**Top 10 Tips for High School Dating**

*Developing good relationship skills early on can set the stage for successful relationships throughout the remainder of your life. Here are ten tips to keep in mind while dating in high school.*

Top 10 Tips for High School Dating

10. Develop your own personality. Nothing is less attractive to the opposite sex than a person with no confidence, hobby or personality of their own. If you're creative, get involved with a writing group or join the band. Get out there and meet people and be able to have something to bring to the conversation.

9. Pick someone you have something in common with. If you are a honor roll student and member of the key club, but you're interested in the slacker in the back row, you will have conflicted interests. More importantly, if you are a needy person and you want to date a loner, you will have problems getting to a comfortable intimacy level. Try to find someone that you think you can relate to - socially and mentally.

8. Don't think you can change a leopard's spots. If a girl is known around campus as a cheater or if a guy's reputation is less than angelic, don't think that you will be the one to break the mold. Nothing is worse than being the one who 'shoulda-seen-it-coming' when a person's old habits repeat themselves.

7. Separate your relationship from your school responsibilities. No one wants to be known as the 'dramatic couple that has epic battles by the soda machines every Tuesday.' It is really hard to keep up your grades and the respect of your classmates and teachers when you bring your relationship problems to class with you. This will also scare away any other potential partners for the future.

6. Include your parents. Until you are 18 and move out of your house, your parents have final say in what you do and don't do. If you keep agendas hidden from them or refuse to let them meet the person you're dating, it will be a lot more difficult for you in the long run to have a good relationship on either end.

5. Don't alienate your friends. It is so easy to become so engulfed in a significant other that friends just don't seem as fulfilling anymore. However, friends keep you sane when your partner is driving you crazy. Also, if something goes wrong, you'll need your core group of friends to hold you up and be there for you.

4. Avoid gossip. While you can't avoid your friends, you can't include them in every aspect of your relationship. Having middle men and friends that like to interfere ('help') only makes problems worse. High schools are full of rumors and drama - don't get sucked into arguments caused by something a friend of a friend might have seen.

3. Communication is Key. Whether you're 15 or 55, keeping open communication with the person you're dating is absolutely essential. Most of bad break-ups and horrible fights of high school dating could have been avoided if the couple had made an effort to talk to one another about problems instead of jumping to conclusions.

2. Don't push your boundaries, and don't let anyone else cross them. If you don't know what the boundaries are in your relationship, establish them before you end up in an uncomfortable situation. Once you know your boundaries, demand that they be respected. Remember - boundaries aren't just physical. Sometimes the strongest boundaries are mental, or emotional.

1. Don't become obsessed. Remember that after high school, life changes dramatically. That's not to say that you can't form a lasting relationship at a young age, it just means that you need to be ready for long distance and a whole new set of problems as an adult. Try not to make a relationship your whole world because it will limit your experience in other areas of life.