



FILL-IN-THE-BLANK LETTER TO MY SPOUSE

Dear _____ ,

Thank you. Thank you for always _____ .

Thank you for never _____ . And thank you
for making me _____ . I'm so glad we get to
_____ together. It makes me happy to see
you _____ .

Hey, remember that time we _____ ? Wasn't
that just _____ ? Thinking of it makes me
want to _____ . I love you!

Your _____ ,



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FILL-IN-THE-[BLANK] DATE

Isn't marriage _____? Yes, there are a ton of words that could go in that blank space. But hopefully, this date will make you answer something like: fun, exciting, or fulfilling. This date is a sort of Choose Your Own Adventure. You and your spouse get to create a unique evening that works best for the two of you.

Ground Rules

- ∨ Take a break from talking about the usual suspects—money, kids, in-laws, jobs. This is not a time to take care of checklists, this is time for your *us*.
- ∨ Flirt. Be considerate, kind, relaxed, and a great listener. Act as if you're still trying to win your spouse over.
- ∨ As much as possible, stay off of technology. Only text or take a call if it's an emergency. Everyone and everything will be okay. (People used to leave their homes all the time without phones, and they lived to tell about it.)
- ∨ In many relationships, there's a talker and a non-talker. If you're married to a non-talker, when they talk tonight, they might not do it as well as you. Give them the time and space to find the words.

Get Ready

If you have kids, there's probably no way to get your usual babysitter right now. Let's get creative to make this a non-issue. See if you can't barter for babysitting with another neighborhood couple, or someone else you've had close contact with in the last few days. Offer to keep their kids another night so they can go on a date too. If this isn't possible, try staying up later than usual and spending some intentional time with your spouse after the kids are in bed.

To help your spouse get ready, fill in the following blank: **I love it when you wear _____**. Your spouse can choose to follow this suggestion or not, but it helps them to better understand more about your expectations and desires.

To choose where order your food from, both of you fill in this blank: **Our favorite place to eat is _____**. Even if you go somewhere else, this helps get the conversation started.

Go Out

On the way to pick up your food, fill in the following fun blanks:

- ∇ I bet our waiter will be wearing _____.
- ∇ While we're gone, I bet our kids will _____.
- ∇ I most hope that _____ happens on our date.

See the "Dare Me" section for a fun suggestion for how to order food!

Once you've gotten your food, you'll want to engage in conversation. But finding things to talk about can be difficult—especially topics other than in-laws, work, and kids. Complete these statements together to spark some fruitful discussions.

- ∇ My first memory of you is _____.
- ∇ In five years, I want to _____.
- ∇ I'd most love to visit _____.
- ∇ When you _____, I want to _____.
- ∇ _____ would play you in a movie.
- ∇ You remind me of _____.
- ∇ I'm most excited about _____.
- ∇ It makes me happiest when you _____.

Dare Me

When it comes time to place your order, here's a fun optional step. Pick a meal secretly for one another. Go into the other room so you can't hear each other (if you have to call your order in), or simply hand your device to your spouse, and order by completing this sentence: **My spouse will be having** _____.

Don't cheat, and don't let the other see. When the food comes out, it will be a surprise. This gives you the opportunity to order your spouse's favorite meal, or encourage them to try something different.

Want to try more dares? You can always use these fill-in-the-blank prompts instead. Fill them all out and then your spouse can choose to do one. As an added bonus, film these challenges for social media and tag @rcclawrence on Instagram or Facebook!

- ∇ I dare you to eat _____.
- ∇ I dare you to drive to _____.
- ∇ I dare you to sing _____.
- ∇ I dare you to dance in front of _____.

Keep It Going

Your date isn't over quite yet. To continue the momentum, you're going to write a love letter to your spouse, using the fill-in-the-blank template that we've provided for both of you. Just complete your letters separately and give them to one another to read later.

You could read them the day after your date while sitting side-by-side on the couch. Or seal the notes in separate envelopes to read individually next week. Where you go from here is up to you. Just remember to stay connected and keep dating your spouse.

A CHEAP DATE

No one likes to argue over money. Finances are a sore spot for a lot of marriages. Let's take a break from the heartache and focus on a date that's cheap. Not because you're cheap—you're money savvy. You're just like The Beatles—can't buy your love. At least, that's true for tonight.

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Get Ready

Rather than wearing an expensive new outfit on this date, put on your favorite outfit. You know the one. The usual. Old Faithful. A date is something you want to enjoy, so why not be comfortable? And comfortable doesn't have to cost anything.

If you have kids, there's probably no way to get your usual babysitter right now. Let's get creative to make this a non-issue. See if you can't barter for babysitting with another neighborhood couple, or someone else you've had close contact with in the last few days. Offer to keep their kids another night so they can go on a date too. If this isn't possible, try staying up later than usual and spending some intentional time with your spouse after the kids are in bed.

Order Out

You don't have to spend a bunch of money to have a fun evening. Here are a few options on what you could do for a meal:

- ∇ Go to your favorite restaurant, but order the cheapest thing on the menu. (We'd recommend the cheapest entree, unless you're really hungry for that \$1 side of ranch dressing.)

GAME CHANGERS

- ∇ Order out at a cheap restaurant. This can be a favorite fast food chain or a local dive. Try to find and use a coupon if you can. Or try to go during a time when they have special discounts on appetizers.
- ∇ Eat at home. Cook a meal using only the food currently in your fridge. You can even use SuperCook.com to find recipes by searching based on the ingredients you already have.
- ∇ If you're eating out, the one thing you shouldn't get cheap on is tipping the waiter. Your fun night shouldn't come at someone else's expense, even if you're simply getting your food to-go.

While you're eating, be sure *not* to talk about money. The whole point of this evening is to push pause on finances for a minute while you enjoy an evening guilt-free. So here are a few random topics that you may not often discuss:

- ∇ What attributes of your parents did you get? Which did you not get?
- ∇ What was your favorite class in school?
- ∇ If salary wasn't an issue, what job would you take?
- ∇ If you could speak another language, what would it be?
- ∇ What do you think there needs to be a national holiday for?

Now that you've had dinner, it's time for some cheap entertainment. There are plenty of local places around any town that you can enjoy for free, and still keep your distance from others.

- ∇ Check out a local park, the local library, or the closest bookstore.
- ∇ Go for a walk around town or on a hike through nature.
- ∇ Watch an old movie together that you haven't seen in a while.
- ∇ Play an easy board game or card game that you both enjoy.

Keep It Going

Once the date is over, you're going to have to start thinking about money again. Spending and saving will once again be part of your thought process. But it doesn't have to be miserable. Hopefully, you've built some memories that showed you how fun it can be to forget finances.

Besides, there's one more thing you can do at home with just the two of you that doesn't cost a dime (wink, wink). I'm of course talking about video games. Oh, you were thinking of something else? I suppose you could do that too.

THE EVERYDAY DATE

This date is a little different. Normally, dates revolve around a special evening or a big day out. But not this date. This date takes place during a “normal” day in your life—a day filled with working from home, kids and homeschooling, and responsibilities.

What if you could take that normal day and make it more interesting by inserting a date with your spouse right into the mix? What if you could make the everyday more special by adding a few touchpoints with your spouse?

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Get Ready

You may have to wake up a bit earlier than usual.

Start the date like you start every day—wake up in your bed next to your spouse. Except make this day just a little more special than average. Kiss your spouse while still in bed—maybe brush your teeth first. Hit the snooze button one more time and snuggle together for exactly nine minutes. Then, take a shower together.

Let the first thing you say the entire day be a complement about your spouse. Take some time to eat breakfast together. Wake each other up with coffee and a real conversation. Pack a lunch for each other. Write a special love note for them to put in the sack lunch.

Go Out

Time to go work. Normally, this isn't the most exciting thing. But it also means the start of your date. Even though you are probably spending your day working from home (and yes, being a stay-at-home parent counts as work), you can still use these different situations.

While you're going about your normal daily routine, do at least two of these things:

- ▽ Text each other at least three times.
- ▽ On the company letterhead (if you have some with you) or a notebook that you use often, write down five things about your spouse that you're thankful for. Then give this note to your spouse when you return home.
- ▽ Listen to this [custom Spotify playlist \(www.MarriedPeople.org/Everyday\)](http://www.MarriedPeople.org/Everyday) to keep your spouse in your mind.
- ▽ Eat lunch together and read the note your spouse wrote you.
- ▽ Plan to leave work at the same time. This isn't always easy, but see if you can't make it a priority just this once. This day is special, after all.

Dare Me

Okay, prepare to get a little crazy. If you're bold enough, try to sprinkle a few of these ideas in during the course of your day. Try to top each other with how wild you can get. These will make for great stories to share with each other when connecting at the end of the day/date.

- ▽ Facetime each other during a meeting.
- ▽ Take a selfie with that co-worker you complain about. Text the picture to your spouse.
- ▽ Post a video to your social media accounts yelling, "I love my husband/wife" out loud.
- ▽ Post a picture of your spouse to your social media accounts.
- ▽ Use a break to buy your spouse a \$5 gift online. Something small that they'll enjoy and brighten up their day.
- ▽ Tell three strangers a nice thing about your spouse.

Keep It Going

When you're done working, you don't need to download everything about your day—because you've already been sharing with your spouse during the day. Now it's time to dig deeper and learn more about each other.

Get take-out for dinner or cook a favorite meal at home. Discuss these questions together.

- ▽ What are your personal and professional dreams?

GAME CHANGERS

- ∇ Does your current job fulfill you?
- ∇ What can I do to help you succeed in life?
- ∇ What part of your day do you most look forward to?
- ∇ What goals do you want to accomplish this year?

Don't expect that you can do same thing every day. Today is supposed to be different and special. But there are still plenty of connection points that you can continue using on a regular basis.

TIME MACHINE DATE

Incredible news! You and your spouse just found a time machine. And you have the once-in-a-lifetime chance to travel back in time together. Whether you're newlyweds or have been married for 50 years, taking the time to reminisce and remember past experiences helps you find new ways to connect and look forward to a future together.

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Get Ready

If you have kids, you may have to wait until they're in bed to have this date.

The first thing you'll need to do is decide when you want to travel back to. We recommend you choose either to go back to the year you both met, or the era when you were both kids. This helps ensure you have shared memories and experiences from this time period.

The only real rule is that you have to **agree** on a time to travel back to so you can travel **together**.

If you're really daring, you can even choose to dress up in an outfit from the time period you chose. See the "**Dare Me**" section for even more daring ideas to spice up the date.

Go Out

You've fired up the time machine, chosen a year to visit, and traveled backwards to the past. Awesome! Now it's time to do some exploring. Pick out a restaurant that's been around since that year, or maybe even just the oldest restaurant in town.

GAME CHANGERS

Order some take-out from that restaurant and listen to some music from that era. It will serve as your time travel soundtrack. While you're eating dinner, discuss your answers to some of these questions.

- ✓ What do you miss most from this time period?
- ✓ What trend or technology are you sad that went out of style?
- ✓ What do you most clearly remember from this year?
- ✓ How have things most changed from now to the present?
- ✓ What were your favorite hobbies or games from back then?

If you want to take this even further, you could also watch a favorite movie from that year when you get home. You could even pretend to rent it from Blockbuster Video—remember those?

Dare Me

Time travel is already a pretty daring feat. Be proud of yourself for being so bold and adventurous! Want to keep that feeling going? Here are a few optional ideas to make your visit to the past even more memorable.

- ✓ Wear something retro from the time period you're traveling to.
- ✓ Sing a song from the year you chose.
- ✓ Perform a dance (either individually or together) that was popular during that era.
- ✓ Pretend like you are actual time travelers from the past and loudly act confused by the new-fangled technology.
- ✓ Be sure to post videos of all of these to your social media accounts!

Keep It Going

Unfortunately, you have to travel back to the present time at the end of this date. It's something complicated about the space-time continuum. But hopefully, you had a memorable experience on your journey to the past.

One of the best ways you can continue to stay linked to your past is by assembling a time capsule or memory box. Grab a shoebox or other sturdy container and fill it with some precious memories from the present. This could be photos, notes, clothes, ticket stubs, or books.

Once you've collected everything, pick out when you want to re-open your time capsule with your spouse. It could be a week from now, a year from now, or ten years from now. Set a calendar reminder for yourself. Now hide the box in a safe place you won't think to look—in a closet, the attic, the garage or trunk of your car.