

# Online Dating + Arranged Marriage

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Written with love, by [Pastor Dave Page](#)

These days it's common to belong to a dating website like Match.com, eHarmony.com or Zoosk.com. Many couples I have had the privilege of marrying found each other online. Online dating has led to many successful happy marriages, and the same can be said for arranged marriages. Is online dating the new arranged marriage?



## SIMILARITIES

You might think, is an arranged marriage even remotely similar to online dating? Well, think about an online dating website. You fill out your profile – your personality type, interests, beliefs and education. Then the website pairs you up with people based on common interests. Dating proceeds and you can either meet the man or woman of your dreams or just enjoy a few fun dates.

Now think about arranged marriages...your parents pick your partner, keeping in mind your unique personality, along with their expectations of the people they want their kin to be with. You go on a (supervised) date, and if things click you have yourself a match!

Arranged marriages are a type of union where the bride and groom are selected by a third party rather than by each

other, common worldwide until the 18th century. And in early Jewish culture, the parents always arranged marriages. The parents would pick a wife for their son, sometimes even at five years old.

The parents would arrange marriages because they thought they could use better judgment because of their own experience knowing the pros and cons of marriage. They thought they were better suited to make such an important decision. The kids, just like today, disagreed and there was often conflict.

## **A FAMILY CONSIDERATION**

When the couple would marry, the young woman would become a part of the family so the family was very interested in who this person was. The father of the young man would begin the negotiations and choose “the friend of the bridegroom.” He was the go-between who would set up negotiations and the dowry. He would set up the deal and the parents would come together. Once a decision was made it was sealed over a cup of coffee and they would enter into the betrothal.

One year before the marriage there was a period of engagement called the betrothal. The future groom would give his bride a gold ring that meant you were taken and that’s when the dating began, after the betrothal. Once the betrothal began they could not get separated unless there was a legal divorce.

Interestingly enough, there are countries today that still practice the same procedure. You still see arranged marriages in the Orient especially in India. And the divorce rate of arranged marriages is extremely low.



## BIZARRE, BARBARIC OR BRILLANT?

I have a good friend named Priscilla and she is from Chennai, India. Her parents moved to the United States when she was a young girl. A clash of cultures occurred and yet her parents still arranged her marriage. I've watched her marriage over the years and recently got together with the couple. They have an extremely happy and successful marriage. As a teenager I used to think that prearranged marriages were bizarre and barbaric. Now that I'm a parent of three kids ... I think it is BRILLIANT! :)





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Now we want to hear from you! How do you feel about arranged marriages and online dating? Did you meet your spouse or future spouse one of these ways?