

# Date Night: What's worked for us

By: Jay and Lisa Forseth

- Decide how often to date. We strongly recommend once a week or once every two weeks.
- Pick a time/day of the week. Find and protect a day that you both can most always date, ie: every Friday night, or 6:00-9:00pm every other Monday, etc. Generally our date lasts 3 hours.
- Prioritize date night. Keep your date night in ink on your calendar. Understand that dating is important and other things that come up will not regularly alter your date night. No answering the phone or allowing other interruptions, please!
- Mark your calendars. Once you know the day of each week that is your date night, write "Date Night" on that day throughout your calendar.
- Budget for it. Set aside a sum for each month to spend dating. It doesn't have to be huge, we budget only \$40/month. The lower the amount the more creative you get to be!
- Be creative. Talk about fun date ideas that you can do throughout the year. Remember each date does not have to be extravagant or even cost money. It's time alone together that is important. The list below is a good starting point for ideas.
- Plan together. Part of the fun is talking about what you want to do for an upcoming date.
- Swap planning. For variety, swap planning the date. "You plan this week's date, and I will plan next week's."
- Surprise! Surprise your spouse with a date.
- Put your spouse first. Think of an activity that your spouse loves to do and plan a date doing that activity, (even if it isn't your favorite thing).
- Trade baby-sitting. If you have young kids, find another couple who has kids and trade date nights with them. One week you watch their kids for their date and the next week they watch yours for your date. That way you have just helped another couple to make dating their spouse a priority, too! No money needs to exchange hands.
- Vacations are dates, too. Plan once a year to go on a vacation together, with no kids. When you have young children, it might only be one night or a weekend away. The older the kids, the longer the time on vacation. It is healthy for you and the kids to have time apart.

## Ideas for Inexpensive Dates

- |                                  |                           |                    |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| *Go for a walk or bike ride      | *Exercise together        | *Coffee shop       |
| *Book store browsing             | *Go to a park             | *Rent a movie      |
| *Do something along the river    | *Go for a drive           | *Watch the sunset  |
| *Share a restaurant meal         | *Eat Dessert only         | *Fly a kite        |
| *Go fishing or hunting           | *Go bird watching         | *Have a picnic     |
| *Go wildlife spotting            | *Museums and Galleries    | *Play cards        |
| *Look through old photo albums   | *Watch your wedding video | *Play a board game |
| *Try a new café in a nearby town | *Listen to good music     | *Surf the web      |

*"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother, and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.'"*

Matthew 19:4-5 (NIV)