



Fun dates (no matter how much time you have)

making dating easier

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15 MINUTE DATES

Read together. You can read the same book or different books, read to yourself or read aloud, but you must sit close enough to each other to touch. For part of the time, talk about what you are reading and why you find it interesting.

Quick massage. Turn on a timer for 7 minutes and give your spouse a neck, back, and foot massage. Switch when the timer beeps. You'll be amazed at how good you feel after just 7 minutes.

Costco date. Okay, you are already at Costco because you have to get groceries. Add an extra 15 minutes and split a treat at the food court. Yes, I just gave you permission to call that a date.

Share a pint of ice cream. Buy that mint chip or chocolate ganache for this express purpose—to enjoy a treat together after dinner. You can't eat this ice cream alone; it must be shared. Extra points if you can eat it with two spoons in your backyard while watching the sunset.

Stroll around the block. Take a walk in your neighborhood holding hands. Kiss each other as you pass houses with white doors (or whatever color you find on your street).

30 MINUTE DATES

Have a candlelight dinner in your home or backyard. If you have kids, feed them first and let them watch their favorite 30-minute show while you eat.

Eat breakfast in bed. Dust off those trays and enjoy a leisurely breakfast. You probably haven't done this in years. Lean into the novelty. Same yogurt and cereal, new location.



Fast forward five years. If your relationship continues as it is, where will you be in five years? Journal about this. If you could wave a magic wand, what would you want your marriage to be like in five years? Journal about this. Now, write a few actionable steps you can take this month to get closer to that dream. Share your journal entries with your spouse.

Cookie date. It's time to bake in the kitchen for fun! You can find several 15-minute cookie recipes online. You'll need a few extra minutes to clean up. Eating freshly baked cookies is one of life's pleasures.

Use that fireplace. Turn off the lights and cuddle in front of the fire. Pretend you're on vacation (ignore the dishes in the kitchen and just relax).

60 MINUTE DATES

Coffee swap. Go to your nearby coffee shop and do a little something to break out of your daily grind. Swap drinks. Try your spouse's pick. Finish it up if you like it, or swap it back if you don't. Talk about what it's like to live from your spouse's perspective. Instead of "walk a mile in my shoes," think "take a sip of my coffee." What challenges is your spouse facing this week? What are the joys?

Play frisbee golf. The game started with people using frisbees and aiming at targets like trees, trash cans, light poles, and whatever was handy. Chances are, you have a park with frisbee golf near you with 9 to 18 holes. You start at hole one and complete the course in order. Little skill is needed and it's a great way to enjoy the outdoors together.

You smell good. Head to the fanciest mall you have in town. You can't buy anything. You can only test fragrances, decide on your favorite scents and people-watch.

Go fly a kite. Head to the nearest park or clearing and fly a kite together. Don't have a kite? That's half the fun—choosing a new kite together. There are many reasonably priced kites. I recommend a stunt kite to amp up the laughter.

Bookstore night. Head to your local bookstore and pick out a book for each other to read. This is your chance to get your spouse into economics, parenting, romance, or a myriad of topics he or she would normally never read. You can then take these books into your 15-minute read-together dates. It's a way to connect and understand each other better.





2 HOUR OR MORE DATES

What not to wear. Each of you chooses one item from each other's wardrobe to eliminate. This is your chance to get rid of that shirt you hate, but be gentle. Don't get rid of a favorite. Now go shopping (thrift store, discount store, or luxury store) and pick a replacement item for your spouse. Wear your new clothes out to dinner that same night or the next time you go out.

Go dancing. Search online for swing, lindy hop, line dancing, ballroom dancing, or salsa in your area. You'll often find live events with free lessons beforehand.

Tour a museum, art gallery, or factory. What might a tourist do in your area? Follow their lead. Search for factory tours in your area for a more unique experience. Who knows? You might tour a guitar factory, motorcycle plant, or chocolate factory.

Take me out to the ball game. While you were dating, you might have gone to football, basketball, hockey, and/or baseball games because your spouse loved it so much. It's time to get out there again and be raving fans together.

Take a class together. We're never too old to learn. Look through the course offerings at the local community college or community center. You might try an art, dancing, cooking, computer, music, or exercise class.

For more resources, visit MakingMarriageEasier.com

