

Dating experts reveal what couples are doing to RUIN their relationship before it even starts

- DailyMail.com spoke with experts to understand the negatives of soft launching
 - Though it may seem harmless, it can halt the beginnings of a relationship
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By [OLIVIA SALAMONE](#)

There is one thing that couples are doing that could be harming relationships before they even start — soft launching.

The trend of soft launching is when you post something on social media that subtly hints at a relationship before any kind of announcement.

This can be done by posting someone's hand on your leg, someone's back as they walk in front of you, or it can be as subtle as two coffee cups on a table.

Though it may seem harmless, it can actually halt the beginnings of a relationship.

DailyMail.com spoke with dating and social media experts to understand what this trend means for a relationship.

Ashwini Nadkarni MD, the Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, said soft launching on social media can create 'distrust' in the relationship.

'Soft-launching effectively means gauging the world's perceptions of your relationship before you've had a chance to be explicit about its true nature,' she explained to FEMAIL.

'Thus, partners are often assessing how others will react. The influence of others' perception of your relationship can potentially trigger feelings of distrust.



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DailyMail.com spoke with dating and social media experts to understand what soft launching means for a relationship (stock image)



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'For instance, if the world reacts in a negative way, do you trust that your partner won't be bothered by this? Do you trust the strength of your connection to your partner?'

'Relying on your partner to be confident in this time period [and sustain confidence in yourself] that you won't get hurt is necessary to both build a sense of safety and vulnerability.'

EXCLUSIVE

'On the other hand, behaving with distrust can ruin the relationship before it fully starts.'

Dr. Marisa T. Cohen, PhD, LMFT, a dating and relationship expert at **Hily**, argued that a person who is part of a soft launch, but doesn't want to be kept private might feel like they are being intentionally hidden from their partner's friends.

'They may also feel as if their lives are not being completely integrated and may even question the status of their relationship,' she detailed to DailyMail.com.

She also added: 'Outside of the relationship itself, friends and family may view it as a manipulative way to gain attention.'



'Not that you have an obligation to share your private life with everyone [or anyone for that matter], but you are sharing just enough to pique people's interest, but aren't providing them with any information.'

There is also a performative nature that comes with the act of posting an ambiguous picture of someone you're seeing.



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The trend of soft launching is when you post something on social media that subtly hints at a relationship (stock image)

Kintija Sluka, Head of PR & Performance at **One March PR**, explained the dangers of soft launching from the perspective of a social media expert.

'Soft-launching a relationship might seem harmless or even kind of fun but from a social media perspective, it can actually create way more pressure than people realize,' she revealed to FEMAIL.

'It can become this performance where instead of just enjoying getting to know someone, you're testing the waters with your followers first.

'A sneaky hand in a story, a blurry dinner date, or some cryptic caption it's all designed to spark curiosity and get people talking. But when you're building something new, bringing in that level of outside attention too soon can mess with the natural pace of things.

'You're no longer just dating the person, you're also managing a low-key PR campaign about your love life, and that can be a lot for some people.'

She explained that the performative element of the act can make things 'feel less genuine.'

'If you're posting with the hope of getting a reaction, maybe to make an ex jealous, show you've "moved on," or just to get validation, it can often put the focus on how the relationship looks instead of how it feels.

'And even if the person you're seeing doesn't mind the soft launch, there's a good chance they're aware of it too.



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'That silent pressure to make the "launch" successful, will people care? Will they approve? Which can lead to unnecessary tension or awkwardness really early on.

'It's important to understand that every situation is different, but this is something to always keep in mind.'

She said - from a social media expert's point of view - soft launching is 'turning your personal life into content before there's even anything solid to share.'

'We've trained ourselves to think in terms of engagement and audience reaction, but not every part of life needs to be filtered through that lens. Especially not something as personal as a new relationship,' she stated.

'The truth is, if you're already worried about how your followers will respond before you've even defined what the relationship is, it might be worth stepping back and asking who you're really doing it for.'