

# TRUE *Love* MATCH

A game of romance and reality TV



Twenty hopeful ladies began this journey. Only four remain.

It is time for the lonely gentleman to finally choose...

...his **True Love Match!**

*A game for six people by Morgan Davie.*

Design by Morgan Davie. This version prepared March 2015.

2014 playtesters were Jenni Sands, Anna Klein, Andrew McLeod, Phillip Brown, Nicolette Brown.

I am grateful for advice from Steve Hickey and Svend Andersen.

Inspirations include *Breaking the Ice* by Emily Care Boss, *Best Friends* by Gregor Hutton, *I Know Right* by Jenni Sands (unreleased), and *EPOCH* by Dale Elvy.

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Roses are expensive. Use something else.

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I tried this game just once, at Kapcon 2014 in Wellington, New Zealand.

I don't want to try it again. It worked too well the first time.

Play at your own risk.

## *About this game*

**True Love Match** is a game for six people to play together over three or four hours. The players will together explore the final stages of a romance reality TV show.

The game begins as the reality show approaches its conclusion. Twenty hopeful ladies gathered in a beautiful mansion and competed for the love of a dashing gentleman. Across several weeks of dates and experiences, sixteen ladies were sent home. Four ladies remain, but only one can be chosen as the gentleman's **True Love Match**.

## *People to be*

One person is **the Host** of **True Love Match**. They will co-ordinate all events.

One person is the star of the show, **the Lonely Gentleman**. He goes on dates with all the ladies and eventually must choose between them.

The other four people are the remaining **Hopeful Ladies**. They go on dates with the gentleman and try to win his heart.

## *Before you play*

There are a few things the Host must do ahead of time:

- **Invite five other people to play.** Agree on a time.
- **Find a playing space.** You need two areas, a large one serving as the beautiful mansion, and a private space where two players can play their dates.
- **Prepare a show schedule.** Make sure it suits the time available.
- **Print four copies of the two playsheets.** Put them in the large room.
- **Gather a dozen roses.** Put them in the large room.
- **Gather a pile of ordinary six-sided dice.** Put them in the private room.
- **Label a container "Maybe" and another one "Love".** Put them with the dice.
- **Gather two ring presentation boxes and one ring.** Put them aside.

## *Getting started*

**All:** Read through these instructions together and follow the steps in sequence.

**Host:** Lead the group in selecting someone to be the Lonely Gentleman. Ask for volunteers, draw straws, or simply choose someone yourself.

**Gentleman:** give your Lonely Gentleman a name, and announce this name to everyone.

**Ladies:** take a playsheet and write down the Gentleman's name. Then give your Hopeful Lady a name and write that down.

**Host:** Invite the ladies to share their names with everyone..

**Ladies:** Fill out the jealousy spaces on your playsheet by writing in the name of one of your fellow Ladies for each one. "I hate \_\_\_ because she is more beautiful/fun/ cool than me."

## *Developing Characters*

**Host:** Begin the game by talking to camera and welcoming the audience to the dramatic finale. Present a recap that will introduce the Hopeful Ladies and the Lonely Gentleman and show their journey to this moment. Start with the Ladies, who have got to know each other while living together in the mansion. Choose a Lady to speak first.

**Chosen Lady:** Talk to camera about the start of the competition, and your early impressions of each rival Lady. Invent a detail about their character that shows why they seemed beautiful, fun, or cool to you.

**Other Ladies:** Each time you are described as beautiful, fun, or cool, fill one of the circles on your playsheet. Note other details as you desire.

**Host:** Repeat this for the other three Ladies. After they are done, turn attention to the Gentleman.

**Gentleman:** Describe how it felt when you first saw all the Hopeful Ladies.

**Host:** Describe how four Ladies in particular forged a special connection with the Gentleman. Choose one Lady to start.

**Chosen Lady:** Describe your impressions of the Gentleman. Invent a detail about the Gentleman that shows just how special he is and how lucky you'd be to win his heart.

**Gentleman:** Say something nice about the Lady. Invent something that she did that endeared her to you and shows why she's here in the Final Four.

**Host:** Repeat this exchange for the other three Hopeful Ladies. Then sum up the recap and announce that the final rounds are about to begin.

**Ladies and Gentleman:** Take a moment to make sense of all the details you have heard about your character, and if you wish, make some notes about yourself. If you don't like a detail that has been established about you, the other person isn't lying, they've just misinterpreted something. Decide your version of events.

**Optional: The Gentleman Has A Secret**

In the 2014 version, the Lonely Gentleman also wrote down (and kept hidden) a shameful or tragic secret. Learning this secret was a reward for a Lady who won a contest in the mansion.

## *Introduce the schedule*

**Host:** Tell the Hopeful Ladies and the Elegant Bachelor that this is the final section of the show. Give them an overview of the Show Schedule and remind them their romantic future is about to be decided.

## *Order of play*

After these sections are complete, the game can properly begin.

The basic structure of play is this: the Gentleman takes a Lady on a date while the other Ladies spend time together at the mansion. The Host co-ordinates all activity.

The Host should link all events and activities with comments to the other participants and the camera, making sure everyone is able to follow what is happening.

## *Hopeful ladies, together*

The ladies at the mansion are all stuck together, trying to get along. Their interactions have consequences for the self-confidence of the Ladies, represented by roses.

### *Roses for You*

At the start of the game, take a number of roses equal to your highest trait. Your roses might be thrown to the floor. You cannot pick up your own roses.

### *Being Mean*

You can be mean to other hopeful ladies at any time.

- If you have no roses, they can ignore you.
- If you have more roses, take one of theirs and throw it on the floor.
- If you have the same or fewer roses, take one of yours AND one of theirs and throw them both on the floor.

### *Being Kind*

You can be kind to other hopeful ladies at any time.

- Pick up a lady's rose and give it back to her.
- Give a lady one of your roses and compliment her beauty, fun or coolness. She takes your rose and increases that trait by one (maximum score is three).

### *Roses and Dates*

When you go on a date, set your roses aside.

- If you had no roses, discard one of your starting attraction dice.
- If you had two roses, take an extra die at the start.
- If you had three (or more) roses, take two extra dice at the start

After the date, replenish your roses so you have a number equal to your highest trait.

# *Going on dates*

## *The Relationship Sheet*

The relationship between each gentleman-lady pair is tracked on a special relationship sheet. (The lady should look after this sheet between dates.)

At the start of the game, the relationship sheet has five attraction boxes filled in. This represents the connection that has built up between the gentleman and lady so far.

The relationship sheet also has a section for "Special Connections". This is empty at the beginning of the game.

The rest of the relationship sheet presents the rules for dates, which are repeated here.

## *Beginning a Date*

At the start of the date, the Gentleman and Lady should go into the private room.

They both take one die for every point of attraction on the sheet, and hold the dice. (For the first date, both Gentleman and Lady will take five dice and hold them.)

## *Playing a Date*

To play the date, both people simply have a conversation about what happens.

The date ends when the clock runs out, or earlier if both people agree.

## *Romantic Moments*

Try to make your date romantic! Describe beautiful locations and interesting events. Hold intense, emotional conversations. Gaze silently into each other's eyes.

If a person feels a moment on the date is romantic, they give their partner one of the dice they are holding. The partner rolls it immediately:

- |         |                    |                                     |
|---------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 4, 5, 6 | <i>Sparks fly!</i> | Put the die in the LOVE container.  |
| 1, 2, 3 | <i>How nice!</i>   | Put the die in the MAYBE container. |



## *Awkward Moments*

You can also add awkwardness to your date. Say the wrong thing! Fall over and hurt yourself! Have a surprise go wrong!

If a person feels a moment on the date is awkward, they give their partner a die from the MAYBE container. (If there are no dice in that container, nothing happens.)

The partner rolls it immediately:

- |         |                   |  |
|---------|-------------------|--|
| 4, 5, 6 | <i>Endearing!</i> | Put the die in the LOVE container.           |
| 2, 3    | <i>Forget it!</i> | Discard the die.                             |
| 1       | <i>Upsetting!</i> | Discard the die AND discard a die from LOVE. |

## *After the Date*

When the date is over, the Lady collects all dice from the LOVE container and joins the host to debrief. The Host can supervise as she spends the LOVE dice.

The Lady can spend **three dice** to either:

- increase attraction by one, OR
- write a special connection on the relationship sheet.

If there are any **leftover dice**, the Lady should roll them. For each die that comes up 6, increase attraction by one.

## *Attraction or Connection?*

A Hopeful Lady might wonder how to choose between increasing attraction and writing a special connection.

There is no right or wrong answer. Attraction provides more dice for later dates, but a Special Connection might inspire the Gentleman when he considers the relationship.

The best advice, as ever, is for the Lady to follow her heart.



## *Host responsibilities*

The Lonely Gentleman and the Hopeful Ladies are not in control of their time. They are told when it is time to go on a date, and when the date finishes.

The Host of **True Love Match** is the only person with control. The Host is responsible for keeping the game moving steadily forward.

The Host introduces an event, shepherds everyone through the event, and then gives a short debrief once the event is done. Then the Host introduces the next event, and so on until the conclusion of the game.

## *Preparing a Schedule*

Before the game begins, the Host prepares a show schedule. The Host will need to tailor the schedule so it suits the time available.

Here is the schedule used for the 2014 playtest of the game, which used a three-hour convention slot. The schedule accounts for two hours and forty-five minutes, allowing some time slippage.

- Getting started (20 minutes)
- First round: Dramatic Dates! (40 minutes – dates around eight minutes each)
- Second round: Fantastic Flight! (20 minute group date)
- Third round: Intimate Island! (25 minutes – dates around five minutes each)
- Gentleman's Choice (10 minutes)
- Final Conversations (20 minutes – conversations around four minutes each)
- True Love Ceremony (10 minutes)
- Closeout (5 minutes)
- Out-of-character Debrief (15 minutes)



## *Sharing the Schedule*

Provide the Lonely Gentleman and the Hopeful Ladies with a summary of this schedule. As an example, here is a summary for the schedule given above. This could be shared as a printed handout as well as being read aloud by the Host.

"Congratulations, Hopeful Ladies, on reaching the FINAL FOUR of the first season of **TRUE LOVE MATCH!** Here is what awaits you:

**DRAMATIC DATES:** You will have a dramatic date with the Gentleman!

**SPEED RUN:** Another chance to impress – but you better be quick!

**GENTLEMAN'S CHOICE:** Now the Gentleman decides his final two!

**FINAL CHANCE:** The final two have a last chance to show their love!

**THE TRUE LOVE CEREMONY:** The Gentleman chooses!

Will YOU be his true love match?"

## *Keeping Things Interesting*

The Host should observe events between the Hopeful Ladies whenever possible. If the Hopeful Ladies are engaged in plenty of conversation and interaction, then the Host can simply stay out of the way. However, if everything is sedate and friendly, the Host should step in to add some excitement to these sequences.

Possible interventions include:

- announcing competitions or challenges between the ladies, with the reward of extra time on the next date
- choosing a Hopeful Lady for a piece-to-camera, talking about her history and her hopes and dreams, and rewarding her with a rose at the end.
- asking the Ladies to discuss and vote on a "Miss Congeniality" award, with a reward of an extra die on the next date.

## *Guide to events*

Through all these events, the Host must timekeep carefully. In particular, it is important that dates stay to time to ensure fairness between the Hopeful Ladies.

### *Event Suggestion: Dramatic Dates*

The Host announces that the Lonely Gentleman will choose four dramatic locations within driving distance of the mansion for some romantic dates. The Lonely Gentleman will not know which Hopeful Lady will join him until they get in the car!

The Host then sends the Lonely Gentleman into the private room, and selects one of the Hopeful Ladies to be first. That Hopeful Lady goes into the private room and the date begins. Meanwhile, the other Ladies wait together at the mansion.

### *Event Suggestion: Fantasy Flight*

The Host announces that everyone is flying to a new mansion on a beautiful island.

This is a group date. Rearrange the chairs in the room to represent a small luxury jet. Include a bar and a spa pool. Aside from the bathroom, there is no privacy here.

#### **Option: Group Dates**

On a group date, all Ladies share time with the Gentleman. Ladies set their roses aside as normal but they do not take any dice in hand. The gentleman takes ten dice and gives them out as he sees fit. These dice are not rolled – they are treated as successful Love dice, and can be spent as normal at the end of the date.

### *Event Suggestion: Intimate Island*

The Hopeful Ladies will get to take the Lonely Gentleman to somewhere romantic on the island. Local guides will help the Ladies choose the most romantic spots possible!

The Host can decide the order of dates, and sends the first couple into the private space. The other Hopeful Ladies spend time together at the beachside mansion.

### *Required Event: Gentleman's Choice*

The Host tells everyone that it is time for the Gentleman to make his final choice.

The Host takes all the relationship sheets and gives them to the Gentleman.

The Gentleman is sent away to stare into the sunset and brood over the difficult decision he must make. Upon his return, he is required to stand before the four Hopeful Ladies and say farewell to two of them.

### *Required Event: Final Conversations*

The two Hopeful Ladies who have been farewelled from the competition now become Advisors. The Host invites first one, and then the other, to visit the Lonely Gentleman alone and give him any advice about who he should finally choose.

(The other Advisor may take the opportunity to speak to one or both of the remaining Hopeful Ladies, or might just keep to herself.)

When both Advisors have said their piece, it is time for the remaining Hopeful Ladies to have a final moment with the Lonely Gentleman. They will take turns to speak with him in private. The Advisors should decide who takes the first turn and who is second.

Note that these conversations are not dates using dice. These are heart-to-heart discussions building on everything established before now.

After these conversations, the Host gives the Gentleman some time to reflect.

### *Required Event: True Love Ceremony*

The two Hopeful Ladies stand before small tables while the two Advisors watch.

The Host meets with the Lonely Gentleman in private. The Host gives him the two presentation boxes and the ring, and leaves him alone with them.

When he is ready, the Lonely Gentleman emerges and places the presentation boxes on the tables according to the decision he has made.

The Host might ask the Lonely Gentleman if he has any final comments to both Hopeful Ladies. Then the Host asks the Hopeful Ladies to open their boxes.

The Lonely Gentleman should get down on one knee and make a proposal.

**What if there is no proposal?**

Although the Host shouldn't mention this as a possibility, the Lonely Gentleman may decide not to put a ring in either box. This is perfectly acceptable, but the Host should ask hard questions of the Gentleman to make him justify his decision.

*Event Suggestion: Closeout*

In the aftermath of the Ceremony, all participants have the opportunity to do a piece to camera speaking about the experience and what it meant for them.

*Event Suggestion: Debrief*

It is strongly recommended that the game ends with a conversation between the participants about the game and the emotional experience they had. Some groups may find the game did not affect them personally, in which case this conversation can be very brief. However, some groups may need more time to listen to each other and step out of the emotions stirred up by the game.

**TRUE**   
**MATCH**

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**True Love Match** was designed by Morgan Davie. This version was completed March 27, 2015.

*Lonely Gentleman*

*Hopeful Lady*

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*Attraction:*



*Special Connections:*

### *Starting the Date*

Both of you take one die for every point of attraction. Hold the dice.

Now work together to describe the date!

- Where do you go?
- What do you see?
- What do you say to each other?

### *Romantic Moments*

If it gets romantic, give your date one of your dice.

They roll it immediately!

4, 5, 6      *Sparks fly!*      Put the die on LOVE.

1, 2, 3      *How nice!*      Put the die on MAYBE.

### *Awkward Moments*

If it gets awkward, give your date a die from MAYBE.

They roll it immediately!

4, 5, 6      *Endearing!*      Put the die on LOVE.

2, 3      *Forget it!*      Discard the die.

1      *Upsetting!*      Discard the die AND discard a die from LOVE.

**YOUR DATE LASTS UNTIL TIME RUNS OUT!**

Hopeful Lady: \_\_\_\_\_

*Beautiful*



*Fun*



*Cool*



I hate \_\_\_\_\_ because she is more *beautiful* than me!

I hate \_\_\_\_\_ because she is more *fun* than me!

I hate \_\_\_\_\_ because she is more *cool* than me!

At the start of the game, take a number of **ROSES** equal to your highest trait.

- You cannot pick up your own roses from the floor.

You can be **MEAN** to other hopeful ladies at any time.

- If you have no roses, they can ignore you.
- If you have more roses, take one of theirs and throw it on the floor.
- If you have the same or fewer roses, take one of yours AND one of theirs and throw them both on the floor.

You can be **KIND** to other hopeful ladies at any time.

- Pick up a lady's rose and give it back to her.
- Give a lady one of your roses and compliment her beauty, fun or coolness. She takes your rose and increases that trait by one (maximum score is three).

When you **GO ON A DATE**, set your roses aside.

- If you had no roses, discard one of your dice.
- If you had two roses, take an extra die.
- If you had three (or more) roses, take two extra dice.

**AFTER A DATE**, replenish your roses so you have a number equal to your highest trait.