

The Perfect Father's Day



From Sun up to Sun down

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Many people don't know the history behind the holidays they celebrate and Father's Day is no exception. The first Father's Day was celebrated in 1908 in Fairmont, West Virginia, but it wasn't officially recognized until President Richard Nixon declared it a national holiday in 1972. Whether you know the history of the holiday or not, you can make this the perfect Father's Day – from sun up to sun down.

Why Do We Celebrate Fathers?



Fathers work hard to provide for their families. It's only fitting that we should honor them for their efforts. That's why Father's Day was established all those years ago. Of course, you'll want to help the children honor their father but there are some things that only a mom can do to make the day perfect.

Father's Day is still a little bit away, so begin early to plan and prepare for the big day. You can get everyone in the family involved in the day, including Dad! Who would be better to let you know what would make Father's Day perfect for him? Take his suggestions into consideration but make some plans that he knows nothing about to surprise him and make him wonder what's next all day long.

Ask Dad, "What would make the day perfect for you?" That answer is going to be different for each man and each family. Those things need to be taken into account when making your plans.

Here are some other questions to consider asking. Keep a notebook with his answers to these questions so you won't have to complete this step in the future.

- What are your favorite foods? Are there some you would love to have on Father's Day?
- Would you enjoy having breakfast in bed?

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- Will the family attend church services on that day?
- Are the grandfathers still living? If so, will you spend part of the day with them?
- Do you enjoy watching sports on TV?
- Do you like to spend time outside? What activities would you prefer to be doing?
- What gift or gifts would you like? Would you prefer something homemade or store bought?
- When would you prefer to get your gift?

These are just some ideas to get you started. You may come up with some other things to consider while you're making plans for your father's "perfect" Father's Day.

Have the Kids Make Gifts for Dear Old Dad

The old adage says that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. That doesn't have to work only for women trying to attract a man. It can also be used as a guide to make some gifts for Dad for Father's Day.

Get an old metal lunchbox or a fishing tackle box, if your father loves to fish. Find some of the grass from Easter and line the box. Then spend a day or two making various recipes that you know Dad will love. Wrap the items in plastic wrap and place them in the box. If you're using the fishing theme, you might want to include a few pieces of tackle and some rubs or seasonings for that big catch he's sure to make.

Why not bake up a huge batch of your dad's favorite cookies, brownies, or other favorite treat? Not only will he appreciate the gift, he'll appreciate the love and effort you've poured into making them just for him. (Of course, you can always hope he'll share.)



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Non-edible gifts are also a big hit, especially if they are made by the children themselves. Have the children each make Dad a handprint poem and frame it with a picture of them on the day the gift was made. All you need is the Handprint Poem (look on your favorite search engine to find it), some paint for the kids to put their handprint on the page, and an instamatic photo that can be added. Get some cheap frames from your local discount store and place the poem in the frame, wrap it up, and it'll be ready to give to Dad on Father's Day.

What would be more perfect than a homemade crown to make Dad feel like the "King of the Castle"? You can pick up a paper crown from your local fast food restaurant, or you can make one using cardboard or heavy card stock. Wrap it in aluminum foil, decorate it with plastic gem stones, and let it dry. Don't forget to take a picture of Dad in his crown on Father's Day so he'll have something to remember the day by.

If the Dad in your family loves to grill, consider making him a special barbecue apron. Find a plain apron, get some craft paint or fabric markers, and decorate the apron with fun sayings like "King of the BBQ" or "Who said they liked theirs burnt?" Think of some things that your dad usually says when barbecuing and add those to the apron.

Do you have a garden? Who can't use stepping stones in theirs? Purchase some concrete, some marbles or plastic gems, and some disposable aluminum pie pans. Carefully mix the concrete together and pour it into the aluminum pans. Have the kids decorate their stepping stone with the marbles or gems. You might even want to add some silk flowers for little girls. Write their names, a Father's Day message, and the date in the concrete. Allow it to dry and place them in the garden. Take Dad outside to reveal his gifts.

Your children may be able to think up some better ideas of homemade gifts to give Dad. The options are endless. All it takes is a little bit of thought about what your particular Dad likes, a little bit of planning, and then actually making the gift. Dad will be sure to love it knowing that his own kids made the gift for him.

Plan the meals for the day

If you're going to be celebrating at home, you might want to have the meals all planned out for the day. Not only will this help you to know what items to purchase, it will also help you to be sure you don't forget that one special ingredient to make your father's favorite meals.

Make sure to go shopping a day or so before just in case you forget something and have to make a rush trip to the store. While you're there, pick up his favorite magazine to put on the tray for breakfast in bed.

You may want to go so far as to print out the menu each meal and make a special scrapbook to help Dad remember the day. You can also print out an itinerary for the day. Just remember to take plenty of pictures to fill the album up. Or possibly you can start a new tradition and add each following year's menus and photos in the same photo scrapbook.

The Friday Before

Did you know that a red rose is the official flower of Father's Day? It's a good possibility that most people don't. Why not surprise Dad at work by having one red rose sent to his place of business for each child in the family. The benefit of sending flowers to him at work, his co-workers get to tease him about the flowers, and he has to bring them home so you'll be able to enjoy them as well. If you don't sign the card, you could keep him guessing who his secret admirer is.

Another surprise you can send to work, if your husband doesn't like receiving flowers, is a balloon bouquet or a gift that's sports related. Surely he won't be embarrassed about your sending fishing tackle or something like that.

Begin at Sun Up

Do you really want to start the day at sun up? Come on! Who really wants to get up at sun up on the only day of the year dedicated to them? Start making Dad feel special by allowing him to sleep in on that day, especially if he generally has to get up really early during the week. While he sleeps, start making breakfast for him so it's ready when he rises.



Of course, if he loves the smell of freshly brewed coffee or bacon cooking, he may wake up before you're done. If that's the case, send a child or two into the room to keep dad occupied, and to keep him in bed, until breakfast is ready.

Use this opportunity for the younger children to take Dad their homemade cards and gifts. He'll probably enjoy having the children with him so they can snuggle up, especially if they aren't usually able to do this. If nothing else, they can lie on the covers so Dad can't get out of bed.

It's his special day, why make him get up? Why not bring him breakfast in bed? That would definitely be a surprise, especially if Mom generally doesn't allow food in the bed because she doesn't like crumbs there. Don't forget to take pictures of the look on his face when the tray is brought in. It will likely be priceless.

The Perfect Breakfast in Bed

You'll need a tray, preferably with legs on it, on which to serve the meal. Next, find a small vase and put in one single rose, taken from those sent to his office. If you have china, get one place serving out and use it for breakfast. Don't worry if you don't have china, you can use your nicest dishes. Crocheted doilies would be a nice idea to use under the china or at least the vase. A fabric napkin with napkin ring completes the perfect breakfast in bed tray.

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Breakfast needs to be specifically chosen based on your loved one's favorite breakfast foods. Think about what he usually eats if you happen to go out for breakfast. Bacon, scrambled eggs, toast, fruit, orange juice, and coffee are some ideas. He may prefer bagels and cream cheese, homemade muffins, or pancakes instead. You know what he likes so include all his favorite foods when making his special breakfast.

Get the Day Started

After a surprise breakfast in bed, Dad is most likely ready to start the day. Make sure the children all showered the night before so Dad doesn't have to worry about running out of hot water. Let Dad take a long, hot, relaxing shower. Have fresh towels set out, and possibly a snugly warm robe, so Dad feels like he's at an upscale hotel.

Have his clothes laid out on the bed, or freshly ironed and hanging in his closet, ready for him to get dressed. Nicely buffed shoes would be considerate, too, if you plan to go to church or a nice restaurant for lunch. Do whatever you can to make Dad feel special.

If your family attends church services regularly, you don't need to forego that activity for the day. Have Mom chauffeur him to church instead of having him drive. Let him pick the radio station (without any complaints), and try to carry on a quiet conversation. This is especially important if the children usually argue on the way to church.

Quite often churches will recognize the dads in the congregation. Perhaps you can purchase a small red rose boutonniere for him, much like mothers are given a corsage on Mother's Day. This will help those who see him realize that the father in this family is very special.

Not all families attend church services, so the above may not apply. If that is the case, allow Dad some extra time to relax. Perhaps he'd like to spend the morning reading a favorite book, the Sunday newspaper, or just relaxing with his family. You'll never know unless you ask him. Remember, it's his day; you want to make it enjoyable for him.

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Share the Day with Others

If both sets of grandparents are still alive, you may decide to spend part of the day with one or both sets of grandparents. Invite them out to lunch at a place that everyone will enjoy. Allow the kids to give their grandfathers the Father's Day cards or gifts they've made. You can also ask if either set of grandparents would like to keep the kids for the night so you and your spouse can have a special evening out.

Make plans to take the kids over to the grandparents' house at a later time. You certainly want to have the kids share as much of the day with Dad as possible. Go, enjoy the day, and then drop the children off later in the evening after you've tired them out with all the fun Father's Day activities. Grandma and Grandpa will probably appreciate your dropping the kids off and them being nearly ready for bed.

Suppose your parents don't live near you, or are deceased. You can still take some time to honor your children's grandfathers. Make telephone calls to let your children express their love if their grandfather lives far away. If the grandfather is no longer alive, perhaps you can visit the grave and leave a flower. How you decide to celebrate the grandfathers is entirely up to you.



A Time to Relax

What's next on the agenda? Most Dads enjoy sports, so allow him to relax on the couch and catch a ballgame or possibly a match of golf. Prepare some special sports day snacks for him while he watches the game. If you didn't take Dad out to lunch, plan to grill some burgers

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and have your meal together around the TV set while he enjoys the game. Don't rush off after you're finished eating, stick around and watch the game with him for a while. Dad will enjoy having the family with him, as long as they don't fuss about having to watch the game.

If the game isn't all it purports to be, you may notice Dad snoozing on the couch or his favorite chair. Don't wake him. Let him enjoy a leisurely day at home and allow him to take that much desired Sunday afternoon nap. Of course, if he starts snoring too loudly, you may suggest he enjoy his nap back in the comfort of his own bed.

Other Indoor Activities

If Dad enjoys board games, pull out his favorite games and play as a family. The whole family can use this opportunity to get to know one another better and enjoy themselves at the same time. You might even find that spending time playing games is something the whole family would like to do more often. You might just start a new family pastime.

Do you have a gaming console? If so, let the kids challenge Dad to a game. There are so many out today that you can do almost anything. If he's always wanted to try tennis, there's a game for it. If he is a World War II enthusiast, there are games that allow him to participate in famous battles from the safety of his home. What about driving in the Nascar races? If Dad would like to have had his chance at that sport, he can have that chance with a gaming console system.

If you don't have a gaming system, you can rent them from most video stores. With the variety of games available, your Dad can try anything. Of course, after he's had an opportunity to play a gaming console, you may notice it high on his list of items he'd like to purchase. Don't be surprised if he says it's for the children, but he'll likely take the controllers and control of the system.

Outdoor Activities

What do you do if your favorite father doesn't want to spend the day lounging around and relaxing? What if his idea of a perfect day doesn't include spending time indoors at all, except for when eating? That's okay; it's his day. Go ahead and do what he would like to do.

If Dad's idea of a perfect day is a chance to spend time outdoors, perhaps he'd like to toss a ball with the kids or play Frisbee. This can be a great opportunity for Dad and kids to bond, get some exercise, and have some fun.

A family bike ride might also be a good idea of an activity everyone can participate in. A picnic snack in a nearby park may be something Dad would enjoy on his special day. Prepare a picnic basket filled with sliced fruit, fruit dip, blocks of cheese, and chilled juice. It will be refreshing and healthy. If it's particularly hot outside, the snack might be just enough to help you all cool down.

Is Dad a fishing enthusiast? Maybe you can rent a boat, if Dad doesn't own one, and take him out fishing. Don't forget to bring his tackle box and get some bait. Spend the afternoon relaxing on the water, dipping your line, and basking in the warmth of a June afternoon. It really won't matter if you don't catch any fish, Dad will appreciate that you thought enough of him to participate with him in his favorite activity.

Of course, to some men, nothing could be more perfect than a game of golf. If you have little children, they probably won't be welcome on the Country Club greens, but you can still enjoy the game by taking Dad to play a game or two of Putt Putt golf. He can show off his expertise in the game of golf, and bask in the attention of his loved ones.

Paintball has been a popular activity for a couple of years. Now might be a good chance to try a new sport. What could be better for a dad? He gets to be outside, he can traipse around and play hide and seek, and then he can take out his frustrations by shooting people without actually hurting them.

Whatever activities you happen to plan for the day, don't forget to take along your camera and take plenty of pictures. You can create a special Father's Day scrapbook, complete with the meal plans, favorite items survey, and menus for the day. Add the photos from each activity to help Dad remember the day. If you'd like, you can continue to add information each year so Dad has a complete history of Father's Days of years past.

Evening Fun

Prior to Father's Day, you probably asked the grandparents if they would be willing to take the kids for the night. Not only will this give grandparents time with the kids, it will also give Mom and Dad a chance to go out for dinner, just the two of them.

If you ate at home during lunch, you may want to take the opportunity to spend an evening with the love of your life. Is there a movie he's wanted to see? Now would be the perfect time to see it. Check ahead of time to see when the movie starts.

Either have dinner out at a nice restaurant first, or see the movie first and have a later dinner.



Perhaps dinner and movie isn't on Dad's list of favorite things to do. Try something a little more romantic. Put together a night of star gazing – either outside or at a local planetarium. If there isn't a local planetarium, that's alright. You can't ask for a better place to gaze at the stars that out in an open field, on a mountain, or anywhere that the lights aren't going to interfere.

If you live near an ocean, take a trip to the beach and star gaze from there. Plan a romantic picnic dinner of wine, cheese, fruit, and a good French bread. Don't bother with foods that require eating utensils, multiple bowls, or that are messy. You want the picnic to be romantic, not a bother.

Of course, you don't want to forget to give Dad a Father's Day card and a gift. However, after he's been spoiled all day long, he may not even notice if the gift was absent. The point is to

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make Dad feel like the king of his castle. Take your time to make this Father's Day one to remember. You'll be glad you did when you see the smile on his face.

Ultimately, your favorite father probably isn't that worried about what you actually do throughout the day. He'll probably enjoy whatever you choose to do, as long as he has the time and attention of his favorite people – his family. Quality time with you is probably all it takes to make this year the perfect father's day from sun up to sun down, and all the hours in between.

Resources for Busy Moms



Make family dinnertime less chaotic! Learn how to cook once and store multiple meals in your freezer with the [Freezing It & Loving It ebook](#).

For other great ebooks that make mom's life easier, visit [Mom's Talk Ebooks](#).

- If you're a mom on-the-go, fill your iPod with podcasts just for Moms! [Mom's Talk Radio](#) is a network of mompreneurs who host their own talk shows about important mom topics.
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