



## Singles in America: Match Releases Largest Study on US Single Population for 11th Year

November 9, 2021

### Singles Want Emotional Maturity More Than Looks, Sex, or Money Findings Show the Pandemic Reshaped Singles' Priorities and Caused a Dating Reset America is Witnessing a Historic Time of Post-Traumatic Growth

DALLAS, Nov. 9, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, Match released findings from its 11<sup>th</sup> annual [Singles in America](#) study, the nation's largest and most comprehensive annual scientific study on single adults, a segment that now accounts for more than one-third of the U.S. adult population. Singles in America reflects an inclusive, representative look across more than 5,000 U.S. singles. With the 11th year of the study, Match has over a decade of research into the thoughts and behaviors of singles that uncovers unprecedented shifts in dating, sex, and love. This year shows a dramatic shift in singles' priorities, both in making positive changes to become better versions of themselves and in reconsidering what they're looking for in a romantic partner. It's a dramatic dating reset.



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"The current zeitgeist has it all wrong. Looks are out, emotional maturity is in. Stability is the new sexy," says Dr. Helen Fisher, Chief Science Advisor at Match. "While COVID wreaked havoc with our lives, it also triggered momentous post-traumatic growth. Singles have re-evaluated themselves and their plans. They've grown up. Bad boys and girls are passe; today's singles want educated, successful, grounded, open-minded and committed partners -- a reset that may increase family stability for

decades to come."

#### What singles want in a long-term partner:

- 84% someone I can trust and confide in
- 84% can communicate their wants and needs
- 83% open-minded and accepting of differences
- 83% can make me laugh
- 83% is emotionally mature
- 82% comfortable with their sexuality
- 80% has a life of their own
- 79% confident and self-assured
- **78% physically attractive (vs. 90% in 2020)**

#### **EMOTIONAL MATURITY IS HOT AF**

The pandemic drove many singles to hit the reset button: 39% say that emotional maturity is, foremost, what they seek more of in a partner--ranking higher than honesty (37%), good communication (36%), kindness (36%) and financial stability (35%).

**Intentional Dating is on the Rise:** Only 11% of singles want to date casually, while 62% say they seek more meaningful, committed relationships. They're motivated too. 65% of singles want a relationship within the next year, particularly young singles (81% Gen Z, 76% Millennials, 64% Gen X and 50% of Boomers).

**Leveling the Playing Field:** Singles are thinking more about the importance of a partner's financial stability. The desire for a partner with an income at least equal to their own rose almost 20% from 2019 to 2021 (70% to 86%). Desire for a similar level of education went from 79% in 2019 to 89% in 2021. Desire for a partner with a successful career increased 5% from 85% two years ago to 90% today.

**Well-Being is the Top Priority:** 73% of singles say they got better at prioritizing important things in their lives over the past year: 66% got better at caring for their mental health, 64% got better at relaxing, 58% got more sleep, 56% gained self-confidence and 55% got better at unplugging from social media. Over half (53%) of singles said they are better at caring for their physical health and they've prioritized caring for others too: 62% strengthened relationships with their family over the last year.

**Going to the Chapel:** Interest in getting married has seen a remarkable jump in just two years. The desire for a partner who wants marriage was at

58% in 2019 and has risen to 76% in 2021. Ditch the stereotypes though—while this desire increased from 61% to 75% in women, men are feeling it more. They went from 55% in 2019 to 77% in 2021.

**The Next Generation:** More singles want to marry, but fewer seek a partner who wants to have children. In 2017, 80% of singles under 40 said it was important to have a partner who wanted to have kids, compared to just 61% today. The shift is most pronounced among women, with only 56% now saying it is important to find a partner who wants children, while 68% of men say they want a partner who wants children.

**Let's Wait a While:** Forecasts for a Hot Vax Summer and wild post-pandemic romps had it all wrong. Over half (55%) of singles are uncomfortable making-out within the first three dates now. More than 7 in 10 are uncomfortable with oral sex within the first three dates, and 71% are uncomfortable with the idea of sex during the first three dates.

**Learning New Tricks Between the Sheets:** While singles are taking their time to get back to the bedroom, they've learned more about sex. Half of singles reported that over the last 18 months they've learned more about how to please themselves and what to do (and not do) with a partner. One in 5 young singles reported that they were now open to having sex more often, experimenting with toys and /or sharing sexual fantasies.

### **The Grow-up Glow Up**

Millennials and Gen Z are evolving at the most accelerated rate in terms of working on themselves and reconsidering what they want in a relationship.

**Balancing Work and Play:** Millennials said they got better at managing their finances (69%) and their time (68%); and 69% of Gen Z said they worked on their career. But more than half of young singles said they are now experiencing career burnout (52% of Gen Z; 54% of Millennials; 37% of Gen X; 17% of Boomers). That might explain why 72% of Gen Z and 68% of Millennials took up new hobbies during the pandemic, more than any other age cohort.

**Seeking LTR:** Half of young singles are open to having a long term relationship and 49% of Gen Z and 38% of Millennials are open to casting a wider net when choosing a relationship.

**Under Pressure:** Nearly one in five singles (19%) said they feel more social pressure to find a relationship since the pandemic, with young singles feeling 2x the pressure of Gen X and 5x more pressure than Boomers (32% Gen Z, 33% Millennials, 15% Gen X, 6% Boomers).

### **The Man-volution**

Contrary to many stereotypes, men are *more* ready to find a long-term romantic relationship than women. 70% of men reported that they want to find a relationship within the next year (compared to 60% of women), and 81% of men said they think sex is less important in a relationship now (vs. 87% of women), compared to how they felt before the pandemic. Is this the death of the f\*ck boy?

**The Clooney Effect:** More men than women have shifted the importance they place on a partner who is well-educated, has a successful career and is financially stable. Their desire to date someone who makes as much money as they do increased from 60% in 2019 to 82% today (compared to women's 78% to 87%). Men are also more interested in an educated partner (75% in 2019; 89% today; compared to women's 83% to 88%), as well as someone with a successful career (78% in 2019, 88% in 2021; compared to women's 90% to 91%).

**Falling Fast:** Men are concentrating more on real emotional connections, and are feeling them more quickly than women. 60% of men say they wouldn't know if someone is a good match from a first date, so they'd need to go on another date to feel it out. By the second date, 53% of men feel an emotional connection while only 38% of women feel an emotional connection that soon.

**Men Are Hopeful Romantics:** Women are often typecast as the starry-eyed romantics, but for the past 11 years of studying singles, men are more romantic. In 2021, men were more open to having a long distance relationship than women (38% vs. 29%); men were also more likely to believe they could fall in love during a video date (41% vs. 30% of women).

### **TECH'S IMPACT ON LOVE**

Technology now plays a critical role in today's courtship process, allowing singles to vet chemistry with potential matches through video chat or audio features and meet up in person with the dates they're most excited about.

**Vibe Check:** This year, 1 in 4 singles had a video date before meeting IRL (27%). But young singles are leading the way: half of young singles (51% of Gen Z; 45% Millennials) had a video date before meeting in person. Moreover, 71% of these singles said their video date helped determine if they wanted to meet up in person and 63% of singles say they would be more comfortable on a first date if they had video chatted with the person before meeting up.

**Chemistry Through a Screen?** 78% of singles who video dated say they felt romantic chemistry during the chat (83% of men and 72% of women), and 1 in 3 singles (34%) believe they could fall in love over a video date.

**Turn-Offs:** Young singles are 10x more bothered by distracting or messy backgrounds and lighting. However the biggest turn-off is the same as for IRL dates: awkward conversation, with 18% of singles bothered by this (Boomers were bothered the most at 29%).

**Power of Voice.** 71% of singles overall (70% of young singles) prefer to get to know someone via phone call, not text, prior to meeting someone in person for a first date.

To see the full findings, including additional demographic breakdowns and previously released stats on singles' thoughts on vaccination status and sex, please visit [www.SinglesinAmerica.com](http://www.SinglesinAmerica.com)

### **About Singles in America**

Singles in America (SIA) was funded by Match and conducted by Dynata in association with renowned anthropologist Dr. Helen Fisher and evolutionary biologist Dr. Justin Garcia of The Kinsey Institute at Indiana University. The 2021 study is based on the attitudes and behaviors taken from a demographically representative sample of 5,000 U.S. singles between the ages of 18 to 98. Generations are defined as: Gen Z (18-24), Millennials (25-40), Gen X (41-56), and Boomers (57-75). Singles in America remains the most comprehensive annual scientific survey of single Americans.

## About Match

Match, the dating app, is available for download on iTunes and Google Play. Members can experience Match in eight languages and available in 25 countries across five continents. Founded in 1995, Match is the #1 destination for single adults looking for love. Match is an operating business of Match Group (Nasdaq: MTCH) and is headquartered in Dallas, Texas.

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