DECEMBER 6, 2021: If 2019 had us face-palming at the state of the world facepalming, and 2020 had us shrugging with uncertainty about the future, 2021 is the year we all exchanged side eyes, and watched the drama continue to unfold.* From sharing a collective look of the side eye emoji, to a common appreciation for simple meet-cutes to keeping it real with vax mentions, Tinder Gen Z members showed how they were authentically themselves as they looked to connect with new people in 2021.

2021 was a side-eye kind of year

While millions of emojis were used in Tinder bios, one rising star really caught our attention: the Side eye. The emoji saw a whopping 40% increase in usage in Tinder bios globally this year, as members showed a mixed bag of optimism and skepticism throughout the year.

URL or and IRL.

In 2021, Gen Z enjoyed both virtual meet-cutes and post-vax IRL dates. Video dates are turning into a first date staple for singletons with mentions of “video call” in Tinder bios growing by 52% globally. Yet, Gen Z were also looking to connect with new people close to them for real life hangouts with “nearby” and “close by” both increasing by 20% in Tinder bio mentions globally showing that the IRL world wasn't going out of fashion anytime soon when it came to dating.

First date ideas ranged from cozy to outdoorsy.

First date drinks are officially outdated! In 2021, we also learned that first dates have become more about activities than icebreakers. Daters are picking more interesting, unique first date activities that help them really get to know each other. Tinder in the UK saw a 376% increase in mentions of 'Winter Wonderland' in bios and requests for date activities from ‘pub garden’ (+65%) to ‘picnic’ (+60%) pop up in bios.** When asked about first date go to plans on Tinder***, ‘a hike to a waterfall’ and ‘a night out on the town’ were both popular choices made by members in the UK.

Being vaxxed became a (dating) flex.

In a year when getting vaxxed was the first thing on the date prep checklist, sharing the post-vaccine lifestyle on their Tinder bios made Gen Z feel safer to meet someone. And as vaccination drives accelerated locally between March and September 2021 , mentions of "Vaxxed" in bios in the UK grew by 97x as members advocated for vaccine status as a dating essential.**

Vaccine badges**** from Tinder became the new flaunt feature with the VACCINATED badge being the most popular by far amongst UK Gen Z members.

Small gestures made it big.

It's the smallest of favours that make a date a favourite. Mentions of "small things" increased by 30% year on year in Tinder bios as members shared their appreciation for the little joys in life. Our UK Tinder members settled on small gestures such as ‘warm hugs’ or sincere compliments’ as ones that would make their day***.

Dating anthems were all kinds of feels.

With music being the top *interest* shared amongst Tinder members globally, what songs members choose to display on their profile told us a lot about their mood. The raw emotions of Olivia Rodgrio’s good4u and Kid Laroi & Justin Bieber’s STAY ranked as chart-toppers in Tinder bios in 2021.

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Notes:

*Most popular emojis from Year in Swipe 2019 and 2020

**Mentions in Tinder bios taken from the period 1 Jan 2021 and 30 Nov 2021

*** From Tinder’s VIBE feature

****Badges as available in Tinder’s Vaccine Centre

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https://uk.tinderpressroom.com/yearinswipe2021