

The First Date Checklist

Forty-one things a girl notices — and every one of them is fixable this week.

I'm not going to tell you to be confident. Nobody has ever been helped by that.

Here's the actual list. Print it, screenshot it, run it the day before. None of it costs much, and none of it requires you to be someone you're not.

— Sloane

48 HOURS BEFORE

7 items

- ☐ **Barber this week, not this morning.** A cut on the day reads as trying. Three days out just reads as maintained.
- ☐ **Nails.** Trimmed, clean underneath. The single most-mentioned item in my group chat and the one nobody ever tells you about.
- ☐ **Neck, ears, brows.** Not shaped. Just handled. This is the "you can tell someone taught him" list.
- ☐ **Pick the place and book it.** A real reservation, not a vague area of town.
- ☐ **Send the address.** Not "see you there" — the address, the time, the parking situation.
- ☐ **Look at the menu once.** Know one thing you'd order. That's it.
- ☐ **Check that it actually fits.** Not what it cost. What it fits.

THE DAY OF

9 items

- ☐ **Shoes clean, heels not worn down.** The most-checked item you're least likely to check.
- ☐ **Shirt not wrinkled.** If it's wrinkled she assumes it came off a chair. She's usually right.
- ☐ **Nothing with a visible logo or a novelty graphic.**
- ☐ **Two sprays of fragrance** — one chest, one behind the neck. Don't rub your wrists together. Smelling like nothing is a miss; smelling like everything is a bigger one.
- ☐ **Phone at 100%.** A dying phone makes the whole night feel improvised.
- ☐ **Trash out of the car.** Every receipt, every cup.
- ☐ **Wipe the dash. Clear the passenger seat.** She should not have to hold your gym bag while you apologize.
- ☐ **Fix the car smell.** Anything that isn't a tree hanging off the mirror.
- ☐ **Aux sorted before she's in the car.** Not chosen during.

If you only do four things on this page: nails, shoes, the passenger seat, and the reservation.

The date is not where you're evaluated. The evidence is.

PAGE TWO: THE TABLE, THE CHECK, AND AFTER

THE FIRST TEN MINUTES

5 items

- ☐ **Arrive first.**
- ☐ **Stand up when she gets to the table.**
- ☐ **Phone face-down, and it stays there.** Not flipped over when it buzzes. Down, the whole time.
- ☐ **Open with something that isn't an interview question.** "How was the drive" beats "so what do you do."
- ☐ **Don't mention how long you waited.** Even joking. Especially joking.

AT THE TABLE

10 items

- ☐ **Order without a five-minute debate.** You already looked at the menu.
- ☐ **Match her drink pace, one behind.** Nothing dies faster than a date where one person is having a better time than the other.
- ☐ **How you talk to the waiter.** The most predictive thing that happens at that table. You're being warm to me because you want something — the waiter is the control group.
- ☐ **If something goes wrong** — wrong order, slow kitchen, spilled drink — one calm sentence, then move on. The only item here with a single right answer.
- ☐ **Don't say what anything costs.** Telling me what it cost is the same as telling me you needed me to know.
- ☐ **No coupon at the table.** Broke is fine. Cheap is a choice. They are not the same thing.
- ☐ **Ask one question about something she already said.** Proof you were listening beats every interesting thing you could say instead.
- ☐ **Let a pause happen.** The silence you don't rush to fill is the most expensive thing on this list.
- ☐ **Don't explain yourself twice.** The second explanation turns a statement into a request for permission.
- ☐ **If she disagrees with you, stay in it.** Whether disagreement is a threat to you is information I get for free.

THE CHECK

4 items

- ☐ **Ask for it before she has to look for it.**
- ☐ **Card already out. No performance.** No sigh, no joke about the total, no math out loud.
- ☐ **If she offers to split** — one warm sentence, no debate. "I've got this one." Insisting past a second offer is its own tell.
- ☐ **Tip properly.** Nobody has ever regretted this. Everyone notices it.

THE END & AFTER

9 items

- ☐ **End it while it's still good.** Ninety minutes beats four hours, every time.
- ☐ **Walk her out.** To the car, to the door, to the ride — not to the exit of the restaurant.
- ☐ **If you're unsure about a kiss, ask.** Being wrong gracefully costs you nothing. Guessing badly costs you everything.
- ☐ **Text the same night or the next morning.** The three-day rule is dead. Waiting reads as strategy, and strategy reads as insecurity.
- ☐ **Make it short and specific.** Reference one actual thing from the night.
- ☐ **Don't send "so when am I seeing you again."**
- ☐ **Ask for the second date within four days** — with a specific plan, and don't repeat the first one.
- ☐ **Six hours of no reply: do nothing.** This is the one that ends the most of them. Nothing you send at hour six improves your position.
- ☐ **If it's a no, take it in one line.** Don't ask for the reason. How you take a no is more information than the yes would have been.

Nothing here requires you to become someone else. It requires you to stop leaking evidence that you're not paying attention.

SLOANE

None of this is a trick.

Every item on this list is something you'd want to be true about her, too. You're not learning to perform — you're closing the gap between the man you already are everywhere else in your life and the man who shows up on Thursday.

There are about forty more of these, and the reasons behind all of them, in **The High-Value Code**.