

PLENTY OF FISH CONVERSATION NATION STUDY 2018

Conversation Nation is the annual in-depth study on the state of conversations in dating. The study explores how every generation of adult singles connects through communication. From the very first time contact is made, to the first date, to partnering up (and even breaking up), conversation is identified as an essential factor in creating and maintaining modern human relationships.

Demographic Overview

- Total Singles: 2000
 - Men: 941 (47%) Women: 1059 (53%)
 - The skew towards females is more nationally representative than an even 50/50 split according to Research Now based on the U.S. Census.
- Ages: 18-55+
 - Gen Z (18-24): 16%, Millennial (25-39): 29% Gen X (40-54): 27%, Boomers (55+): 27%
- Location: United States
- Annual Income: under \$30K: 28%, \$30K-\$44,999K: 17%, \$45K-\$59,999K: 15%, \$60K-\$74,999K: 12%, \$75K-\$99,999: 13%, \$100K-\$149,999K: 10%, \$150K or more: 5%
- Race/Ethnicity: White: 73%, Black: 11%, Asian: 4%, Hispanic/Latino: 10%, Other: 2%
- Sexual Orientation: Heterosexual/Straight: 83%, Bisexual: 5%, Gay: 10%, Other: 2%

CONVERSATION IS KING

CONVERSATION IS THE KEY TO MEETING PEOPLE...AND FALLING IN LOVE:

Today, 74 percent of singles identify good conversation as the best indicator of great chemistry on a date, even over physical attraction.

The very first conversation with someone can change everything, as 60 percent of daters believe it is possible to start falling in love from that moment.

Solidifying its important role early on in the dating process, singles deem conversation the #1 most effective way to identify a compatible partner on a dating app, surpassing



reading through profiles and swiping through photos by a long shot. A further 62 percent of respondents say that first conversations are important or very important to them.

IS THERE ANYTHING WORSE THAN BAD SEX?: YES, evidently the wrong use of *“their, they’re and there”* really gets singles fired up. When asked which of the two were worse, bad sex or bad grammar, the majority of respondents (58%) couldn’t live with subpar grammar. Adding even more importance, 83 percent of singles say they’ve found someone less attractive after having a conversation with them (but the good news is that 87 percent found someone *more* attractive after having a conversation).

LET’S CHAT AND MAKE UP: After a heated debate or quarrel with someone they’re dating, 88 percent of respondents state they would resolve the argument with constructive conversation over makeup sex.

SETTING THE DATE - HOW SINGLES PREFER TO COMMUNICATE

SQUAD GOALS? Forty-six percent of singles admit they are most hesitant to start a conversation for fear of rejection, and 39 percent because they don’t know what to say. An incredible 49 percent of Gen Z and 20 percent of all singles are calling upon the help of others to draft a message to someone they’re interested in.

Of that twenty percent, they are most likely to ask a friend, followed by a family member, and a coworker rounding out the top 3.

GREAT CONVERSATIONS ONLINE = BETTER DATES OFFLINE: Eighty-three percent of singles agree that great conversations on a dating app can lead to better conversations on a date, but how do they successfully make that transition? By zeroing in on the what to/what not to send in those initial interactions.

THIS MESSAGE WILL MOST LIKELY GET YOU A REPLY: Sixty-two percent of singles say first conversations are important or very important, because first impressions count. These are the messages most likely to get a reply on a dating app:

- A message that refers to a shared interest or experience (60%)
 - A compliment on photos or appearance (18%)
 - A joke or funny story (15%)
 - An emoji or GIF (8%)
- **Conversation Tip:** Fifty-nine percent of singles also prefer to talk to someone on the phone before meeting for a first date!



DROP THE THREE DAY RULE: The notion of waiting three days to reply back to a message is now defunct. Eighty-nine percent of singles will respond to a message on a dating app within 12 hours if interested, and 23 percent of those singles will respond right away. When someone replies to a message right away, it shows they're interested, and making themselves available! (not what society has, for so long, deemed as desperate or too eager).

In fact, 75 percent of singles say leaving a message on "read" and not replying for days at a time is a much more annoying texting habit than replying too quickly.

CONVERSATIONS GO BEYOND WORDS: Outside of using words, singles identified their favorite ways to communicate online, via text and in-app with potential dates. Sharing photos/screenshots is the number one choice, followed by their favorite emojis.

- Photos/screenshots (38%)
- Emojis (32%)
- Memes (13%)
- GIFS (12%)
- Bitmojis (5%)

NO ONE WANTS TO SEE YOUR EGGPLANT: The winky face emoji is hot right now, with 55 percent of singles selecting this as their favorite emoji to receive from a potential partner. The eggplant emoji has the adverse effect - 75 percent of singles chose the oblong purple plant as the biggest turnoff when it comes to emojis. No surprise there. Singles top three favorite emojis:

- 😜 Wink face: 55%
- 😘 Kissing face: 43%
- 😍 Heart eyes: 41%

Singles least favorite emojis:

- 🍆 Eggplant: 75%
- 🍑 Peach: 49%
- 🔥 Fire: 32%

SEX TALK VS THE REAL THING: Can talking about sex be sexier than sex itself? Yes, according to the majority of singles (59 percent).



POLITICS AND DATING

THE POLITICAL DIVIDE: The majority of singles (59%) won't start a conversation with someone who's dating profile promotes an opposing political view. This divide becomes increasingly stark when you take a deeper look at Republicans vs. Democrats. Fifty-two percent of Republicans and 65 percent of Democrats won't start a conversation with a political opposite.

SINGLES ARE SWIPING LEFT ON TRUMP: Thirty-four percent of singles say they would rather have bad sex for the rest of their lives than date a Trump supporter, and 50 percent of singles are turned off immediately upon finding out someone is a Trump supporter. Another 44 percent of singles won't date someone who voted for Trump.

Singles are also more tired of talking about Trump (51%) than specialty diets (20%), Millennials vs everyone else (18%), and the upcoming royal wedding (12%).

GOOD CONVERSATION TRUMPS POLITICAL AFFILIATION: While the political divide can be difficult to talk about, there is only one thing singles identified that would prompt them to overlook someone's political affiliation, and that is good conversation (beating out looks, height and money).

HOT TOPICS: POLITICS, EXES, SEX & MONEY: Singles would rather talk exes than politics! When asked what the number one topic singles avoid while chatting online via text and dating apps, singles said politics, followed by sex, past relationships and money.

DATE NIGHT - BREAKING THE ICE

THE MICHELIN STAR DATE: The famous dinner date still reigns supreme as the best first date activity. Seventy-eight percent of singles prefer dates that nurture quality conversation.

"HEY GOOGLE, GIVE ME DATING ADVICE": Thirty-nine percent of singles say they are hesitant to start a conversation with someone they're interested in because they simply don't know what to say. Nineteen percent of singles go as far as to Google or internet search conversation starters **before** going on a date (33% of Gen Z vs. 7% of Boomers) and 13 percent admit to having Googled conversation starts **during** a date (23% of Gen Z vs. only 5% of Boomers).



Singles who prefer going to the bar on a first date are more likely to Google conversation topics during a date, compared to those who prefer the dinner date. Furthermore, bar-goers are 130 percent more likely to say lack of good conversation contributed to their last breakup compared to those singles who prefer dinner.

BUZZKILLS AND CONVO CRUSHERS: Killing the vibe of a conversation can be done quickly if singles aren't aware of the following behaviors - these are the top conversation buzzkills:

- Negativity 41%
- Not letting their date get a word in 20%
- Controversial topics (politics/sex/religion) 18%
- Cheesy one-liners 15%
- Using too many big words to seem smart 7%

WELL THIS IS AWKWARD...: 70 percent of singles experience awkward silences on a typical first date - cue the crickets! But what really happens when singles are stuck in that painful moment of silence?

- 44% Change the subject
- 32% Talk more to fill the silence
- 15% Remain silent - yikes!
- 5% Look at their phone

Gen Z-ers are the most likely of any generation to look at their phone during moments of awkward silence.

SECOND CHANCES? CERTAINLY: First conversations can be tricky to navigate, but thank goodness singles don't expect this to be perfected the first time around - 85 percent are willing to give someone a second chance should the first conversation not go well. Phew!

GEN Z ARE MAKING THEIR OWN RULES

GOOD CONVERSATION GOES A LONG WAY: The key to a Gen Z's heart? Good conversation, evidently. Seventy-four percent of singles say good conversation is the best indicator of great chemistry on a date, and a whopping 81 percent of Gen Z (highest of all the generations) believe this to be true.

GEN Z IS THE iGEN: Is phone addiction real? Yes - 45 percent of iGen can't go a full date without checking their phone versus only 10 percent of Baby Boomers. Also,



outside of flirting in person, 30 percent of iGen believe a flirty text message is the best way to show interest in someone, and only 9 percent of Boomers agree. Oh, and don't call iGen, although 59 percent of singles would like to talk on the phone with someone prior to meeting them in person, Gen Z would prefer not to, stating *it could potentially be awkward*.

EMOJIS ARE ALL THE RAGE: Gen Z isn't particularly fond of initiating conversations, but when they do, they're more likely than the other generations to use an emoji or GIF. They're also more likely to respond to an emoji or GIF on a dating app than older generations. Thirty-five percent of Gen Z use emojis often in a typical text conversations, beating Millennials (23%), Gen X (14%) and Boomers (6%).

SERIOUS DISCUSSION: When asked what the number one social issue they and their partner would have to agree on, Gen Z said gender equality, and they believe the most important conversation happening right now is gun control.

