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Facebook Plays Cupid With New Dating Feature

After announcing it last year at its F8 developer conference, Facebook has finally jumped on the online dating bandwagon. The social media giant launched its newest feature "Facebook Dating" on Thursday, currently available in the US and 19 other countries.

According to Statista, 17% of adults aged 18 or older in the US have met a partner online as of January this year. Tapping in on this trend, Facebook Dating will now enable the platform's users to find and connect with their romantic interests. The new opt-in feature allows for a high degree of customization in terms of how you use it as well as how matches are suggested to users.

Facebook Dating requires a standard profile to be completed, requiring information like how you identify and who you are looking for. Upon permission, the social media platform can also auto-generate images and other content from an existing user's profile. A "block" function exists to calm the nerves of users who don't want to be seen – the control allows you to manage access over who your dating profile is visible to.

Once it is all set-up, suggestions for matches will appear, just like any other dating app. With the "Secret Crush" list, users can add their desired Facebook friends or Instagram followers and will receive a notification if their added individual also adds you to their list. Safety tools have been incorporated into the new in-app function, with users able to share the details of an upcoming date or send live locations to a trusted contact via the Messenger tool.

Currently, Facebook Dating is only accessible to users in the United States, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Columbia, Ecuador, Guyana, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Singapore, Suriname, Thailand, Uruguay, and Vietnam. Nonetheless, Facebook has declared it will be available across most of Europe early next year. In future updates, Facebook will also be looking into integrating Instagram stories into its dating function.

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