

# Tinder has killed off traditional romance and reduced dating to transactions

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By [OLIVER PRICE, DATA JOURNALIST](#)

Back in the day, couples typically met at bars, with those flirty glances eventually progressing into blossoming romances. Others might have been set-up by friends playing Cupid.

Nowadays, however, singletons hit the love jackpot by swiping through a conveyor belt of strangers' faces on dating apps.

A mesmerising chart today shows how the likes of Tinder and Hinge have killed off the traditional ways lovers used to meet.

In the early 1960s, more than a third of couples originally met through friends.

Another 28 per cent were introduced to each other by family members.

By the late 2010s, online dating stole the top spot, according to research carried out by social scientists at Stanford University.

As of this decade, internet dating has completely eclipsed all other methods, being responsible for 59 per cent of all relationships.

Dating guru Kate Mansfield, who brands herself the UK's premier relationship coach, said that the 'super convenient', low pressure online dating environment is what has made it so popular among today's singles.

She said: 'You can swipe from your couch in your pyjamas. It opens up so many more possibilities than just the local bar.'

'Meeting online takes away some of the awkwardness of face-to-face introductions. You can chat first and get to know each other a bit before diving in.'

Ms Mansfield said that app algorithms, which connect potential lovers based on their interests, can mean you find a better match.

She added: 'You can meet people you'd never cross paths with otherwise, which is great.'

Although the seemingly limitless options can be 'overwhelming', Ms Mansfield said.

The survey asked around 3,000 US couples how and when they met their partners.

In the 1960s, 20 per cent met through school and 17 per cent at a bar or restaurant.

The total for any given period may be above 100 per cent because some responded 'yes' to more than one option. For example, they might have met through family and friends.

Meeting through friends remained firmly in first place until the early 80s, when it was edged out by coworkers.

Friends reclaimed the top spot from the late 80s, as workplace romances quickly fell out of fashion.

As of the 2020s, just 7 per cent of relationships get started in the break room.

Online dating entered the picture in the 2000s. From 2000 to 2004, around 12 per cent of couples met online. This was the era of early online dating services such as Match and Plenty of Fish.

But this figure grew in each five-year period.

By 2005 to 2010, more than 16 per cent of couples met online, compared to 29 per cent through friends.

In the early 2010s – when apps including **Tinder**, Hinge and **Bumble** were released – online dating rose to the number two spot.

Twenty-one per cent met through an online dating service, compared to 26 per cent meeting through friends.

The internet romance revolution was complete by second half of the decade, when a third of couples first met online.

Between 2020 and 2022, 59 per cent of couples met online, with friends plummeting to fourth place on 15 per cent.



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**Dating apps have killed off traditional methods of meeting romantic partners in the last decade (stock photo)**



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Ms Mansfield told MailOnline: 'We used to hang out in smaller groups, but now we've got a mix of friends, acquaintances, and online connections.'

'It's like our social networks have exploded.'

According to Ms Mansfield, this means that turning friends to lovers is less common because people don't know their ever-expanding friends list as well.

Asking a stranger out also has less opportunity to lead to an uncomfortable situation, she added.

She said: 'A lot of people prefer to find partners on their own. It can feel less awkward than getting set up by a friend, especially if things don't work out.'