Am I Being Too Picky?

Standards vs. preferences: a practical checklist for women who want to date with clarity.

Sista-girl, wanting respect is not asking for too much. But requiring a six-foot man, a six-figure salary and a movie-perfect first date can hide what you actually need. Start by sorting your list.

TREATMENT STANDARD

How someone treats you. Honesty, respect, consent, accountability and follow-through.

LIFE COMPATIBILITY

Whether your lives can work together. Children, faith, commitment, location and an agreed approach to money.

BOUNDARY

A limit you set for your own participation. I will not continue a date where my physical limits are pressured.

PREFERENCE

A trait or experience you like. Height, clothing style, a particular job title or the restaurant you imagined.

> Do not force everything into two boxes. Wanting children is not the same as wanting a taller man. Someone can be kind and still be incompatible with the life you want.

Before calling something a non-negotiable, ask:

- [ ] What specific need does this protect: safety, faith, honesty, daily life, attraction or social approval?
- [ ] Could a different trait meet the same need? Could responsibility matter more than a job title?
- [ ] If nobody saw us together, would this still matter to me?
- [ ] Have I described behavior I can observe, or a label I am assuming means something?
- [ ] Can I accept who he is now, without relying on a future makeover or conversion?

These are reflection prompts, not a scored test. You do not owe anyone a date or need to prove someone is bad to decide he is not for you.

The date, the texts and the money

The useful question is not just “Can I compromise?” Ask what the requirement is doing for you.

WHAT YOU ARE THINKING	SORT IT	WHAT TO CHECK IN REAL LIFE
“He suggested coffee instead of dinner.”	Usually a preference; effort is a standard.	Is it a public place you are comfortable with? Did he make a clear plan and consider your schedule? A cheaper date is not automatically low effort. Pressure to go home with him is a separate issue.
“He does not text back within an hour.”	Communication expectations need discussion.	A nurse on shift may reply differently from someone at a desk. Agree on a workable rhythm. Notice repeated disappearing, broken plans or refusal to discuss it, rather than timing every message.
“He earns less than the number on my list.”	Income can affect compatibility; a salary target may be a preference.	Can you discuss work, obligations, spending and your expected lifestyle honestly? Job loss, disability or caregiving do not define character. Do not confuse status with responsibility.
“He does not own a house.”	Often a preference; independence and logistics need context.	Renting, saving or living with family can have different reasons. Ask about privacy, responsibilities, future plans and whether the arrangement works for you. Ownership alone does not prove readiness.
“I expect him to pay for dates.”	A dating expectation to discuss, not a universal morality test.	If a provider dynamic matters to you, say so. A different view may mean incompatibility. Either way, paying never buys access to your body, time or obedience.
“He brings gifts but cancels constantly.”	Reliability is the issue.	Do his actions match his promises? Does he acknowledge the impact and change the pattern? Flowers and expensive dinners do not cancel out repeated disrespect of your time.

Practical rule: Changing a restaurant, height preference or texting rhythm can be flexibility. Accepting dishonesty, pressure or a future you do not want is a different decision.

The chemistry, the faith and the future

The useful question is not just “Can I compromise?” Ask what the requirement is doing for you.

WHAT YOU ARE THINKING	SORT IT	WHAT TO CHECK IN REAL LIFE
“He is not my usual type.”	Preference plus attraction.	If you feel safe, curious and some attraction, you may choose another date. You do not have to force chemistry. An unfamiliar connection is not automatically wrong, and an intense one is not automatically right.
“He is shorter or dresses differently.”	Usually a preference.	Do you enjoy him and feel attracted when you are together? Or are you mainly worried about how he will look in photos? You can keep a preference; be honest about what it costs you.
“He says he is Christian.”	For Christian women, shared faith may be core compatibility.	Discuss what faith means in everyday choices, church life, sex, marriage and parenting. A label or church attendance alone cannot establish honesty, respect or shared convictions.
“He does not have my degree.”	Usually a preference; mutual respect matters.	Can you talk freely? Does he respect your work and goals? Education, curiosity and responsibility do not come in one job title. Dismissing your achievements is a treatment issue.
“He never posts me.”	Posting is a preference; secrecy and exclusivity need clarity.	Have you agreed you are exclusive and discussed privacy? A low-profile person is different from someone hiding another partner. You do not need passwords or constant location access to deserve honesty.
“He wants kids; I do not.”	A life compatibility issue.	Take a clear answer seriously. Do not plan on either person changing. The same applies to marriage intentions, major location decisions and other life choices neither of you can genuinely accept.

Practical rule: Changing a restaurant, height preference or texting rhythm can be flexibility. Accepting dishonesty, pressure or a future you do not want is a different decision.

What to hold firm on

Look for patterns and specific actions. One imperfect moment is not the same as an ongoing pattern; a serious violation does not require repeated chances.

- ☐ Honesty: he tells the truth about his relationship status and what he is looking for.
- ☐ Consent: he accepts “no” without guilt, bargaining, anger or punishment.
- ☐ Respect: he does not humiliate you, insult your body or belittle your work, faith or friends.
- ☐ Follow-through: he makes realistic plans and communicates when circumstances change.
- ☐ Accountability: he can acknowledge harm, apologize specifically and make a change.
- ☐ Mutual effort: you are not responsible for every plan, check-in and difficult conversation.
- ☐ Freedom: you can keep your friendships, privacy and identity without being controlled.
- ☐ Compatible intentions: you discuss the relationship you each want instead of guessing from chemistry.

Four conversations you can actually have

Intentions: “I am dating toward a committed relationship. What are you looking for right now?”

Communication: “I do not need constant texting. I do need follow-through. What does realistic communication look like for you?”

Money and dating: “I like a man to take initiative in planning dates. What are your expectations around planning and paying?”

Physical boundaries: “I am not comfortable with that. If you keep pushing, I will end the date.”

When it is serious: threats, coercion, stalking or violence are not differences in dating style. Prioritize your safety and seek trusted support. You do not need another date to gather more evidence.

Your after-date reality check

Use facts from the date and direct conversations. Leave unknowns as unknowns rather than filling them with hope or fear.

1. What happened?

Write one specific action or exact statement, not “he is high value” or “he is toxic.”

---

2. What am I reacting to?

Treatment standard / life compatibility / boundary / preference / still unsure

---

3. What need is underneath it?

Respect, faith, safety, attraction, companionship, stability, family, lifestyle or something else.

---

4. What do I know, and what am I assuming?

Separate what he said and did from what you think it might mean.

---

5. What question do I need to ask?

Ask clearly once. Notice whether the answer and later behavior match.

---

6. Could I accept this staying the same?

Evaluate the person and circumstances in front of you, not the future version you could create.

My next step

- ☐ Continue because I am interested and my key needs are being respected.
- ☐ Clarify a real unknown before investing further.
- ☐ Decline because this connection does not fit what I want.
- ☐ End contact because my boundaries or safety are not being respected.

My own responsibility: Am I offering the honesty, clarity, kindness and accountability I expect? Reciprocity does not require identical income, a matching degree or identical roles.