



He'll be moving across the room towards you in no time, with these six flirting tips, says Patricia Flokis

flirting

FOR GROWN-UPS

Let's be honest – as we get older, many things including learning a new language, staying up past midnight and losing three kilos seem to get harder.

Flirting also doesn't necessarily become easier with age. It may be you're out of practice or perhaps you've never been particularly clever at it. The good news? Help is at hand. We ask the experts for advice on becoming a successful grown-up flirt – no hair twirling and eyelash batting required.

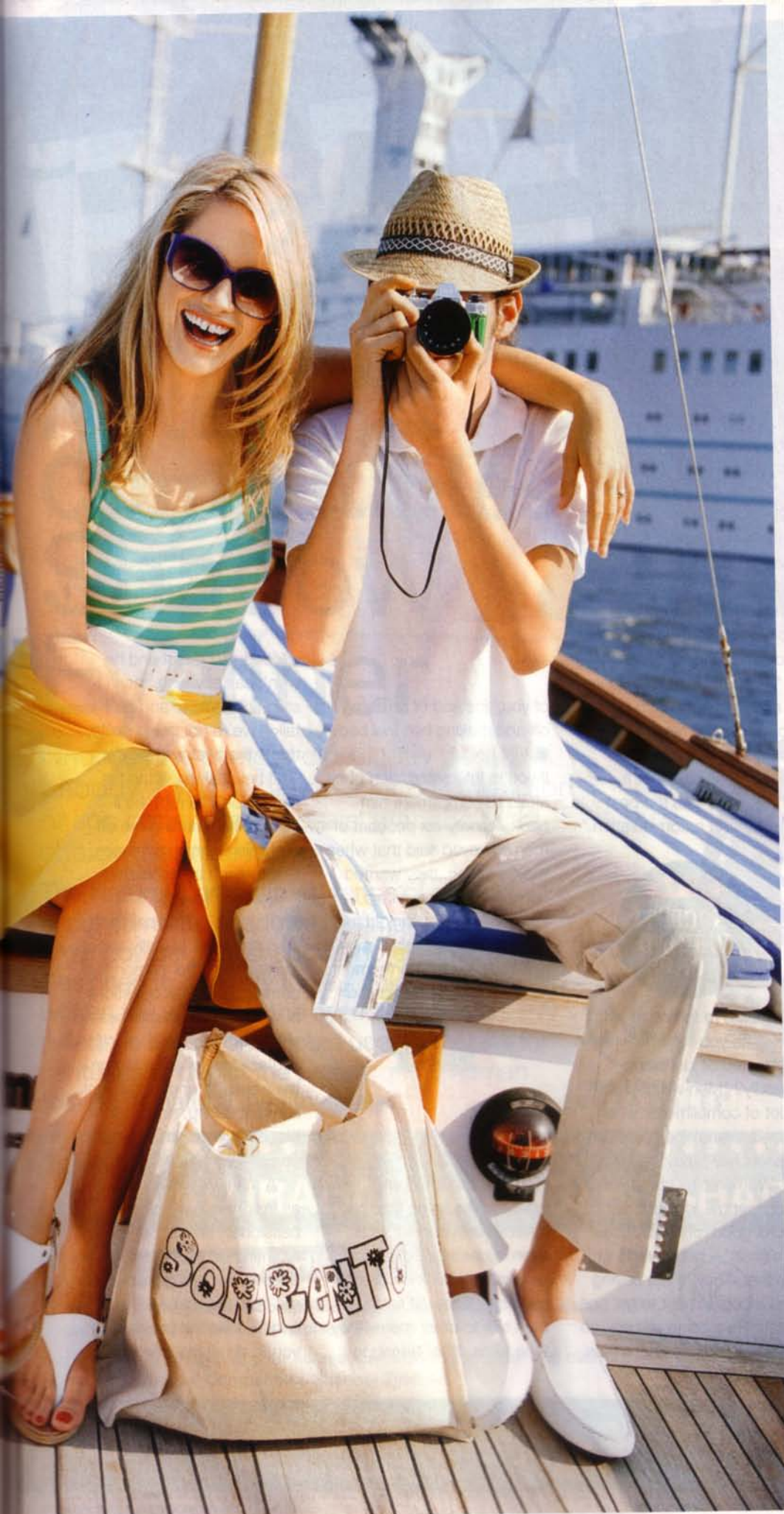


The biggest deterrent to flirting is the fear of rejection, and getting older amplifies this feeling. It gets harder to remain objective about your attractiveness to men around women who are younger and firm all over. "There's a myth that men are after women who are tall, blonde and thin – and that's not the reality," says Katia Loisel-Furey, author of *How to Get the Man You Want & How to Get the Woman You Want* (Inner Kiss Publishing \$29.99).

■ WHAT MEN WANT As part of the research for her book, Loisel-Furey conducted the *Real People, Real Answers* study, and asked over 1500 singles about their dating habits. "Of the men polled, 67 per cent said a woman's attitude was more important than her looks, 63 per cent said they preferred a woman with curves, while 96 per cent said that the fear of rejection was the main reason they wouldn't approach someone.

"Men are just as nervous about putting themselves out there as we are and, if he's losing his hair or has a pot belly, he'll have the same body hang-ups as you do," says Loisel-Furey.





TIP #2
DITCH YOUR PAST HURTS

If you've been hurt in a past relationship, it's natural for you to have your guard up around prospective partners. "But you can't flirt if you're self-absorbed," warns Loisel-Furey. "It's called non-verbal leakage, where what you think comes out."

■ LET YOUR BODY TALK

If you're defensive, you are more likely to cross your arms and avoid eye contact, which can make you seem unapproachable. "If you spot a man you like, think 'he's gorgeous. I've got to talk to him' in place of 'I'm not good enough'. Instead of your body sending out the message that you're unworthy of his attention, it'll send a message that says, 'Come and talk to me.'" explains Loisel-Furey.

■ SHARE A SMILE

If you smile, chances are he will, too. "A man is four times more likely to take a smile as a come-on signal than a woman," says Allan Pease, author of *The Definitive Book of Body Language* (HarperCollins, \$29.95).

"Smiling is a submissive signal. Monkeys use it for the same purpose – it shows you're not about to attack and could be dominated."

TIP #3
KEEP CLOSE WATCH

When it comes to the flirting game, men and women don't always see eye to eye. ▶

"Typically, this is the scenario: she sees a guy across the room and she looks at him until he looks around. She drops her eyes. He notices and thinks, 'Hey, she just looked at me.' She looks back, sees him still looking at her and drops her eyes down a second time. That is the universal courtship signal for females.

"What she's saying is, 'I'm interested in you, so make a move.' What he thinks is 'hey, she's looking at me. Oh, she looked away. She's not interested. Wait, she's come back for a second look. Oh, she looked away again. She's not interested.'" says Pease.

■ WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

"When you look at him a second time, you need to hold his gaze for at least four to five seconds, then give a little smile before looking down again," advises Pease. "If he's interested, he'll unconsciously preen himself by brushing his hands down his pants, fixing his hair, adjusting his tie or he'll close the distance between you. For instance, if he's sitting with you, he'll lean in or cross his leg towards you. If he's not interested, he won't be looking the second time you look back."

■ GIVE HIM A CHANCE

It might be a little off-putting, but don't ignore a man who's laughing too loud or being a bit of a goose around you. "Men have been taught that they need to stand out to get noticed and many don't know what works," explains Loisel-Furey. "I've seen

60-year-old men doing the weirdest things in order to get a woman's attention."

**TIP #4
INITIATE CONTACT WITH HIM**

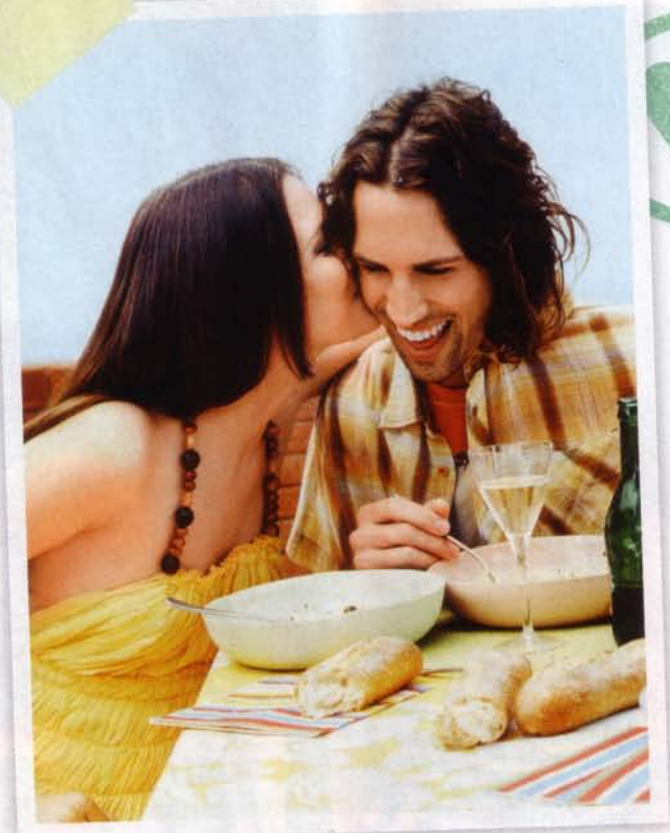
If he can't be enticed to leave his corner, but you're sure he's keen, take the initiative. "Older women have to move past this expectation that men should make the first move," advises Loisel-Furey, who says 83 per cent of men polled were happy for women to initiate contact.

"If you're interested, there is nothing wrong with going up to him and saying hello," she says. "In fact, 91 per cent of men said that a simple hello was the best way to start a conversation."

**TIP #5
ACCEPT HIS KIND WORDS**

Once you're talking to him, how can you tell if he's really interested or just being friendly? "Men will give you a lot of compliments when they like what they see," says Loisel-Furey.

"Women play compliment ping-pong – 'oh your hair looks good' or 'your shoes are great' – but men don't do that. They're not paying you a compliment to get one back. He's being sincere, so just say, 'thanks, that's nice



of you,' instead of brushing it off and making him feel bad."

■ LEARN TO COMPLIMENT

If you're interested, don't be afraid to compliment him back. "Ninety-six per cent of men surveyed said that when they're flirting, they wanted compliments," says Loisel-Furey. "One 55-year-old told me that, in his whole life, he'd only received five compliments from women he had dated."

**TIP #6
LISTEN MORE CLOSELY**

"Women can listen and speak at the same time on several unrelated subjects, even in one sentence, while men either speak or listen," explains Pease. "It's how men talk to other men – they take turns. If I'm talking to

a friend, I'll go first and he won't say anything, then I'll stop, look at him and he'll talk – we're not being polite, that's the best we can do.

"If he's talking, listen to him. If you interrupt, he'll think, 'She's cutting me off and finishing my sentences. She mustn't be interested in what I'm saying.'"

■ DIG DEEPER Loisel-Furey says small talk is really about making the other person feel comfortable. "Ask questions, but listen to the responses he gives you," she advises. "If you ask him what he did on the weekend and he tells you he went sailing, don't cut him off and go onto another conversation, use that.

"A man will always give you an insight into what he's passionate about, but most women don't delve any deeper. If you do, you'll stand out from the rest. He'll relax and it'll take the pressure off you to do all the talking." ❖



WIN A COPY! For your chance to win one of 10 copies of Katia Loisel-Furey's book *How to Get the Man You Want & How to Get the Woman You Want* (Inner Kiss Publishing, \$29.99), tell us in 25 words or less why you would like a copy. Enclose your contact details and send to: Good Health & Medicine – Flirting Competition, ACP Magazines, GPO Box 4088, Sydney 2000.