Dating an AI bot is easier than you might think.

But it never ends well.
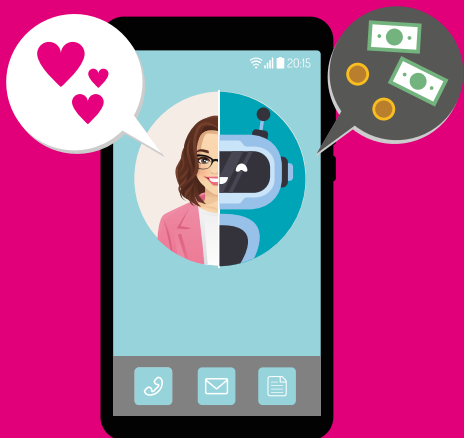
According to recent research, more than one in four people say that they or someone they know have been approached by an AI chatbot posing as a real person on a dating app or social media. Obviously, however, AI chatbots aren't interested in falling in love with you. What's actually happening is that the scammers using them want to trick you out of your money or into revealing confidential information.*

The latest generation of AI tools can hold very convincing conversations with you not only as webchats but as voice and video calls, using their expertise in ultra-realistic deepfake technology. It's virtually impossible to tell them from a real person, especially as you haven't met or spoken to your new 'date' before.

McAfee, February 2025

#RomanceScams

Protect yourself

Even if AI isn't involved, it's still easy to get taken in by a scam if you're really keen to start a new relationship. Whether you're trying online dating for the first time or a regular, please take time to read our safe online dating top tips.

- **Pick a trusted dating platform.** Look at independent reviews, and if you can, ask people you know which sites or apps they've had good experiences with.

- **Keep conversations on the app or dating site**, even if someone pushes you to move to text, email or another platform. It's safer that way.

- **Protect your account** with strong, unique login details. Using different passwords for different apps or sites reduces the risk of someone hacking into your profile.

- **Focus on the person behind the profile.** Take your time, stay level headed, ask questions and don't feel pressured to move faster than you're comfortable with.

- **Always do online checks.** Search for your match's name, photos or repeated phrases along with terms like 'dating scam', 'romance scam' or 'catfish'. You can also use Ask Silver and other tools in our free Self Help Tool Centre to help you spot fraudulent messages.

- Use freely available online **AI detection tools** to check for fake audio, deepfakes or other AI generated content.

- **Be cautious** if someone comes on too strongly. Pushing for rapid intimacy or sharing dramatic personal stories early on are common red flags.

- **Never send money or share financial information.** No matter how convincing the explanation, don't hand over bank details, passwords or payments to someone you've only met online.

- **Keep personal information private.** Avoid sharing your full name, date of birth, home address or details about your family until you're sure it's safe to do so.

- Avoid sending **intimate photos or videos.** Once shared, if you lose control of them, you risk sextortion or revenge porn, which can have serious emotional consequences.

- **Watch out for attempts to isolate you.** If someone tells you not to talk about them with friends or family, they may be trying to manipulate or control you. End the conversation and block them.

- Plan ahead if you're **meeting in person**. Let someone you trust know where and when you're going. Arrange your own travel, choose a public place, keep your phone charged and ask a friend to call you during the date so you have an easy exit if you need it.

For free, practical advice on dating online safely, visit **www.getsafeonline.org,** choose **'Protecting Yourself'** then **'Safe Online Dating'**

If you become a victim of romance fraud, report it immediately to Report Fraud on **www.reportfraud.police.uk** or on **0300 123 2040** (or if you're in Scotland, **Police Scotland on 101**). Also, report it to the dating site or app where you met the perpetrator. Report any assaults or coercively controlling behaviour to the police. Report any financial losses to your bank as soon as possible.

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

For more information and expert, easy-to-follow, impartial advice on safeguarding yourself, your family, finances, devices and workplace, visit **www.getsafeonline.org**

If you think you have been a victim of fraud, report it to **Report Fraud** at **reportfraud.police.uk** or by calling **0300 123 2040**. If you are in Scotland, contact **Police Scotland** on **101**.

GET SAFE ONLINE .org ®

www.getsafeonline.org

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