

Dating through the decades

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Early '20s:

Singles coin term 'dating' to properly define the shift from antiquated courting to a new time of sexual exploration and liberation.

"The New Woman of the 1920s boldly asserted her right to drink, smoke and date..."

Joshua Zeitz, author of "Flapper..."

Flappers:

1920

The newest form of woman was urban, stylish, and independent. These flappers represented a new era of female empowerment, one that emphasized freedom and equality.



Early '40s:

With WWII in full swing, women were left to perform all roles left by the men at war--traditional housewives found jobs and became breadwinners.

1940



Depression Era:

The sexy and carefree time of the '20s came to a halt when the market crashed--love and marriage all took a toll as well--the number of single women ages 25-30 rose 30% from 1930 to 1935.

1930



Late '40s:

By the end of the '40s, with the war ended, men and women were free to start families, leading into the baby boom.

A Return to Tradition:

The '50s saw a return to courting rituals; going steady often meant exchanged letterman jackets and class rings.

1950



Swingin':

Characterized by the rise of the feminist movement, the '60s is thought of as a time of free love. With birth control pills approved in the early '60s and abortion legalized by 1973, there were more ways to have sex safely.

1960



1970

The Me-Decade:

The '70s markedly moved away from marriage--the number of unmarried 20 to 24 year olds rose from 4.3 million in 1960 to 9.7 million by 1976.

You've Got Mail:

While the internet in the '90s was nowhere near where it is today, the introduction of email, chat rooms and other messaging platforms was huge for romance.

1990



Sex in the Media:

The 'free love' mentality in to '60s and '70s carried into the early '80s with the destigmatization of pornography and sex in the media, however, this receded when people became aware of the AIDs epidemic.



1980

Technology Rules All:

In the 21st century, dating, sex and love are all greatly aided by the use of social media, texting, FaceTiming, dating apps and websites, you name it, it's out there. While this does this make communication easier, it can also serve to complicate relationships.

2000-Present



"[Texting, email, social media, etc] removes much of the need for charm; it's more like dropping a line in the water and hoping for a nibble," NY Times article "The End of Courtship"