

35 Questions to Ask If You Really Want to Get to Know Someone

1. Are you a better talker or listener?

Sure, the question itself is interesting, but it's how they answer it that really shows the answer. Do they launch into an eloquent and thought-provoking response or do they turn it back on you and listen closely? It's like an inception question.

2. What's your favorite season and why?

Are you going to be hosting BBQs in the summer or Halloween parties in the fall? No, it's not super deep, but this is a date, not a therapy session. Throw some fun ones in the mix to keep things balanced.

3. What do you hoard?

Maybe it's memories. Maybe it's cat mugs. This shows not only how they view ~stuff,~ but what holds true value to them. Also! If they're a legit hoarder, it's probably a good idea to know that sooner rather than later so you can address it. Just saying.

4. What year was your favorite birthday?

Was it the year their friends threw them a huge surprise party or the year they spent alone, drinking beer, and reading a book? Sure, this can help you come up with ideas down the line but more importantly, it gives you an idea of what makes them feel special.

5. What's your favorite way to spend a day off?

If you're the kind of person who wants to spend your weekends relaxing with some wine instead of wake up early to go hiking, it's a good idea to see if your future partner's on the same page.

6. Did you have pets growing up?

Asking someone about their childhood can sometimes feel a little too heavy or vague, so asking about pets growing up is a simpler way to do that. Oftentimes family pets bring back great memories and it'll give you an idea if they envision a future with a furry friend or not.

7. What's your favorite part of the workday?

Granted, plenty of people aren't the biggest fans of clocking into their jobs, but are you with an optimist or a pessimist? Regardless of how much your job sucks, there's probably something good about it—even if it's just the iced coffee that makes you 15 minutes late every morning or the check that pays for your shoe obsession. This can clue you into whether you not you'd be listening to work complaints every day for the rest of your life if you end up together.

8. Have you ever been to a family reunion?

Not only will this give you deets about their extended family (and if you'll be expected to go to their grandma's house every 4th of July), but here's how you learn if they have a secret castle in England or are heirs to the Toaster Strudel fortune.

9. Where would you be happiest to live?

First of all, it sucks to start getting serious about someone only for them to move across the country because they always wanted to live in Colorado. Potential LDRs aside, someone's dream location will probably give you a good idea of what sort of environment makes them happiest.

10. Have you ever read a book that changed your life?

Especially if you're a reader, this is a super powerful question. Books tend to be extremely personal, and knowing what genres they like and what stories moved them can give you a deep insight

into who they are. Plus, you might just get some awesome book recs that you two can chat about on your next date.

11. What age do you feel like?

As someone who feels like a perpetual 12-year-old, this is always an interesting one to ask. Are they an old soul or young at heart? This can also give you an idea of where they are in their life because if they feel older or younger than their age, it might give an idea of what they're looking for in a relationship.

12. When was the last time you felt excited? And what was it for or because of?

Licensed marriage and family therapist Billie Tyler suggests following up with questions like “What do you think excites you about that?” and “How do you know you are truly enjoying something?” to dive even deeper.+

13. Have you ever become intensely invested in the fate of a TV show character?

This is more fun to ask than "what's your favorite show" because it's a little more nuanced and gives insight into the types of characters that capture your date's attention. Follow up with questions about why they were interested in the character and how they felt about where their story went (if you're cool with spoilers, that is).

14. If your life were a movie, what scene would you watch over and over again?

One time, a date hit me with this question, and I've loved it ever since. It may take the person some time to come up with an answer on the spot, but it's worth the wait.

15. On a scale of 1-10, how well do you seize the day?

Adding a scale makes answering more abstract questions a little easier since chances are their response changes depending on the day, situation, and mood. Listen to not only their response, by the "why" after it. Are they working hard to build a foundation for the future or do they care more about experiencing the now and aren't as focused on what's down the line? This can cue you into their goals and how they might align with yours.

16. What's the best decision you've made in your life?

We all have a story to tell, and this question specifically “gives a glimpse of a person’s past and the way they tackle challenges in life,” says love and dating coach Sandra Henderson.

17. Would you consider yourself healed from the past?

This includes whether they're healed from their past breakup, childhood trauma, a recent conflict at work, etc. "You don't want to enter a relationship with someone who will project issues of the past onto you that are unrelated to you," says counselor Sarah E. Williams. "Asking this question can help you determine if they are whole and fully ready to love."

18. What are your long-term goals?

This is the super subtle (but actually genius!) way of asking someone what type of relationship they're looking for. "This question allows you to get a good picture of what they are envisioning for their life and you get to see if a romantic relationship is part of their plan," says relationship expert Stephania Cruz. "If they don't mention having a romantic relationship as a goal, you can be more direct and ask them what their current relationship goals are."

19. What are some of your biggest fears?

This can be as simple as spiders and snakes, or as deep as commitment, loneliness, and/or abandonment. "This question allows individuals to understand their partner's vulnerabilities and sharing fears will strengthen the foundation of the relationship," says psychiatrist Leela R. Magavi, MD. "It will also help gain insight into someone's past and what helped to shape them

20. Who do you look up to the most?

In whatever way you want to interpret it, there's a big difference between looking up to your grandpa versus someone like LeBron James. Whoever they look up to, this question will help "conceptualize the partner's core values and personality type," says Dr. Magavi.

21. Where do you see yourself in five years?

"This question is great because it gives you an idea of that person's goals and life vision. You can determine if they're compatible with yours," says Jonathan Bennett, a relationship expert.

22. What do you love most in your life right now?

This question unpacks not only what the other person values but also lets you glance into your potential compatibility, says Veronica Grant, a love and life coach. There's no right or wrong answer, but depending on your personality (like you're a go-getter and they're happy just coasting through life), this question will take you straight to any potential personality clashes. You can either weed them out or start a fun convo about what the two of your visions together would look like, says Grant.

23. Who did you turn to as a child when you were scared, lonely, hurt?

If they say "no one" and dealt with stressful situations alone, this is a good indicator that this is how they'll handle current and future stressors now. On the other hand, if they went to their parents all the time for everything, they might need a lot of validation from a partner, explains Strachowski.

24. How do you deal with finances? Do you spend too much or too little?

Sure, combining finances is a step for WAY down the line, but still, it's worth asking as finances can be a huge issue in relationships, according to Paul. It can also be a good indicator of how they deal with life, in general. Are spontaneous weekend trips to Paris going to be a thing? Or are you guys gonna cook dinner at home more often than not?

25. What are you most proud of and why?

This question lets you see what they value and how they spend their free time, explains Strachowski. Are they most proud of how their city soccer team went 10-0 last year, or do their eyes light up when they talk about the coffee table they built for their apartment last year?

26. What do you do need during periods of stress? Do you call someone to vent? Do you spend time alone to think it through?

How they answer will let you know what they expect from close ones during rough times, whether it be closeness and a shoulder to cry on or space, explains Strachowski. If you wind up dating and you find that they withdraw from you when they're lonely, remind yourself of this so you don't take it personally.

27. Who is your biggest influence and why?

This question can give you insight into a person's core values, according to Bennett. If they name their single mother for raising them, they value responsibility and family. If they rattle off someone like Woody Allen, you can run.

28. What are your favorite addictions?

By addictions, we mean anything from chocolate to working out or Netflix. "Everyone has some addictions," says Paul. The question is, are they going to be honest?

29. Are you a neat person or a messy person? Are you an on time person or a late person?

Even if you're not planning on moving in together or you're just gonna be BFFs, someone's baseline definition of "messy" can be super insightful. Are they gonna be pissed if you spread all your makeup out on the counter for a night out, or will *you* be annoyed if the laundry piles up on a chair for a week? "It's much easier if you are both neat or both messy, or both on time or late," Paul adds.

30. Do you believe in karma?

"This is a good question to get to know someone because it shows whether they believe there are consequences to their actions," says Laurie Berzack, MSW, a relationship expert and dating coach. If a coworker screws them over at work, are they going to stay up for days stewing about how to get revenge, or are they more the type to forgive and forget?

31. Where is your happy place?

Another open-ended cutie that can segue into good follow-up questions, depending on how they answer. If it's a physical place like the gym, or that one great hiking spot on their favorite trail, you can talk about those interests. If it's a more abstract answer like "any time I finish a book that's so good I immediately flip to the first page and start again," that's a good convo starter, too.

"This question allows you to learn what the other person truly enjoys in life," says Bennett. You can also use it to plan for future dates, gift ideas, etc.

32. What makes you cry and why?

"Knowing someone's soft side is important to know what triggers them. If they don't cry, they may not be sensitive," says Strachowski. Again, if you're sobbing on a movie date in the future and look over to see nothin' but stoicism on their face, they're not a heartless robot—they just have a higher cry threshold than you.

33. What is your best quality?

"It's always interesting to see what a person thinks is their best quality. By asking this question, you get insight into how the person views themselves and what they think is an important aspect of who they are," explains sex therapist Christopher Ryan Jones.

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34. Ask them to complete this sentence: "I most enjoy having someone to do _____ with."

Sometimes, a person's intentions can be clearly discussed by simply asking them. Strachowski recommends listening closely to see if what they're seeking aligns with what you can give someone right now. Are they looking for a romantic partner, a best friend, or just a casual movie buddy?

35. If money wasn't a factor, what would you be doing with your life right now?

This is a fun one that can tell you a lot about a person and their passions without them feeling too self-conscious about it, explains Deen. Do they want to be directing movies? Working with animals? Traveling the world? Depending on their answer, you've also got great banter to go off of afterward.