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9 Unusual New Places to Meet Men

by Sherry Amatenstein ([see more from this contributor](#))

Have you found that lately all the tried-and-true methods of meeting men -- i.e., flirting at the gym, in bars, etc. -- are getting stale, not to mention fruitless? Well, those tired techniques aren't the way to find true love in 2004. If we've learned anything from the busy ladies on *Sex and the City* over the years, it's this: Meeting a man can happen anytime, anyplace. All it takes is the right mindset and a little strategy.

1. Puppy Love

A dog can be woman's best friend when it comes to meeting men. But don't take Fido for just any old walk -- bring him to the local dog park for a more social stroll. That way, while the pooch plays with his new pals, you can make a few of your own. *Sex and the City* featured the Madison Square Park dog run in New York City as a hotbed of single guys.

Meanwhile, many entrepreneurs are finding that our four-legged friends are natural-born matchmakers. [Leashes and Lovers](#) hosts cocktail parties for single dog owners to meet (and share photos of their pets). The company is based in New York for now, but it's soon to go national. And [Singles with Pets](#) is an online dating site with a guarantee: Your potential partner won't be allergic to your first love, your pooch.

2. Seminars for (Seeking) Sweethearts We're not talking knitting or flower arranging. Think y-chromosome-friendly activities. Anything from car maintenance to cooking (yes, real men are interested in learning techniques beyond boiling water) to the Brazilian dance/martial arts craze capoeira will do. Or let your taste buds do the talking with a [wine tasting](#) or a [scotch tasting](#). Says New Yorker Sarah Parvis, "Men are impressed by women who want to learn about a [traditionally] 'manly' drink. And there's a happy hour after the event." The point is, looking for an overlap between your interests and what might intrigue guys is a great way to educate yourself and create an opportunity for meeting new people.

3. Home Depot Hookups

This home-improvement chain offers enough man-meeting potential to warrant its own category. In fact, iVillagers on the [Guy Talk board](#) have recently been discussing the abundance of available guys roaming the aisles for tools, fixtures, wood -- and dates. The store even offers classes on home repair and construction projects. Debbie Mandel, author of *Turn On Your Inner Light: Fitness for Body, Mind and Soul*, explains the appeal: "Men are looking for self-reliant women who can fix things and take some of the responsibility off them." She adds, "Some weddings have been celebrated at the Home Depot where the couple originally met!"

4. High IQ x 2 = True Love

Intellectual singles are increasingly meeting their high-IQ matches at events geared toward people looking to exercise their minds. Are you a Mensa member? Check for parties in your area. Enjoy scavenger hunts? [Watson Adventures](#) hosts hunts at museums, zoos, circuses and other interesting places in cities such as New York, San Francisco, Seattle and Boston. Amy K., author of [Brain Brilliant Dating: The Secrets to a Mental Orgasm](#), says, "Two people involved in an activity that mentally engages them will definitely generate sparks." **5. Planes & Trains (but No**

Automobiles) True, airports are a hassle these days, but all that hustling and bustling can actually be a breeding ground for, well, breeding! It's even possible to bond over bad service. Says Monica Hildebrand, a Texas marketing executive, "I met a great guy [on an airplane] traveling from Dallas to New York last fall. I've also met quite a few interesting men traversing Europe via rail. It's all about attitude and a healthy dose of confidence." It doesn't have to be a long trip. Countless couples have hooked up riding the subway or bus to work. Score one for public transportation.

6. Music Lovers

To quote Shakespeare, "If music be the food of love, play on." No wonder concerts are packed with male patrons. L. Ann Carlson from Minneapolis, Minnesota, took this tip even further. She moonlighted as a security guard at the Target Center, where many big events are held. "Not only have I been able to see great shows for free while being paid," she says, "I've met musicians and performers including Usher and Chicago, as well as great-looking fans." Not ready to make meeting men a second job? Love of music brought Amy Tenner and her now fiancé to a record store at the same moment. The Pennsylvania banker laughs, "We bonded over Sting."

7. Cyber-Networking

[Online dating](#) is more mainstream than ever -- and it's even taking cool new strides with *video* chat. Sites such as [Attract One](#) can accommodate up to 16 users in each video chat room. All you need is the latest version of Flash, a DSL or cable connection and a recent browser -- and some sites even offer to send you a free Web cam to get started.

The Internet is also a fabulous tool to find a man in a six-degrees-of-separation sort of way. There are a burgeoning number of Websites where you can find friends, business contacts and activity partners -- all of which can lead to love. Perhaps the most popular is Craig's List. This electronic bulletin board for every major city has areas to post and respond to requests for hairstylists, fling partners, employees, movie buddies and more. On [Friendster.com](#), you post a profile and photo, and then get connected through the social-networking software to your friends, their friends and their friends' friends! Women recycle exes and offer up platonic male friends on [Great Boyfriends](#), while, for a fee, [Social Circles](#) arranges cool activities for strangers who quickly become friends.

8. Play Ball

Here's a statement that no football widow will contest: Men love sports. Does your community have a local softball team you can join? Or perhaps it's another sport that gets you to don your sneaks and sweats. Tori Pugliese's passion is a local running club. The New Yorker explains, "It's a good way to get in shape and meet an interesting guy. Before the run is warm-up time. After the run, everyone's cooling down and talking about the run."

Not a jock? Not a problem. You can meet men while watching them play, by going to games in stadiums both big and small. Tammy Filler calls the soccer fields in her neighborhood, "the new singles bars -- at least for single fathers." The Seattle-based divorcee says, "On Saturday mornings I head over with a friend or grab a niece or nephew. It's a relaxed, casual atmosphere and no designer clothes or shoes are needed."

9. Dinner Is Served

Here's an idea for the single who's hungry for good food and even better dinner companions. Clubs around the country such as [Eight at Eight](#), [Table for Eight](#) and [Dinner at Eight](#) set up dinner parties of four single men and four single women who share similar backgrounds and interests. If love doesn't bloom, at least you'll have had a great meal. *