How to Lose a Guy (or Girl) in 10 Minutes: Five quick tips to shake those creepy drunks that never seem to get the hint

Leah De Graaf  
*Iowa State University*

Nguyet Bui  
*Iowa State University*

Blake Lanser  
*Iowa State University*

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How to Lose a Guy (or Girl) in 10 Minutes

1. Know Your Signals

Be aware of the nonverbal messages you are sending to others. Ladies, if you are gazing at someone across the bar with a smile spread across your face as you tilt your head to the side and continuously flip your hair, he/she is probably going to think you’re interested. Communication studies professor Mark Redmond says women give off approachability cues that help others identify whether a person is approachable or not. Men, however, might engage in status displays says Dawn Sweet, who holds a doctorate in communication. So guys, if you catch yourself expanding your chest to take up as much space as possible, talking in a loud voice and engaging in “showing off” behavior you might be sending the wrong signals.

2. Show Disinterest

Once you know the nonverbal hints you give off, use them to shake that guy or gal without being hurtful. Body language is everything, so avoid eye contact and keep your body turned away from your unwanted admirer. Drudge down conversation by answering questions shortly and don’t ask questions in return. Redmond, whose research focuses on interpersonal communication, says people tend to avoid offending others. “We don’t want to embarrass someone,” Redmond says. “We don’t want to make them feel bad.” Indirect strategies, like ignoring the person or subtly acting rude, protects a person’s feelings, while direct strategies tend to “threaten” an individual. One risk with the indirect strategy is that your message may not be picked up. According to Redmond, “We see what we want to see.” If that’s the case and you just can’t shake them, find an excuse to leave.

3. Be Direct, Say No

Flat out tell the person you are not interested. Sometimes it is best to have a clear and strong message to get your point across. According to Redmond, among the students he has talked to the preference is to be direct and say, “I appreciate your interest, but no thank you.” You don’t want to be seen as a tease. William Foss, senior in hotel and restaurant management, says it is easier to tell a lie. “If you lie you are saving their feelings. If you tell the truth, they could get upset,” says Foss. So using the whole “I’m sorry, I am in a relationship,” may be the best route, as long as you don’t get caught.

4. Don’t say one thing and do the other. For example, if a girl accepts a drink and then walks away there is a clear contradiction, and mixed messages lead to tricky situations. Foss, also a bartender and bouncer at Big Shots, says when he buys a girl a drink he expects at least a casual conversation. Similarly, if you have told someone to leave you alone, do not continue any kind of interaction. “We get into too much game playing sometimes when it comes to relationships,” says Redmond. “It would be a lot easier if [everyone] could be real frank with each other.”

5. Find Help or Leave

If the message is just not sticking, don’t hesitate to excuse yourself from the situation. Sit in a different seat, create distance, leave or ask for help. As a bar employee, Foss can tell when a girl is not interested in a guy, and if he were notified about a potentially dangerous situation, he would ask the male to either leave the female alone or exit the bar—don’t leave without your friends, though. “There are creeps out there,” Redmond warns. “Ultimately, it is just a matter of getting the message across clearly.”