

Tips for Making a Long-Distance Relationship Work

One of the main benefits of Internet dating is that it opens up a whole new world of possibilities. Instead of being limited to the women you might meet in your unit or at local establishments, you can set your online search filter to include hundreds of prospects across the country. But on the flip side, if you find a love match who happens to live in another state, it can be a challenge to build and sustain a strong relationship.

The good news is, if she's truly "the one" and she feels the same about you, it should be an easy decision for one of you to relocate so you can be together. But if that's not immediately possible, there are some things you can do to maintain trust, chemistry, and communication to bridge the distance between you.

- **Set some guidelines.** Once the two of you have decided you want to make this work, it's important to lay down some ground rules. For instance, you might agree to not see other people, to talk at least three times per week, and to schedule a face-to-face visit at least once a month.
- **Share your feelings.** Women frequent reassurance of their partners' commitment. Let her know how much you miss her, how happy she makes you, and how excited you are to see her again. Coyness and "hard-to-get" games have no place in a burgeoning long-distance relationship. Never assume she knows how you feel—if you're not sure, she probably doesn't.
- **Connect every day.** You don't have to hang on the phone for hours, but it's important to reach out in some way at least once a day. Whether it's a quick IM chat, an electronic greeting card, a Skype conversation, or an email, long-distance communications are free and easy—and they go a long way toward keeping the spark alive.
- **Trust one another.** Jealousy and distrust are the quickest destructors of a long-distance relationship. If you're insecure, your partner will pick up on that immediately, and you'll risk losing her altogether. Unless you have a valid reason to think otherwise, assume that she's trustworthy and committed. If you've been hurt or betrayed in the past, don't let that cloud your outlook of your current relationship.
- **Get close—mentally.** One of the biggest advantages of dating from afar is that you're forced to talk more than you might if you were physically together. This

allows you to get to know each other on an intimate level. Between conversations, make lists of things to tell your partner or questions you want to ask them. This will help ensure that each exchange nudges you closer.

- **Send gifts.** They don't have to be lavish or expensive—just a simple token of your affection can work wonders. Some thoughtful, economical ideas include her favorite candy, scented candles, books about topics or activities she enjoys, a personalized CD of her favorite music, a gift card for a massage or spa day, framed photos of the two of you together, or a video message. Don't go overboard—one “care package” per month should be plenty.

Cultivating a long-distance relationship isn't easy, but if you're both committed to the necessary work and sacrifice, it is possible to find love from afar.