

The Do's and Don'ts of Starting a Relationship

Is it Healthy

- Have fun together more often than not
- Each enjoy spending time separately, with your own friends, as well as with each other's friends
- Always feel safe with each other
- Trust each other
- Are faithful to each other
- Support each other's individual goals in life, like getting a job or going to college
- Respect each other's opinions, even when yours are different
- Solve conflicts without putting each other down, cursing at each other or making threats
- Both accept responsibility for your actions
- Both apologize when you are wrong
- Have equal decision-making power about what you do in your relationship
- Each control your own money
- Are proud to be with each other
- Encourage each other's interests-like sports and extra curricular activities
- Have some privacy – your letters, diary, personal phone calls are respected as your own
- Have close friend and family who like the other person and are happy about your relationship
- Never feel pressured for sex
- Communicate about sex if your relationship is sexual
- Allow each other "space" when you need it
- Always treat each other with respect

Is it Unhealthy

- Gets extremely jealous or accuses the other of cheating
- Puts the other down by calling names, cursing or making the other feel bad about him or herself
- Yells and treats the other like a child
- Doesn't take the other person, or things that are important to him/her seriously
- Doesn't listen when the other talks
- Frequently criticizes the other's friends or family
- Pressures the other for sex, or makes sex hurt or humiliating
- Has even threatened to hurt himself or commit suicide if they leave
- Cheats or threatens to cheat
- Tells the other how to dress
- Has ever grabbed, pushed, hit or physically hurt the other
- Blames the other for your own behavior (if you hadn't made me mad, I wouldn't have)
- Embarrasses or humiliates the other
- Smashes, throws or destroys things
- Tries to keep the other from having a job or furthering his/her education
- Tries to make the other feel crazy or plays mind games
- Goes back on promises
- Acts controlling or possessive-like you own your partner
- Uses alcohol or drugs as an excuse for hurtful behavior
- Depends completely on the other to meet social or emotional needs

