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8 Steps to Scoring Big in a Bar

By Melissa Darnay

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by: **Melissa Darnay**

If you're single, you've probably gone to a singles bar at some point in your life, hoping to make a love connection. But what determines whether tonight will be your lucky night? Chance? Kismet? Maybe. But most times it has more to do with skill than luck.

After hundreds of hours in bars, pubs and nightclubs—watching thousands of singles in action—I've unlocked the little-known secrets of finding romance at your favorite watering hole. In fact, my research was so successful, that I'm now able to walk into any bar, and within minutes, I can tell who is going to get lucky ... and who is going home empty handed. Because let's face it, there's nothing better than the intoxicating butterflies that flutter in your stomach when your new love interest gives you that "morning after" phone call.

Catching those butterflies isn't as hard as it seems. Whether you're trying to enhance your dating life or meet the sweetheart of your dreams, there's an art to scoring big at a bar. And believe it or not, you don't have to be ravishingly beautiful to get lucky. You just need to know how to play the game so you come out ahead.

Yes, you read that right. Dating is a game. Just like chess, scoring big in a bar takes a winning strategy. Here's an easy eight-step process that'll help you score big in the love department. Because let's face it, if you want the Monarch's to be dancing in your belly tomorrow morning, you need to learn how to play the dating game pronto, before someone else beats you to the prize.

1. Look Your Best. If you think about it, singles bars are called "meat markets" for a reason. You're the "meat" and you have to display your wares to make "shoppers" want to buy. Grunge might be comfortable, but after age 25, the frumpy look won't get you to first base.

Men, wearing a sports coat will give you a competitive advantage. Why? Because women like men who look successful and confident. By sporting a classier look than your brethren, you'll come out on

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top. Women, I have three words for you: show some skin. Don't even think about wearing a turtleneck to a bar.

Let's face it, after 30, very few of us have the hard-bodied figures we once did, but that doesn't mean you need to hide your assets. Even if you're a little plump, it's better to show your skin than to hide behind a bolt of frumpy fabric.

2. Limit Your Alcohol. Although a drink or two can lower your inhibitions, drinking too much will send the wrong impression. And falling off the barstool is a definite no-no. If you tend to drink more when you're nervous, try alternating between your favorite drink and a club soda with lime. No one has to know that there's nothing stronger than carbonation in your drink!

3. Exude Confidence. Self-confidence is crucial if you want to be lucky in love. If you have a swagger in your walk, and a cocky tilt to your chin, your Rolodex will bulge with prospects. So how do you exude

confidence when you're trembling inside?

There are two strategies that work well. First, fake it 'til you make it! Yes, that's right, just pretend to have confidence, and amazingly, others will perceive you as self-confident. And then pretty soon, that confidence will be real.

Second, deal from strength. After all, you're probably the best at something. Maybe you're the smartest person in the room. Or maybe you know you can beat just about anyone at Backgammon. Or maybe you can solve complicated algorithms in your head. Maybe you're a true native in a town of transplants. Whatever you're good at, borrow that confidence, and when you walk into a bar, hold your head high knowing there's no one else quite like you.

4. Cross the Great Divide. Amazingly, I see both men and women who go to a bar or singles party in the hopes of meeting someone new, but then they spend the entire evening either by themselves or talking to the same-sex person they came with.

Newsflash: if you go to the trouble of being showered, shaved and cologned, you might as well take action. An important step in meeting someone new is actually saying hello. Instead of thinking, "I wish that person would come up and talk to me," take the initiative and be the one who breaks the ice.

Something as simple as a smile and a hello will work just fine. Just let your feet do the walking, and break that invisible barrier between you and the person you want to meet. After all, you can't meet someone new if you don't even try. Just keep in mind that dating is a numbers game, and you may need to chat with more than one person before you make a love connection.

5. Be Friendly. A sparkling personality is worth its weight in—well—drinks. If you're naturally effervescent, keep it up, and it won't be long before love finds you. If you're not, it just takes a bit more work.

It helps to look good and feel great. Then keep a smile on your face and focus on other people. One

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key to being a great conversationalist is to ask interesting questions. Things like, "What do you do for a living?" And "Where are you from?" will spark other questions or things you have in common.

Another way to score points in the friendly category is to be up on current events. This doesn't mean you have to be a news junkie, but it helps to be abreast of current topics. With 24-hour news stations and breaking news on the Internet, it shouldn't take long to become well-versed in the topics du jour. Oh, one note of caution: unless someone's political affiliation is a deal-breaker for you, stay away from politics and religion.

6. Men, Whip Out Your Wallet. "Can I buy you a drink?" is a sure sign of interest. Being too cheap to ask will get you a cold shoulder, followed by a cold shower ... alone.

This is where you need to walk a fine line. There are certainly women out there who want free drinks—and nothing else. So how can you tell the difference between a woman who is using you to get free drinks, and someone who is really interested?

By reading her body language. Is she looking directly at you, with dilated pupils and unblinking eyes, or is she looking somewhere else? Is she leaning into you, or is she pulling away from you? (For the entire scoop on body language, see Chapter 3 in *Dating 101*.)

If her body language is positive, ask her if she'd like something to drink. Then, while you're sharing your first drink together, exchange business cards. If she doesn't have a card (or doesn't want to give you one), ask for a way to contact her. If she's hesitant to give an email address or cell phone number, chances are good that she has no intention of seeing you again, so put your wallet away and move on.

If she readily gives you a way to contact her, you'll score more points by being generous than by being frugal. And if you really want to score big, offer to call her a cab at the end of the evening, just to make sure she gets home okay.

7. Be Honest. If you're not interested in someone, it's better to make a graceful exit than to waste that person's time. Something as simple as, "I've enjoyed talking to you, but it's time for me to go mingle," lets the other person know that there you're not seeing stars.

Honesty is always the best policy, because if you say you're going to the bathroom and then never come back, you might end up with a stalker on your hands. If you're the person being dumped, be gracious about it. Just because someone's not interested in you right now, doesn't mean things won't change at some point in the future.

Because most of us tend to frequent the same places, chances are good that you may see that person again. Keep in mind that if you get angry and say something mean, you'll never make it past "hello" next time, so it pays to be nice.

8. Have Fun. Instead of putting unnecessary pressure on your big night out, give yourself a break. After all, tonight is only one night out of your life. Instead of having unrealistic expectations, grab a same-sex friend, and plan on having a good time. Without the pressure of having to find someone in five hours or

less, you're more likely to enjoy yourself.

Plus, when you're laughing, talking and smiling, you're more approachable than when you're nervous or tense. After all, wouldn't you rather chat with someone who's laughing than someone who's sitting in the corner alone, looking desperate and lonely?

Now that you know the eight easy steps to scoring big in a bar, get out there and do it. The first step toward winning the game is actually going out there and playing it. And just like any other game, this one takes practice. So if you don't meet someone tonight, remember this ... there's always tomorrow!

Melissa Darnay is a dating coach, a matchmaker, and a relationship humorist. For more information about Melissa or her latest book, "Dating 101: The Instant Cure for Romance Blues," go to

Guide To Basement Bar

By Masni Rizal Mansor

A basement bar is a good idea to enjoy an evening with friends and family or even have a party. There are a few important things one needs to take care of before building a basement bar. These steps will help make the bar a real good place to enjoy the drinks as well as party in the basement.

Basement space

The first thing towards building a basement bar is to ensure that there is a basement in the house and that it is suitable enough to accommodate a bar. Although a bar may not require too much space, the basement must have enough seating space and more if the place is to be used for a night party as well.

Setting up a Basement Bar

A basement bar can either be a ready-made bar or one can hire a carpenter or an expert to build a bar. Bar building is not recommended for those interested in setting up a bar as quickly as possible. Getting a carpenter to do the work will also enable the homeowner to come up with any extra requirements or design specifics that are otherwise not found in a normal bar. Seating arrangements can also be accordingly modified.

Refrigeration Requirements

It is a good idea to provide for refrigeration in the basement especially for drinks like beer. It makes better sense to serve chilled drinks straight from the bar than to buy bottles from shops when someone comes visiting. The bar will be used to its optimum if there is provision for refrigeration in the basement itself.

Seating Arrangements

In case one plans to have a night of poker or Monday night Football, the seating arrangement in the basement bar must match the requirements. A place where friends can relax while enjoying their drinks and the television will be the ideal setting. Comfy couches or bar stools along with a poker table or television will make up for an ideal basement bar. A television to watch all those basketball and soccer matches along with friends who would also join for a drink provides for a great way to unwind.

Masni Rizal Mansor provide tips and review on

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and

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