

Father's Day Gift Ideas

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Father's Day was first celebrated on June 19, 1910 in Spokane, Washington. It was initiated by Mrs. John B. (Sonora Smart) Dodd and backed by the Ministerial Association and the Spokane YMCA. The idea came to her during a sermon the same year on the second-ever Mother's Day. She realized her father, William Jackson Smart, a Civil war veteran, had sacrificed much to raise her and her five brothers after his wife passed away during childbirth. Among the first noted Father's Day supporters was William Jennings Bryan, who wrote to Mrs. Dodd, "Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the relation between parent and child."

The proposed date for the celebration was originally June 5th, Mrs. Dodd's father's birthday, but it was moved to the 19th when ministers expressed the need for extra time to develop an appropriate sermon. Father's Day was slow in becoming an official observance, as the members of an all male congress were afraid the proclamation might be seen as self-appreciating. Other Father's day supporters were President Woodrow Wilson, President Calvin Coolidge, and Senator Margaret Chase Smith, although Father's Day was not permanently established as an official observance until 1972 by President Richard Nixon. Today, Father's Day is always celebrated on the third Sunday of June, and is the fifth largest occasion for greeting card sales.

So what would make an appropriate Father's Day gift, besides just a greeting card? If your father is anything like mine, you probably find him very difficult to shop for, because no matter how useless or impractical the gift is, Dad always acts as if it is the best thing he has ever received. I ask myself again, just as I do every year, "What can I give my father this year that he will *really* appreciate?"

But where to start? My father never mentions anything he really wants without running out and picking it up himself the next week. Sound familiar? Let's take a look at some creative solutions to our dilemma, and maybe we can get an idea from there.

Pamper your Father

Dads like to be spoiled too! Why not set an appointment for your father at your favorite salon or spa? Better yet, make a second appointment for you - Dad will probably enjoy the company! Our society is continuously moving further and further away from the barber-shop-for-men and salons-for-women concept. Today's salons offer a range of unisex services Dad will love, including tanning, a much-needed massage, and nail services.

A Walk Down Memory Lane

How many old home movies have been stored in the basement since the family's reel-to-reel projector broke down years ago? How many photographs do you have lying around in an old shoe box? Why not convert those family treasures into a video scrapbook? And if Dad doesn't own a VCR, throw that in too. What a perfect way to remind your father of all the wonderful times you've shared together!

Something for His Space

Every man has that special place at home where he can be comfortable and do "man" things. For some fathers, this place is the den or home office; for others, it's the workshop or garage. What is missing from Dad's home retreat that he probably wouldn't get for himself? A big comfy chair in the den or that power sander he's always wanted will remind him of you every time he uses it. Has his favorite piece of furniture in the house seen better days? Why not send it out to be refinished or reupholstered? Is your father a collector of old cigar boxes, the latest Star Trek collector series, or something in between? How about a collectible, antique or commemorative golf club or limited edition golf art? Adding that perfect item to round out or simply add to his collection will ensure that it will always be his favorite piece.

"A Man's Home is His Castle."

How about help with the day-to-day household upkeep that most dads hate to do? If your dad is single or widowed, general housework is probably one of his least favorite and rarely-performed activities. Hire a cleaning service for the day to take care of that spring cleaning before summer rolls around. Home improvement service professionals are also available to take care of those maintenance issues Dad has little time for or is unable to do himself. Does your father like to do yard work, but it's almost too difficult anymore? Why not replace his old lawn mower with a riding mower?

Dress for Success

Could Dad's wardrobe use a little updating? Maybe he could use some accessorizing, such as a pair of cuff links, a tie chain, or maybe a new watch. How about nice casual wear, such as a pair of designer jeans, like the ones he used to buy for you?

Getting Away

How long has it been since your father has been on a real vacation? Is a quiet little bed and breakfast in the country his style, or has Dad always wanted to take a trip around the world? How about a combination of gift ideas here? If your

father, like so many men, loves to get away to play golf, how about arranging a golf vacation? There are all kinds of great golf/resort vacation packages available. Perhaps the ultimate would be a package to play golf where it all began - in Scotland! This could be the opportunity for you to make your father's dream come true. Be sure to make arrangements for two. Dad will want someone to share the experience with!

So what will I get my dad for Father's Day? If I told you, it wouldn't be a surprise for him. I'm sure he'll be picking up his own personal copy of *Women's Edition* and adding this article to his collection of "everything my children ever did" stuff. Besides, the most important part of whatever gift I select for him will be the love behind it. Be sure to tell your dad you love him this Father's Day. After all, wasn't that the main purpose behind its origination?