

ESL Brains

Spotting the flags

1. Look at people's habits and behaviours in the boxes and discuss the questions below.

They openly express their emotions, both positive and negative.	They insist on you spending more time with them than with anyone
They're OK if you want to be on your own instead of going out together.	They resort to gossip in every conversation.
They expect you to always take the initiative.	They don't try to change you.

- Which of these appeal to you in a friend or a partner and which can make you dislike them?
- Can you think of a situation when a person's habit or behaviour had a particularly positive or negative impact on your relationship?
- What are red and green flags?

2. Match each sentence beginning with two endings.

- A. One of the clearest green flags is when...
- B. While making new friends, you should **steer clear of** people who...
- C. If you seek to build a successful relationship, don't **turn a blind eye to** things which...
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1. ...can potentially **raise eyebrows**, like sudden changes in behaviour, which might indicate deeper issues that need to be addressed.
 2. ...a person actively **navigates relationships** with respect and consideration for other people's feelings.
 3. ...often **play hot and cold**, leaving you uncertain about their true intentions and feelings.
 4. ...**come off as** overly critical, as this negativity can make a supportive and enjoyable connection impossible.
 5. ...could potentially be **a dealbreaker**, such as dishonesty or a lack of communication.
 6. ...a person doesn't **dwell on** past arguments but instead focuses on resolving issues and moving forward together.

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3. Match the words and phrases in bold in ex. 2 with their definitions below.

- A. think or talk about something, often unpleasant, for a long time
- B. ignore something that you know is wrong or inappropriate
- C. avoid something or someone, usually to prevent problems or conflict
- D. manage and deal with interpersonal connections
- E. keep changing your behaviour in a relationship, from showing interest to being distant
- F. something important that prevents you from agreeing to a relationship, buying something, etc.
- G. cause surprise or shock, often due to something controversial
- H. give a particular impression

4. For each pair of examples, decide if they represent green or red flags. Then, discuss which example in each pair is 'greener' or 'redder' in your opinion and explain your answer.

EXAMPLE: a person's eccentric fashion choices raise eyebrows wherever you go

OR a person often plays hot and cold

I'm not sure about the first option. I understand that it has to do with personal taste, but still it would be quite uncomfortable for me personally to date someone like that as I'm a pretty shy person. However, the second option seems totally unacceptable to me, and I wouldn't tolerate it by any means, so for me that's definitely the 'redder' example.

- a person dwells on their past misfortunes in every conversation OR a person steers clear of personal topics like friendships, pastime preferences, etc.
- a person turns a blind eye to trivial disagreements OR a person finds playing hot and cold unacceptable
- a person is clear and upfront about the dealbreakers in a relationship OR a person admits they're open to compromises while navigating conflicts in a relationship
- a person always expresses themselves in a way that raises eyebrows OR a person comes off as quick-tempered and self-centred

5. You are going to watch a video about red, green and beige flags. Discuss what 'a beige flag' might be. Then, watch the [video](https://youtu.be/lDufeYi66Zl) [https://youtu.be/lDufeYi66Zl] (to 00:46) and check your ideas.

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6. In the next part of the video, you are going to hear three examples of beige flag behaviours. Look at the points and guess what the behaviours might be. Then, watch the next part of the **video** (from 00:47 to 02:15) and check your answers.

- A. left and right
- B. Peppa Pig
- C. intimate questions

7. Watch the final part of the **video** (from 02:15 to 02:57) and complete the notes.

- A. A beige flag is a concern if people _____
- B. A beige flag isn't a concern if people _____

8. Discuss the questions.

- Do you think beige flags have the potential to become dealbreakers in relationships? Why/Why not?
- What other beige flags can you think of?
- How do you think different generations perceive beige, red and green flags?
- Can you think of any characters from films or TV shows and their beige, red, or green flags?
- How do you think the concept of red, green and beige flags has influenced online dating?
- Can you think of behaviours that are considered acceptable in one culture but are seen as a red or beige flag in another?



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9. Look at the situations and comment on some of them using the sentence frames below.

Your partner wants to have a dessert after dinner every day while you don't feel like having anything sweet.

On a dating app, you see a profile that contains phrases like 'Don't contact me if...' or 'I'm not interested in someone who's into...'

Your friend or partner never posts pictures of the two of you together on social media, even though they are active online.

Your friend pretends they don't know what some words mean. When you talk about your new laptop, they might ask, 'What's a laptop?'.

On a date, you ask a person about why their previous relationship ended. They respond with one sentence and then change the subject.

A person you're dating turns up late each time you arrange to meet, but they always bring you a small gift.

Whenever you go to a restaurant, your friend will ask the waiter what to order and they will blindly order what the waiter says.

Your friend doesn't know how to sum up their day. Instead, they tell you about every little thing they did.

- To me, this behaviour comes off as...
- This wouldn't be a definite dealbreaker for me, but...
- With this sort of behaviour, navigating a relationship/friendship might be...
- I think I could turn a blind eye to this if...
- I'd steer clear of people who...
- This kind of behaviour might raise some eyebrows because...