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Why and how to date your spouse: 5 things that keep the spark alive



(<https://everydaymamas.com/author/rachelbabcock/>) Rachel Babcock (<https://everydaymamas.com/author/rachelbabcock/>), 2 weeks ago

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Kids can change your entire world, including your dating life. After having kids, instead of the spontaneous nights out on the town my husband and I would have had before, we found ourselves tucking little ones into bed and reading a fifth story night after night.

As a stay-at-home mom, the all-consuming focus on my kids that is present during the day started to take over my nights, too. Even after bedtime, I still felt my focus was on the kids. Are they finally asleep? Who's crying? He wants another story. I need to nurse the baby. It goes on and on.

My husband and I were always doing our own thing in the evenings—trying to finish whatever chores and projects we each had going while dividing and conquering with the night time kid wakeups.

With so much energy put into caring for our children, it was easy to let the relationship with my husband slip through the cracks. I found that not only was I **not** dating my husband, I wasn't even putting time into **thinking** about dating him. I found us fighting more often, feeling emotionally distant, and being burned-out each day. I knew things had to change if we wanted to keep our love and marriage strong.



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If you're feeling like your relationship could use a little boost, here are a few ideas for you to try:

1. Prioritize dinner conversation together

The first step in dating each other again was to have a conversation with each other during the day! We decided to prioritize conversation during family dinners. Usually, we're both so distracted feeding and talking to our kids that we never get to have a quality conversation with each other.

To change that, we adjusted when we do things. I now make sure to feed the baby before dinner so that I don't have to be distracted during dinner to do it. We also give our toddler silverware and other things to play with so that he's not insisting we entertain him the entire meal.

I could then look my husband in the eyes and really ask about his day, and he about mine.

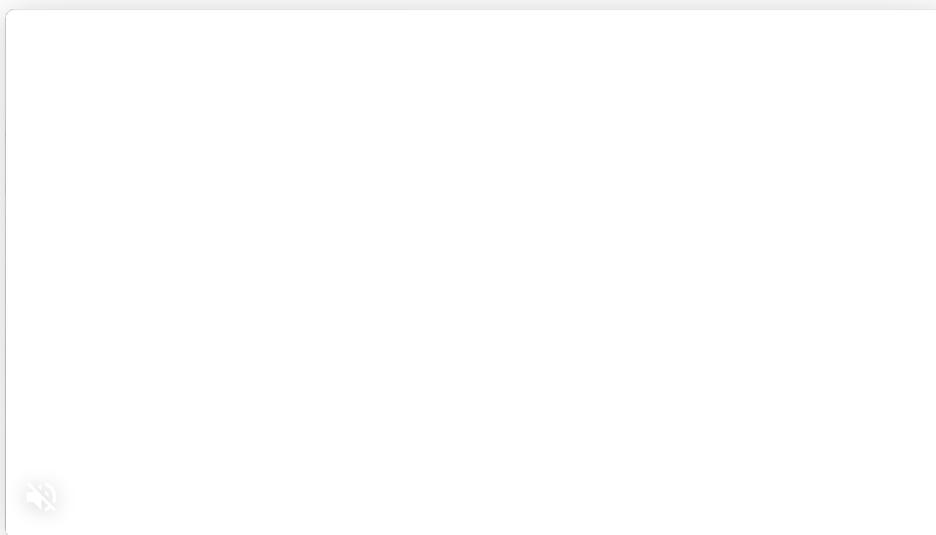
2. Plan simple home dates

Even though evenings are super crazy with kids needing things in the evening, I made the decision to spend time with my husband in between the interruptions. We started doing simple home dates. One night, we grabbed a bowl of ice cream and started a television show (a very rare occurrence in our house). We held hands, ate ice cream, and laughed together.

Another night, we took wine and the baby monitors out on the deck. Doing date things together (even if a kid interrupts us here and there) was so fulfilling.

When the kids started sleeping a little better through the night, we invested in date boxes that get shipped to us (<http://datenightinbox.com>)(not sponsored, just a fan!). Everything we need for a date night at home is included and so it makes for an easy and fun night that we don't have to plan.

3. Write love notes



This practice stemmed from a date box (<http://datenightinbox.com>). One of the activities was to write love notes to each other on little slips of paper and put them in a jar to give to each other. It was such a brilliant idea! I loved pulling out a love note each day and reading sweet sentiments from my husband in the middle of my chaotic day taking care of the kids.

The notes built intimacy even when we weren't with each other, and we plan to continue this practice by writing more notes when the ones in the jar are gone — maybe even just tucking them in a place we know we'll see them, like on the seat of a car or bedside table.

4. Hire a babysitter

This is a tough one, but very needed. It can be hard to have someone else manage bedtimes and tough on the bank account, as well, but it's important to have time alone together without kids. It's important to have an actual night on the town again. It's important to feel like adults again and not just parents.

We hire a sitter once every couple of months for a date night. It's not that often, but it definitely helps our relationship. Getting out on a date together, even just occasionally, fuels us to keep working on our dating life at home. I know some couples with older kids go on a date together every Friday night. We look forward to doing that someday when we can.

5. Take trips without kids

If hiring a babysitter is tough, a trip sounds impossible! But really, it can be totally doable. You just have to plan for it. We take a trip together without our kids once per year. Usually, I'll tag along to one of my husband's work conferences. We are lucky to have grandparents willing to stay with our kids. It can be hard leaving them, but we know they're in good hands, and we come back feeling recharged as a couple.

Not having free childcare can make traveling more expensive, but there are ways to still have a vacation within your budget. One option is to have a staycation. There are usually many attractions in your own city, or nearby, that you have yet to explore. Seeing new sights, trying new restaurants, going dancing, or even doing your favorite standard date with a hotel stay can be so revitalizing. Staying local allows you to get away from the kids for a few days while also saving you money (and time!) on the travel.



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(<https://everydaymamas.com/author/rachelbabcock/>)

Rachel Babcock is a writer, consultant, and stay-at-home mom. She loves writing about parenthood and healthy living. Her favorite pastimes include HGTV, playing with her husband and two sons at home in Minnesota, and traveling to warm destinations in winter! Say hi and read her lifestyle blog at rachelbcompany.com.

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Our everyday lives as mothers aren't always picture perfect, and the effort we put forth often goes unnoticed. But that doesn't mean it's insignificant. By highlighting the strength, the courage, the hope and the joy in those everyday moments, we hope to be a source of encouragement and perspective.

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