population parameters. The sample is balanced to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region (U.S. Census definitions), population density, and telephone usage. The Hispanic origin was split out based on nativity; U.S. born and non-U.S. born. The basic weighting parameters came from the US Census Bureau's 2011 American Community Survey data. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2010 data. The telephone usage parameter came from an analysis of the January-June 2012 National Health Interview Survey.

Following is the full disposition of all sampled telephone numbers:

Sample Disposition		
<u>Landline</u>	<u>Cell</u>	<u>-</u>
41,291	24,698	Total Numbers Dialed
1,755	411	Non-residential
1,516	88	Computer/Fax
12	----	Cell phone
24,344	9,674	Other not working
2,038	226	Additional projected not working
11,626	14,299	Working numbers
28.2%	57.9%	Working Rate
679	75	No Answer / Busy
3,442	3,668	Voice Mail
41	16	Other Non-Contact
7,464	10,540	Contacted numbers
64.2%	73.7%	Contact Rate
450	1,537	Callback
5,786	7,097	Refusal
1,228	1,906	Cooperating numbers
16.5%	18.1%	Cooperation Rate
45	68	Language Barrier
----	684	Child's cell phone
1,183	1,154	Eligible numbers
96.3%	60.5%	Eligibility Rate
58	27	Break-off
1,125	1,127	Completes
95.1%	97.7%	Completion Rate
10.0%	13.0%	Response Rate

The disposition reports all of the sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the original telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:

- **Contact rate** – the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made
- **Cooperation rate** – the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused
- **Completion rate** – the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed

Thus the response rate for the landline sample was 10 percent. The response rate for the cellular sample was 13 percent.