

Finding Quality Time with Your Spouse: A Survey

REAL Ideas from REAL People that Have REALLY Tried Them and REALLY Work

Overview:

We surveyed 25 “married with children” women in hopes of figuring out what couples are doing today in our fast paced world to carve out meaningful time with their spouses. Everyone surveyed felt that prioritizing time with your spouse is vital to a happy and healthy marriage yet every couple had obstacles to overcome. For some it was money, others, young children at home and for nearly everyone, finding time in busy schedules (kiddie demands, work, church callings, etc.) made dating tricky. Yet, the main thing learned from this study was that every challenge and obstacle to carving out quality time with our spouses can be overcome with creativity and planning.

Our marriages are vitally important to our Heavenly Father and to his Plan of Happiness. “Marriage brings greater possibilities for happiness than does any other human relationship” (Russell M. Nelson, Nurturing Marriage) and “Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other.” (The Family: A Proclamation to the World). For our children to be raised by dedicated, committed, loving and kind parents who cherish each other will make all of the difference in this life and in the eternities to come. Hopefully these suggestions, gathered from our survey, from REAL people that have REALLY tried them and that REALLY work will help you to “go and do.”

Question: How do you define the word “date”?

- Time set aside to spend as a couple outside of your everyday routine.
- When we can go out and spend quality time with one another for an hour or more.
- Go out with my husband for hopefully 2+ hours.
- Spending one on one quality time with someone you care about.
- Any significant amount of time together with no children.
- ANY one on one time with my husband.
- Getting to go somewhere with my spouse.
- At least one hour (minimum) of “clean” time alone...meaning no phones, no kids, no other human beings, no worrying no whining, no reality!
- Alone time with my husband when we can concentrate on each other and have fun together with no other demands.

Question: What “ingredients” make a good date or quality time with your spouse?

- No children
- Conversation
- Interaction
- Communication
- Laughing until you cry, snuggles, and something yummy.
- Listening is the best ingredient and then sharing ideas.
- TIME
- Affection: “holding hands and definitely, you’ve gotta have a kiss”
- “Great attitude that no matter what we do it will be awesomely fun!”
- Being able to talk to your spouse without any interruptions.
- No distractions, meaning the kids don’t even need to be driven anywhere late or picked up from anywhere, there is no time limit on how long we can be gone and we don’t feel rushed.
- Getting away from reality and the mundane (so refreshing)!

Top five babysitting solutions (some cheap or free)

- Babysitting exchange with other couples-in other words, time swap the kids
- Relatives-Grandpa/Grandma, nieces, siblings who also have children (then swap),

- Scheduled babysitter—we had a regularly booked babysitter every Friday night who just counted on the hours like a scheduled job. So, I didn't have to go through the dreaded babysitter search every week—it was SO nice.
- Temple excursions—ask a YW who is willing to do it for free
- Bribe oldest child/children
- Game nights with friends and have kids watch a movie in the other room

Question: What are some of your most memorable and cheap dates?

- Read a book together at the park
- Living room volleyball—use the furniture as a net and balloon for a ball
- Driving to McDonalds for McFlurries
- Ice blocking
- Laser Tag—“Laser tag is so fun and there are always coupons, but it is best to be on the same team and work together. Some men don't want to lose or be shot by their wives—just sayin.”
- Play tennis
- Super Mario competition
- Playing pool at the local bowling alley—loser buys the ice cream after
- Rollerblading on the walking trails
- Go on a walk
- Golf together—“It is the best! It's beautiful and peaceful, there is something about golfing that makes you feel closer to Heavenly Father when you are surrounded in the beauty He has created. Golfing is 'OUR' thing. We kiss after we get the hole in the cup on every green—that means I am going to get kissed at least 9 times every time we golf together.”
- Share a plate at a restaurant for dinner
- Attend a high school basketball game (even if you don't have kids old enough to attend high school)
- Window shopping at furniture stores—sometimes involves free hotdogs
- Frisbee golf with other couples
- Watching movies together after kids go to bed—“I love this because we can just cuddle and enjoy being together.”
- Picking up a meal and taking it to spouse's work
- Playing board or card games
- Picnic in the canyon
- Hike/Bike together—go somewhere where your cell phone doesn't work
- Del Taco
- Family planning/goal sessions
- Motorcycle ride
- Dollar movie
- Temple and dessert after OR dinner at the temple before doing a session
- Go for a drive and talk
- Go out for frozen yogurt
- Get together with other couples and play games
- Horseback riding
- Rock climbing—“fun to do something that was a challenge.”
- Two for One miniature golfing
- Share a lunch special—take turns choosing where to eat
- Arts Festival
- Inviting other couples to join us for dessert and a favorite restaurant
- Potluck dinners with other couples
- Stake Adult Valentines Dance

- Attend Adult Session of Stake Conference

Question: What are some of your “dates in disguise” ...dates that aren’t the traditional dinner and a movie (i.e. holding hand in church, driving to Home Depot to get home repair supplies)

- Fun to go out and snuggle in a blanket on the trampoline and look at the stars
- Folding laundry while we watch a midnight movie at home.
- Playing a game of basketball together.
- When holding hands, three squeezes means “I Love You”
- Walking to the chicken coup to gather eggs
- Yard work together
- Find ways to flirt-phone conversations, emails, letters, etc
- Sit next to each other in church and during Family Night
- Go on an evening walk.
- Exercise together while watching our favorite sit-com
- Sit on the back porch drinking hot chocolate and star gaze.
- Staying home and having a pizza and a movie
- Hitting up Sam’s Club/Costco/Walmart etc.
- Make a special lunch and when your husband comes home for lunch you have a lunch/home date
- “We do dishes together while cranking up the music.”
- Watch old, 80’s music videos and laugh together
- “I Love You Because” Frame idea from Pinterest-“I made my husband one and it sits on his desk. I try to fill it out every day...it has been a wonderful thing in our relationship and it has made me consciously think of all the reasons I love my husband and I have let him know which has been great for his man esteem, especially since his love language is “words of praise”!
- We climb in bed and I snuggle up to him and we look at “A Day in Pictures” on the ipad.
- Going to the park and being able to talk while the kids play.
- Attend older kid’s performances without the little ones.
- Weekly grocery shopping