

**YOU!
YOU!
YOU!**

Relationship



Going out **ON YOUR OWN** is *more fun than you think*

How to **FLY SOLO** ANYWHERE

Panicked at the thought of going to a party all alone? Or over the fact you'll be dateless for an upcoming wedding when everyone else is coupled up? Here are a few tactics to help you master the art of flying solo, and have you saying "Table for one" in no time...

At the movies

"The movies is one of the easiest places to go on your own," says Kirsti Boothroyd, success coach and director of spheresofsuccess.com.au. "If you feel awkward, arrive when the lights are already dimmed. Walk in as though you've done it a million times before." Confidence coach Di Riddell (diriddell.com) adds: "Choose a spot with a few empty seats surrounding it, so you've got plenty of personal space. Then sit back, relax and enjoy the film." Chances are, people are focused entirely on eating their popcorn and watching the movie – and won't even realise you're sitting alone in the dark.



At a wedding

"Don't be tempted to sneak in late and sit at the back of the church on your own," says Boothroyd. "Slip into a seat near the front and ask the person next to you how they know the bride and groom. Discussing mutual friends is an instant topic of conversation. At the reception, approach your table with a smile and introduce yourself. If conversation doesn't flow naturally, ask people to relay memories of the bride and groom."



At a restaurant

"Eating is considered a social activity, so it can be nerve-racking sitting alone in a restaurant," admits Riddell. "Ask for a seat by a window, so you've got a good view. If the waiter asks 'Just one?', flash a smile and say, 'One is plenty.' It shows you're happy in your own company. If you're anxious, take a book and read until you start to feel comfortable." Says Boothroyd: "Still nervous? Look around – chances are there's at least one other person sitting alone. Think of it as a rare opportunity to enjoy some private thinking time while you eat."



At a party

"Turning up solo to a party is scary, but it forces you to meet new people," says Riddell. "Rule one: wear something comfortable," says Boothroyd. "If you feel self-conscious, it's harder to relax. Rule two: arrive when others are already there so you'll have people to talk to. Rule three: be honest. Approach a group and tell them you don't know anyone. People will talk to you if they know you're alone. Rule four: plan topics of conversation to prevent awkward silences." **COSMO**



Great convo starters

1. "Give a compliment," says etiquette coach Rachel Quilty, from finishing school, **Jump the Q.** "Saying 'I love your dress/earrings/shoes' gets people on side."
2. "The weather. Cheesy? Maybe, but everyone can join in."
3. "Introduce yourself. If you tell someone your name, they have to tell you theirs."

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Great at flying solo?
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