

Dating: Lie Busters – 3 ways to spot a liar

There are little white lies, and then there are whoppers. Little white lies are acceptable, and in fact are expected on the first date. It's the whoppers you want to avoid. When meeting someone for the first time, we tend to use harmless white lies to blur facts about less impressive or unimportant details – such as how you really feel about hockey, or opera, or breast feeding in public. This behaviour indicates a certain sensitivity and normal desire to put one's best foot forward, and isn't necessarily bad. However, when someone starts telling you they recently won the Nobel Peace Prize, it's clearly a problem.

Honesty is the basis of every good relationship. For that reason it is important to begin a relationship honestly, and equally important to be able to identify who is lying to you. Since merchants aren't likely to install lie detectors into their venues anytime soon, it's best to learn how to pick the liars apart from the sincere.

We were always told that when people lie, they look up to the left? Or is it to the right? In fact, it doesn't matter, that theory has long ago proven to be little more than an old wives tale. There are however, three widely researched and accepted telltale signs that someone is lying.

1) **Eye contact** – This is probably where the "looking up to the left" legend comes from. It doesn't matter where they are looking, if they can't make eye contact with you it's a pretty clear sign that they are lying. A low self-esteem can also cause people to avoid eye contact, however you can usually tell these poor souls from the liars because they will consistently look down. Liars on the other hand, will look anywhere and everywhere (but you) when lying, but will be able to stay focussed on you when answering a question truthfully. If you suspect you are talking to a liar, try asking a question that you know is easy to answer honestly (such as, "do you like hockey?") and watch for a change in demeanour and eye contact: if they are lying you will notice that they immediately relax, and latch on to the new topic very quickly.

2) **Subject avoidance** – Liars are usually trying to cover up a detail about themselves or a topic they are embarrassed for you to know about. They will almost always do whatever they can to avoid talking about it, which is where lying comes in. Topic avoidance comes in two forms: First, is The Stall. With popular variations such as "um," "uh," and "can you repeat the question?" the stall is a likely sign that they're trying to buy more time to think up an answer. Then, there is the Topic Change. Much more direct (and telltale,) liars use the topic change to avoid having to lie about the subject altogether. Ironically, they often end up telling another lie to facilitate the switchover.

3) **Long, unnecessary explanations** – Lies, by default, are made up stories. Stories take a lot of construction and reflection. When someone lies to you, they often feel the need to tell more detail than necessary. This is because they are not only proving the story is true to you, they are in a sense doing the same for themselves. Going into detail allows the liar keep track of the lie, kind of like how criminals have to go over every detail of their alibi to ensure it checks out. Because they are worried you will see through the lie, they will often keep providing "evidence" that it's true. A variation of this third sign is exaggeration. Liars will often over-exaggerate in their long-winded discourse, in the hopes that it will strengthen the lie.

A person may act like this and still be telling the truth; it's just highly unlikely, especially if they exhibit more than one sign. Take note of the three indicators and use them to help decipher honesty next time you meet someone new. Bear in mind that telling the truth is the easiest option, while constructing a lie takes thought and energy. Most people will take the path of least resistance, and opt to tell the truth; However, there are countless social situations – meeting new friends, [speed dating](#) 10 or more unknown singles, examining your blind date, etc. – where being able to discern the liars from the truthful will come in handy. Keep your eye open, and your own ethics clean, and you will always come out on top.

About the Author

Dating tips from Justin Parfitt, CEO and Founder of FastLife International, the world's largest speed dating and singles events company. FastLife is a premium [speed dating](#) service hosting high quality events for busy professional singles the world over. FastLife operates across 6 countries, hosting [speed dating events](#) in 47 cities around the world.

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