

# LOVE AT

Make a high-speed connection with online personal ads

# FIRST SITE

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**Y**ou're at a bar, beholding some hot stud who's returning your googly-eyed gaze with a sexy stare. Should you approach him? Yeah. Do you? No. As a result, you'll never know if he shares your passion for Czech porn flicks and Celine Dion. You'll also never unearth what's *really* important

about him (at least for the time being): top or bottom? Life may be like a box of chocolates, but when shopping for the perfect guy, wouldn't it be great to know if you're gonna get one with nuts? Placing an online personal ad gives thousands of single and not-so-single men the opportunity to discover

## STEP 1: "HI. YOU'LL DO."

First, introduce yourself. While a simple "Hello" or "I'm erect" may work at the club, you'll need something catchier to title your ad. Think of this as your pick-up line. But remember: if that remark about the party in your mouth to which everyone is coming didn't fly at the bar, it won't work online, either. Also, as in person, avoid clichés. You're not the only one who's "never done this before." Avoid generic words like "cute" (who isn't?), "gay" (again, who isn't?) and "masculine" (who is?). If you can't reel them in with a clever phrase, just make sure that you have a hot photo to post instead.

## STEP 2: "HI. I LIKE EVERY MUSCLE IN YOUR BODY—ESPECIALLY MINE."

Fun and laughs will only get you so many good times, so let's cut to what really matters: physical appearance. Many online personal ad services ask you to choose your body type from a list. Since countless ads boast men who (perhaps mistakenly) claim to be "slim" or "athletic," also indicate measurements such as your height and weight. And unless you're strictly prowling for sex, promoting the length of one particular muscle, no matter how proud you are, is probably going overboard.

Some services also ask you to describe what celebrity you resemble. Despite some intoxicated old man once mistaking you for Brad Pitt, you don't (or you'd be on the cover of this magazine), and saying that you do will only prime you for ridicule. (Isn't it enough that you like Celine?)

## STEP 3: "HI. DO YOU WANNA SEE SOMETHING REALLY SWELL?"

For anyone other than you, your mom, and that sloshed old man at the bar to find you attractive, you'll have to prove it. Again, a hot pic will do. Moreover, smile, because, after all, aren't *you* more likely to approach someone who looks friendly? Finally, make sure that no one else is in the picture: you don't want a potential beau to be more attracted to your father or best friend, especially if it's your dog.

## STEP 4: "HI. I'VE BEEN SLIGHTLY DEPRESSED—EVER SINCE THE LOBOTOMY."

Even though looks matter most, you

should still display your personality with a little show-and-tell. Don't merely *talk* about how smart and funny you are. *Display* your wit with, uh, witty writing. Furthermore, rather than offer facts about yourself, share experiences and feelings, like how your heart was shattered when *Melrose Place* ended.

### STEP 5: "HI. WANNA PLAY WAR? YOU CAN BLOW ME AWAY."

Are you versatile? Here's your big chance to demonstrate what roles you're capable of playing... by revealing your hobbies and interests. It's an opportunity for someone else to exclaim, "Hey, I love monster trucking, too!" Don't just mention that you enjoy traveling, watching movies and reading. So do millions of other queers.

Many men will tick off an endless laundry list of hobbies in order to seem well-rounded. The rule is, if you've only played hockey once, that doesn't constitute a hobby. And don't be shy about your drinking, smoking and drug habits. Somewhere out there is a single man in a rehab center just for you.

### STEP 6: "HI. I HAD SEX WITH SOMEONE LAST NIGHT. WAS THAT YOU?"

Enough about you. It's time to design the man you lust for: young, rich, cooks gourmet cuisine, writes novels, models when he's not saving lives as an ER doctor, looks like Brad Pitt (wait, that's you), and is best friends with Madonna. Unfortunately, you'll have to settle for less. Don't limit yourself by setting unrealistic expectations or narrow parameters. Remember that your prerequisites shouldn't dominate your ad, so strike a healthy balance between the descriptions of you and the stud you crave.

Note: Sex is natural, sex is fun—but it isn't best for everyone when it's simply one on one. Specify the type of connection you desire, be it friendship, monogamy, an open relationship or just getting off. Also, spend more time describing your turn-ons than turn-offs.

### STEP 7: "HI. I'M NO FRED FLINTSTONE, BUT I CAN MAKE YOUR BED ROCK."

If it's too short, he won't feel much; if it's too long, he may want to stop. Don't rush writing your ad. Some people may want to know more than that you're a nice guy looking for another nice guy (duh). On the other hand, providing too much detail is equally

detrimental. While you may find it fascinating that the "Body for Life" regimen reduced your body fat by 6.3 percentage points, you'll only bore others into contemplating, "Gee, that's a really cute puppy in his pic." Additionally, omit whatever you'd tell your shrink, as well as your readiness to date now that your "condition" has finally cleared up. There should be just enough material in your ad to whet the reader's appetite so that he e-mails you for seconds.

### STEP 8 "HI. YOU'RE UGLY, BUT YOU INTRIGUE ME."

The Internet accords anonymity, allowing you to stretch the truth and lie. You can become that young, rich and funny model-cum-doctor who cooks gourmet meals for Mrs. Ritchie. But, better still, the Web indulges honesty. By lying about your age, interests or certain body dimensions, you're only cheating yourself. An online personal ad allows others to get to know you before they actually get to *know* you, often softening any potential rebuff.

But don't think about rejection. This should be fun. If you don't chance upon anyone to date or bed, at least you might make some friends—and then date or sleep with *their* pals. See, it's all about networking.

One final thing: after reading your ad, ask: Would I want to meet myself? Uh, only if my photo looks hot. ■

## THE PRICE OF LOVE

Like bars, some dating Web sites charge a cover, while others teem with men for free. Increase your chances by posting your ad on numerous sites. The following allow for posting and viewing of ads, but the cost for responding starts at \$9.95/month and goes up depending on the site and payment plan:

- [www.personals.planetout.com](http://www.personals.planetout.com)
- [www.gay.com/personals](http://www.gay.com/personals)
- [www.match.com](http://www.match.com)

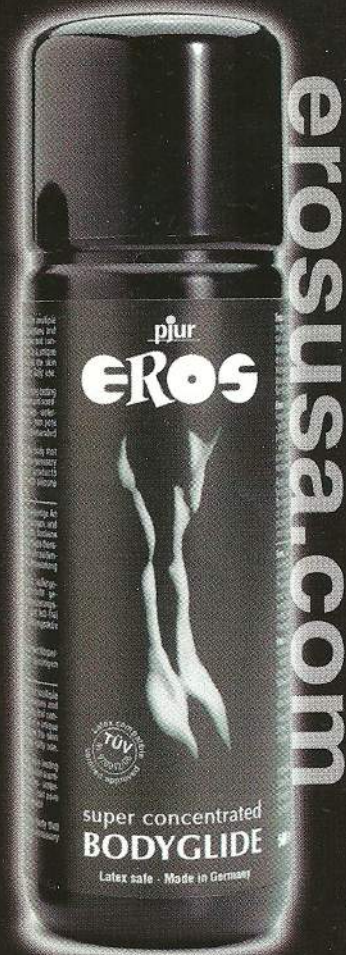
If you don't want your love to cost a thing, check out our very own "Matchmaker" at [www.instinctmag.com](http://www.instinctmag.com), or any of these other free sites:

- [www.gaywired.com](http://www.gaywired.com)
- [personals.yahoo.com](http://personals.yahoo.com)
- [www.aol.com](http://www.aol.com)

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