

DATING IN 2023: FINDING LOVE IMPACTS WALLETS AND HEARTS

New research from Choosi exposes shocking 'ghosting' epidemic and the poor experiences Aussies are likely to encounter when online dating

SYDNEY, JUNE 2023 – Precautionary tales and unfortunate encounters encapsulate the online dating experience for the average Aussie. According to new research, nearly all online daters (98%) remain vigilant for various 'red flags' that signal potential issues in online relationships. These warning signs include gaslighting (54%), controlling behaviour (51%), dishonesty (51%), hostility, arrogance, or anger (46%), negging (44%), insensitivity (33%), and commitment-phobia (31%).

In addition to these concerns, the unfortunate reality of 'ghosting' looms large in the dating scene, with most Aussies (71%) reporting personal experiences of being abruptly cut off by a romantic interest. Strikingly, the study reveals that almost three out of four daters (73%) admit to having ghosted someone themselves, citing disinterest or lack of motivation as primary reasons. After being ghosted, the 'ghostee' is left with a rollercoaster of emotions, including disappointment (38%), rejection (33%), confusion (29%), insecurity (26%), or even a touch of embarrassment (26%).

Commissioned by Choosi in partnership with consumer research group CoreData, the **Choosi Swipe Right Modern Dating Report 2023** surveyed over 1,206 Australians. The research explores the costs of dating in 2023, how Aussie singles aged between 18-49 view and value dating, their behaviours towards dating and relationships, as well as how their perceptions and needs in the dating world have shifted in recent years.

Love and life coach, Angela Barrett, commented: "Online dating gives you the ability to meet potential matches who you never would have come across in real life. However, it can also open you up to all sorts of insincere and shady people who have no real intention of finding and being a committed partner."

"Sadly, ghosting is on the rise: if you've met online, you don't have any common friends to keep you honest and it's easy to be cavalier with someone's feelings if you know you'll never have to face them. It's seemingly an easy out but if you've ever been ghosted by someone you cared about, you'll know just how painful it can be when you're unceremoniously cut off without any explanation. I am a big proponent of kind, honest, dignity-preserving letdowns, rather than ghosting."

Dating is becoming increasingly expensive for those wanting to play the dating game, with Aussies spending up to \$158 each date. The research reveals that daters are embarking on up to 5 dates per month and devoting up to 316 hours per year to dating apps, significantly impacting their time and their wallets.

According to the research, the rising cost of living is adding pressure to the dating scene, with most Aussies (74%) reporting that dating is getting much more expensive than it used to be. Further, half (50%) claim the cost of dating is having an appreciable impact on their finances and often makes them feel 'burnt out'.

When it comes to who pays for the date, the research shows that men are much more likely than women to pay the lion share of the date (72% vs 9%), and men are far less likely to have

most of the cost covered by their date (4% vs 33%). However, a higher percentage of women claim they split the bill (42% vs 20%).

The cost of dating also goes beyond the date itself and includes several preparation costs. While women are more likely to incur costs for new clothes and accessories (49%), makeup (48%) and beauty treatments (23%) to prep for a date, men are more likely to purchase tickets (45% vs 32%) gifts (30% vs 11%) and pay for dating apps and websites (25% vs 12%).

To save money, two in three daters actively seek cost-effective ways to enjoy a great date (66%). The most popular budget-friendly date activities include walks (45%), picnics at a beach or park (36%) and movie nights at home (35%). In contrast, over half (59%) occasionally set money aside to pay for dates.

Angela Barrett commented: “With the rising cost of living impacting just about everything in our lives, the price of going on a date has gone up markedly. Food, entertainment and transport costs have all risen substantially, so whether it’s drinks and dinner or going to a movie, people are having to part with a lot more cash in their quest to find a partner.”

“Aussie daters are having to think creatively about how to cost-cut while dating – without looking stingy. In 2023, people are needing to be more mindful about how they’re choosing to spend their money, and on whom.”

“Daters are becoming more discerning about who they date – which is an appropriate response to the need to rein in spending. My concern is that rising costs combined with negative experiences is making people more apathetic about dating”, Ms Barret added.

Beyond the financial implications of dating, there are also many hidden costs. Modern dating takes a toll both mentally and emotionally on many daters who are actively searching for a partner online. On average, just under 3 in 10 report (28%) that the dates they go on are disappointing.

More than two-thirds (69%) of current and recently active daters state that they have experienced ‘burn out’ from seeking dates and all the effort involved. And those who have dating experience in the last six months, estimate that they have gone on at least 6 bad dates on average in the past year. This has led to almost a quarter (24%) of singles who are currently not actively dating to cease their dating activities because they are tired of being rejected and things not working out. Interestingly, some Aussies (16%) have lost hope or are not looking for love at all.

Angela Barrett states: “The dating game – particularly online dating – can be very deflating if you’re not having positive experiences, let alone finding someone special. It can be a bit of a minefield and quite perplexing. Depending on your mindset and your underlying emotional wellbeing, people can become jaded, cynical, despondent, and even depressed if their overall experience is negative. And they’re scared of getting hurt or disappointed and of being sucked in by people with questionable motives.”

For the better and the worse, many Australians who are looking for love and companionship feel the dating game has changed in recent years post the COVID-19 pandemic (74%). For those who feel that the dating game has changed for the worse (26%), specifically feel it has worsened in terms of reliability and accountability (61%), followed by willingness to commit (54%) and dishonesty (44%). Conversely, those arguing that things have become mostly better

(34%) highlight a stronger focus on getting to know each other (40%), more creative dates (37%) and improved online options for meeting people (37%).

Most people are meeting others online in recent years and surprisingly prefer to do so, with dating apps and websites topping both the most common (62%) and preferred (39%) way of meeting people.

Naturally, daters are on the hunt for people with certain qualities. It comes as no surprise that the top qualities online daters are seeking are a sense of humour (59%), honesty and integrity (56%) and thoughtfulness (51%). Curiously, daters also placed emotional maturity and a lack of manipulative behaviour (50%) above physical attraction (47%), which could be attributed to the shifting dynamic that comes with online dating.

“Online dating has become a perfectly acceptable and ‘normal’ way to meet someone. Most of the stigma around online dating has gone and people are often quite open about the fact that they met their partner online”, Ms Barret explained.

Choosi Swipe Right Modern Dating Report 2023

Further key findings from the research

Key reasons for playing the dating game

- To find true love (57%)
- For companionship (45%)
- Keep social and meet new people (38%)
- For fun and something to do (32%)
- Self-discovery and/or personal development (27%)

Date preparation costs

- Buying tickets (movies, concerts, shows etc.) (38%)
- Transportation (37%)
- Haircuts and grooming (29%)
- Time spent researching potential dates and venues (23%)
- Emotional costs around concerns about disappointment or rejection (21%)
- Paying for dating apps/websites or singles club membership (17%)

What a bad dates looks like

- No chemistry or common interests (51%)
- Awkward silences and/or lack of communication (48%)
- Hygiene issues (46%)
- Poor conversation topics (44%)
- Lack of respect for each other’s opinion and ideas (42%)

Worst things about online dating apps/websites

- Dishonest profiles (39%)
- Scammers (34%)
- Disingenuous people (30%)
- Awkward communication (30%)
- Meeting in real life is often disappointing (25%)

Online dating safety

Current/recent active daters are concerned about the safety of online dating (83%)

Scamming and fraud attempts are becoming an increasing problem for online dating (79% agree)

Catfishing' (i.e., using fake identity) is becoming an increasing problem for online dating (78% agree)

Sexual violence and coercion including intimidation, threats, revenge porn, and extortion are becoming an increasing problem (76% agree)

You can access the full Choosi Swipe Right Report 2023 [here](#).

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About Choosi Swipe Right Modern Dating Report 2023

The Choosi Swipe Right Modern Dating Report 2023 is a part of the Choosi Research Series. This in-depth study investigates the cost, benefits and concerns of dating both online and in-person in Australia. The report explores the good, the bad, and the ugly sides of the dating world in Australia, with a focus on the fast-moving online dating scene. The study also explores other aspects of dating, including the time, money, and emotional investment required, as well as the safety concerns associated with meeting people online.

The report is compiled based on research commissioned by Choosi and conducted by CoreData between the 13th of March and the 24th of March 2023. The research was conducted via a quantitative online survey, gathering 1,206 responses from Australians aged 18 years and above who are actively dating or have had dating experience in the past 2 years.

About Choosi

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