

**DATE
NIGHT** 
INBOX

IT'S ABOUT TIME



IS YOUR MARRIAGE A TOP PRIORITY?

A peek at your daily calendar should let you know.

We're gifted 24 hours each day. But most days, those hours slip by too quickly and we're left without enough time to truly connect.

This date helps you and your partner learn to dial down distractions and make time for your marriage.





This date can take place on a worknight or any other busy evening. It is designed to start right after work, but most of the date can take place later on, after chores are finished and kids are in bed.

YOU'LL NEED: Your family calendar, a pen and paper for each of you, and your individual smartphones.

This entire date (minus the 5-minute Calm Connection exercise) can work for deployed couples, too.

TOP PRIORITY: CALM CONNECTION

Begin this date as soon as you and your partner are both home from work. As soon as you're together, set aside 5 minutes for a couple connection. Put down phones and distractions (even kids!), face one another, and use physical touch to reinforce your connection—holding hands works well! Use your 5 minutes to embrace, kiss, welcome another home, and ask about plans for the evening.



Even though it takes hardly any time, this quick couple connection does a lot for your marriage:

- Demonstrates to children, other family members (and your spouse!) that your marriage is a priority
- Helps re-establish your physical connection after a day apart
- Diffuses the day's stress and sets the stage for a smoother evening

TOP PRIORITY: TECH TALK

Once dinner and chores are completed, it's time for the next part of your date.

If you're like most couples, technology is a source of distraction. But technology can also help solve the problem.

Start by taking an honest look at digital distractions. Phones, tablets,

and other devices are necessary for modern life, but are they stealing time from your loved ones? If the answer is yes, consider an app like Freedom, Offtime, or Flipd to block social media and other distractions for set periods of time.

Next, sync up your calendars. A calendar app made for sharing (Try Cozi Family Organizer, VueMinder, or Cal) keeps you two on the same page, preventing miscommunication, frustrations, and wasted hours. Have fun exploring the options and downloading the one that best suits you.



TOP PRIORITY: TIMEKEEPING

Now that you've owned up to digital distractions and faced the family calendar, spend 15 minutes thinking about ways you can create an extra hour or two of time in your spouse's week. Examples could include:

- Hiring a lawn service to mow the lawn or care for the yard
- Watching the kids so your partner can exercise
- Taking over dog walking or pet feeding duties
- Picking up groceries on your way home from work
- Ordering takeout once or twice a week

- Teaching kids to pack their own lunch or fold their own laundry

Share your ideas with your spouse. Which one appeals most to him or her? And how would he or she spend that extra time?

Next, make a plan to spend more of that time together. Using your new calendar app (or an analog planner if you prefer), plan a few

months of weekly at-home mini-dates with the time you've created. You might be able to start that Netflix show you've been eyeing, enjoy breakfast in bed, indulge in a luxurious weekend nap, or simply turn in earlier each night to spend time together before you fall asleep. No matter how you choose to connect, you'll never regret spending more time on your marriage.



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