

The ‘Craic Test’ Is the Irish Conversation Tactic That Cuts Through the Bad Dates

COMEDIAN- AND IRISH-LAD APPROVED



BY [SYDNEY MEISTER](#) • PUBLISHED MAR 3, 2025



DASHA BUROBINA FOR PUREWOW

It's 3 a.m. Somehow, I've ended up at an SNL after-party, still buzzed off of tequila shots and the adrenaline of slipping past the bouncer with a secret door code. I'm about to take a sip of my Cosmopolitan when an Irish guy approaches. "What's your craic?" he asks.

Within ten minutes, he and his friends have called me out for the way I pronounce "dog," made a completely unprovoked dig at my pink drink, and accused me of being "too confident for an American." But it wasn't malicious—they were testing me. Seeing if I could hold my own. Little did they know I'm an East Coaster from a Jewish family, where affection means getting roasted alive. If my mother could look at my outfit in the fifth grade and say, "Interesting choice—are we going for 'vagrant on the subway' today?" A couple of Irishmen taking the piss wouldn't break me.

I woke up the next morning (OK, afternoon) and felt like a kid again. Immediately, I reached for my notebook. *PITCH IDEA: Good banter is what's missing from our dating lives right now.*

What Is "Good Craic"?

A few months later, a PR friend asked if I was interested in interviewing Hannah Berner—comedian and co-host of the *Giggly Squad* podcast—at a Lactaid event for “Dairy Baddies.” I immediately texted back, YES. Not only is Hannah a comedian, but she’s also married to an Irish comedian. And after my run-in with the lad who asked, “What’s your craic,” I had questions. What exactly was this thing I apparently passed a test for?

Good Craic (pronounced “crack”)

- An Irish term for having a good time.
- Involves rapid-fire banter—ruthless teasing—and rapport that makes conversation feel more like a tennis match

Per Hannah, *good craic* is really just about “saying what you’re thinking.” And yet, when it comes to dating, most people do the exact opposite. Instead of banter, there’s small talk. Instead of playful taunting, there’s careful curation. Too often, first dates feel like job interviews—both sides trying to present the most polished, inoffensive version of themselves. “And *that’s* the problem,” she says. Having good craic means elevating a date from dull (downright excruciating at times) to an activity you’ll actually look forward to. It breaks through the small talk and forces people to actually engage. And if there’s chemistry, you’ll feel it immediately. If there’s not, it’s an easy way to avoid two painful hours of hearing about his company’s incentive plan.

How to Test ‘Good Craic’ on Your Next Date

“Like, literally, go in with no filter. You’ll have some bad dates, sure, but you’ll know immediately if someone is right for you.” More to the point: **Try dropping a slightly inappropriate comment and see how it lands**. Per Hannah, this is the best way to test compatibility. Instead of running through a list of pre-approved HR questions, you want to push the conversation just past ‘safe’ and see how they react. “This is what I do with crowd work in my stand-up sets,” she explains. Good banter—whether on stage or on a first date—requires zero hesitation. If you pause to workshop a joke in your head, the moment is gone. If you filter yourself to avoid “sounding weird,” you’re guaranteed to... sound weird. But when you toss something out there and wait to see if they take the bait? You might just find your Moby Dick.

If you have no idea where to start, we workshoped some ideas. Here’s what I’m calling the ‘craic test’ to see if your date can match your energy.

- **The Dark Joke Test:** Throw out an unhinged statement like, “I feel like I’d be an incredible cult leader. Not in a scary way, just in a charismatic way.” Gauge their body language. Do they freeze? Do they nervously sip their drink? Or do they light up and one-up you with, “I don’t know if you have Manson-level charm.”
- **The Roasting Test:** Lightly drag them for something stupid. “You strike me as someone who gets to the airport four hours early.” Or, “You’re definitely the kind of guy who practices his baseball swing in the mirror.” If they get defensive, it’s over. If they fire back, proceed.
- **The Hypothetical Test:** Pose a weird, chaotic scenario. “If we need to fake our deaths, what’s the plan? Double suicide? Kidnapping? Walk me through it.” The person for you will have an answer. A boring person will ask why you’re like this.
- **The Pop Culture Divide:** Throw out a polarizing take. “I don’t trust men who have strong opinions on the Kardashians.” Or, “Sports betting is just girl math. It’s not that complicated.” If they go with it, potential. If they look confused, likely a dead end.

The Bottom Line

At first, this might sound like an unnecessary game. Too much effort—especially for a first date. But as Hannah pointed out, “Women are so often told to be chill, to keep things light, to avoid being too much.” Yet, shrinking yourself into a more palatable version isn’t just exhausting—it’s counterproductive. If you’re filtering your personality to make a date run smoothly, you’re not gauging whether you’re into them; you’re auditioning for the role of “woman who behaves.” Even worse, playing it safe means missing out on potential chemistry with someone who truly gets you.

In short, mastering the art of good craic is less about being performatively witty and more about letting your freak flag fly. Everyone has one—you just have to risk finding the person who will fly it with you.

RELATED

DATING POV: YOU'RE EITHER THE CARTIER OR THE KNOCK-OFF IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP

The Conversation

 2 Viewing

Your voice matters. [Discussions are moderated for civility.](#)

 [Log in](#) [Sign up](#)