



**Walk tall,
always carry
a handkerchief,**

*...and other
essentials
dads have
taught us*

From sage advice to corny one-liners, the things our dads say stick with us long after we've grown too big to ride on their shoulders. To celebrate fatherhood in its many forms, *Country Living* asked designers, chefs, writers, makers, and mentors to share stories and lessons they've learned from their own dads. You'll also find plenty of ways to pamper Pop come Father's Day and a fair share of dad jokes...because of course there are dad jokes.

produced by
Leigh Crandall

Ben Napier at Scotsman Co. Woodshop. Watch him work on *Home Town: Ben's Workshop*.

“Parenting is its own kind of craftsmanship.”

—Ben Napier, costar on *Home Town* and new show *Home Town Takeover* (HGTV and Discovery+)

“My parents are both United Methodist ministers, and while I grew up doing little projects around the church or parsonage, it wasn’t until college that I started wood-working and building furniture. I was studying history and had always been drawn to the stories behind antiques, the way furniture reflected how people lived and worked. On our TV shows, I get to design pieces I hope people will keep and pass on, so when my wife, Erin, and I found out we were having our daughter, Helen, I wanted to make a crib that would become a family heirloom.

“Building my firstborn’s crib was special on so many levels. It was a culmination of the love I have for my wife, of becoming a father, and the chance to check a new type of furniture off my bucket list. Just like each life lesson helps build a person’s character, meaningful details can add character to furniture, too. Helen’s crib has bobbin turnings on the legs inspired by Erin’s childhood bed, a Jenny Lind. The Jenny Lind bed is an iconic piece of furniture named after the famous singer, who was said to prefer sleeping in beds with bobbin turnings during hotel stays. While Helen has now moved on to a big-girl bed, her favorite movie is *The Greatest Showman*, which is, funny enough, about Jenny Lind.”

NAPIER FAMILY FAVORITES

TV SHOW: “Helen and I watch *Bonanza* together every week-end. We call it *Saddle-Up Saturday*.”

BACKYARD ACTIVITY: “I add something new to Helen’s swing set each year for her birthday. She loves *The Greatest Showman*, so this year it was a trapeze bar.”

CHILDREN’S BOOKS: “We’re all fans of Shel Silverstein’s poems. Helen especially likes *Falling Up*.”



Ben and Erin Napier in their hometown of Laurel, Mississippi

PORTRAIT COURTESY OF DISCOVERY+; CORN HOLE, LARSEN & TALBERT; STYLING BY SARAH MOFFETT.

PORTRAIT, FABIO CHIZZOLA/TRUNK ARCHIVE; INTERIOR, DAVID A. LAND/EMANATING FROM DESIGN WISE.



“Let kids touch the breakables—really!”

—Vern Yip, interior designer, HGTV host, and author

“My mom had an incredible eye for design and taught me the difference between something that was simply well-made versus something that was a masterpiece by letting me handle delicate pieces, even as a kid. Of course I broke my fair share of stuff, but being allowed to interact with beautiful things on a daily basis helped me develop a sensitivity to them and was so influential in honing my design eye. Now I encourage my kids to do the same.”



VERN’S DAD HACK SPILL-PROOF SURFACES

“These days, modern high-performance materials mean families can have a beautiful home that’s also kid-friendly. You can have rugs made in any size from Stainmaster’s durable ‘Nylon 6,6’ material, which is stain-resistant and surprisingly inexpensive [[stainmaster.com](https://www.stainmaster.com)]. Upholster furniture with soft indoor-outdoor fabrics, which look great and are also easy to get marker or chocolate out of, even in lighter colors. For kitchen countertops, opt for white quartz, which is a durable alternative to marble.”

“Pin far back to win at thumb wrestling.”



#1 Use your dominant hand. Start off by trying a quick attack as soon as the opening chant—“one, two, three, four, we declare a thumb war”—has finished.



#2 Be unpredictable, moving your thumb around without attacking. If you get pinned, jerk your thumb forward or sideways, not backward, to break free.



#3 Lunge! Pin as far back on your opponent’s thumb as you can. Add pressure. Move your hand with theirs to hold the pin for five seconds. Victory!

"Lean into the oldies."

by Ryan D'Agostino



"Discogs [discogs.com] is a huge marketplace for new and used vinyl. If your kids take to records, get them a Crosley 'Cruiser' [\$70; crosleyradio.com] they can carry from room to room. They'll be hooked."



Back when I was cool, I lived above a used-record shop in Greenwich Village. It was run by two guys who'd open up whenever they rolled out of bed, and I'd often stop in on my way home from work or dinner and pick up something. A beat-up \$5 copy of *Harvest Moon* one night, or some Ray Charles, if it was raining. I'd walk up to my apartment, put my new purchase on the turntable I'd owned since fourth grade, open a beer, and listen.

Today I have a mortgage on a house with a barn, a wife and two kids, a dog, two cats, a rabbit, and a bunch of chickens out back. I like to think of it as a different kind of cool. My kids, though? Cool is not the word they use.

Like the other day: I was opening a box that had arrived for me and the teenager walked in.

"What's that?" he asked.

"New records! Here, look," I said, cracking open the fragrant cardboard jacket to reveal the gorgeous artwork on the *Sgt. Pepper* deluxe edition reprint I'd ordered from *beatles.com*.



"Boomer," he said.

I explained (once again) that I am not a boomer.

"Eighteen hundreds, Dad," he said flatly.

I get it. Vinyl smells funny. You have to keep getting up to flip it over. But I've tried to show them that it's about the sound. It's about the tactile nature of it. It's about the artwork. I yearned to bathe their ears in the warmth and glory of 180-gram vinyl!

Blah, blah. Boomer.

I've bought new stuff, their stuff (in my alphabetized-by-artist collection, *Imagine Dragons* comes just before Michael Jackson's *Off the Wall*). They liked that actually—and they conceded that, sure, a record sounds better than a phone. But it's not like they're fighting over who gets the next spin.

The teenager wandered off. I placed the record on my turntable, dropped the needle, and sank onto the couch. Those first noises played, the orchestra warming up, then the exciting thrum of drums and guitar.

And then he wandered back in. And he sat down. This hulking, 14-year-old boy snuggled up next to me, his head against my arm, his hand on my wrist, like he used to do when he was a toddler. I showed him the Technicolor photos on the jacket, and we listened. He was paying attention, asking questions. We listened to the whole first side, next to each other.

It wasn't about the sound or the warmth or the stereo mix or the artwork. No, as we sat there just listening, father and son, not saying much, it hit me: He liked it because I liked it.

—Ryan D'Agostino is the author of *The Rising* and the former editor-in-chief of *Popular Mechanics*.

VINYL COURTESY OF DISCOGS.

MAIN IMAGE COURTESY OF RICK STEVES; MEREDITH FAMILY COURTESY OF MAGNOLIA NETWORK; ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOBIAS HALL.



"Let kids order their own ice cream."

—Rick Steves, guidebook author and travel TV host

"When our kids were young, my wife and I gave them small travel allowances. If they wanted an ice cream, they had to order it, even in another language, and figure out how to pay with foreign currency. It's great practice interacting with new people and such fun to see their confidence grow. As kids get older, incorporate them into family travel planning. Not just picking a destination, but also researching what there is to do, the best time to go, if you'll need reservations. It's a real-life process that teaches them pacing, the need to choose this over that, and to take ownership of an adventure."



"There are few things that can't be fixed."

—Andy Meredith, co-star of *Magnolia Network's Home Work*

"Don't be afraid to jump in to renovations. I knew little about building before I met my wife, Candis, but she encouraged me to get in there and break up a wall or ceiling. Historic buildings—like the schoolhouse in Utah we've renovated into a home—often reveal beautiful details when you peel back the layers, from wood floors to mouldings. Saving these details makes me happy, and so does showing our kids how empowering picking up a hammer can be."

"Rock skipping is all in the wrist."



#1 Hunt the shoreline for a thin, smooth rock that fits in your palm. Better yet, make a pile of them so you don't have to search between throws.



#2 Hook your index finger around the rock's edge and place your thumb on top. Face the water and draw your arm back, parallel to the ground.



#3 Bend your wrist so it's at a 90-degree angle to your arm. Bring your arm forward, and flick your wrist to send the rock skipping across the surface.

“Great things take time.”

—Rodney Scott, pitmaster and owner of Rodney Scott's Whole Hog BBQ

“My dad instilled a hands-on work ethic in me and taught me so many things I still use today, from getting an early start and respecting everyone you work with to being open to ideas. I'm still learning new barbecue techniques and recipes.

“I've also learned that patience leads to quality. If you rush, it's easier to end up doing things the wrong way, so take your time and surround yourself with people who do, too. Same for barbecue. By slow-cooking, you'll know which side of the hog is most tender and which part will turn out best, because you were able to watch and manage the process from start to finish.”

Get more recipes and tips in Rodney's new cookbook, *Rodney Scott's World of BBQ*.



RODNEY'S DAD HACK BETTER BBQ SAUCE

In a small stockpot, warm **1 gallon distilled white vinegar** over medium-high heat until it reaches **150°F** on an instant-read thermometer, about 5 minutes. Before it starts to simmer, add **1 thinly sliced lemon**. Continue to cook until the lemon peels begin to soften and wilt, about 10 minutes. Whisk in **2 cups sugar**, **1/2 cup ground black pepper**, **1/3 cup cayenne pepper**, and **1 1/4 tablespoons red pepper flakes**. Continue to cook over medium-high heat until sugar is dissolved and sauce reaches **190°F**, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and cool. Discard lemon before using.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGIE MOSIER; RECIPE: REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM RODNEY SCOTT'S WORLD OF BBQ: EVERY DAY IS A GOOD DAY BY RODNEY SCOTT AND LOUIS ERIC ELIE; COPYRIGHT © 2021 BY RODNEY SCOTT'S BBQ, LLC, A SOUTH CAROLINA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY; PHOTOGRAPHS COPYRIGHT © 2021 BY JERRELLE GUY; PUBLISHED BY CLARKSON POTTER, AN IMPRINT OF PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE.

“I don't need another tie.”

(Said by dads everywhere.) Instead, consider the *broquet*, a dude-ified bouquet artfully wrapped with butcher paper.



FOR THE MEAT-LOVER

Charcuterie-board enthusiasts will appreciate a bundle of cured meats from foustmans.com and olympiaprovisions.com.



FOR THE HOME COOK

Wrap up cooking and grilling essentials like silicone spatulas, wooden spoons, and handheld graters.



FOR THE DAPPER DAD

Skip the neckwear, and pick a mix of nifty novelty socks from nicelaundry.com, dueplesocks.com, and tophatnyc.com.



FOR THE GREEN THUMB

If summer includes a daily update on Dad's tomatoes, opt for an assortment of seeds and gardening gloves.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BECKY LUGART-STAYNER; STYLING BY ALISON ALLSOPP; CRAFTING BY CHARLYNE MATTOX.

“Don’t underestimate the details.”

Father-and-son interior designers James Michael Howard and Andrew Howard on each others’ styles



“Andrew’s ideas are creative...”

...which you can see in this kitchen design of his, with the inventiveness of the multiple shapes working together, from the vent hood and the corbel brackets to the top of the cabinet boxes. The backsplash quietly and beautifully complements the other materials, and the scale of the upper cabinets is precisely proportional to the end cabinets. Those harmonious details are what make a great designer. Andrew’s kitchen feels honest and authentic, and I’m a very proud papa!”

—James Michael Howard

Follow Andrew on Instagram @andrewjhow, where he weaves dad jokes into his design commentary.

PHOTOGRAPH BY HELEN NORMAN.



“My dad loves subtle patterns...”

...which you can see in this kitchen of his, in the patterns on the cupboard and hood. There’s something so classic and serene about an all-white kitchen. The shimmering backsplash is an element we both love to use.

“I learned a lot from Dad right from the beginning. When I wanted to work with him, he sat me down for a job interview and, after a time, told me I wasn’t bringing anything to the table yet. I had to work my way up and find my own style, and I’ll have my sons do the same if they ever want join the business.”

—Andrew Howard

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALAN SHORTALL.



“Take the same photo in the same place every year.”

—Kiel James Patrick, fashion designer

“I have an old but vivid childhood memory from the morning we took one of our annual family photos. I couldn’t tell you exactly which year it was, but I remember my dad had fresh grass stains on his jeans from trimming the lawn so it would look perfect for the picture. He was, and always would be, in the garage those mornings tinkering with his camera and trusty tripod while my mom was upstairs making sure our outfits were pristine. They worked so well as a team, and no matter how much my siblings and I groaned about spending our Saturday morning taking a picture—they must have heard ‘why do we have to do this?’ a hundred times—a smile never

left their faces. Dad would test the framing, wait for the right cloud to roll in, then set the timer so he could get into the picture. He always got it right, and my wife, Sarah, and I have stuck to my parents’ formula for our own family photos. Taking them in the same place during the same time of year really captures the changes in kids that fly by for parents. I particularly love the photos in front of our house with the rhododendrons and hydrangeas blooming behind us. Even though I have thousands of family pictures on my phone, the effort that goes into our posed portraits makes me value them more, and keeping the tradition going has brought me closer to my parents and siblings. I finally know ‘why we have to do this’ and appreciate it all these years later.”



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF KIEL JAMES PATRICK. PANCAKES: BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER, STYLING BY ALISON ALLSOPP; FOOD STYLING BY TORIE COX; RYAN SCOTT, CHRIS ANDRE; MIKE WOLFE COURTESY OF MEGHAN AILEEN.

KIEL’S DAD HACK GET EVERYONE TO LOOK AT THE CAMERA

“I rely on two tricks to keep the attention of toddlers and dogs alike. First, lots of playtime before the picture. This way, everyone is ready to sit still when the shutter goes off. Second, I keep something that gets everyone’s attention near the lens. If I can enlist the help of my sister or brother, an inflated but untied balloon works well. My son, Harry, always cracks up at the sound the balloon makes as the air jettisons out.”

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF KIEL JAMES PATRICK.



Get Ryan’s PB&J pancake recipe on page 83.



“Make the pancakes.”

—Ryan Scott, chef and author of The No-Fuss Family Cookbook

“The aroma of my mom’s spaghetti sauce will always remind me of her, so I think it’s great for everyone to have at least one signature dish they cook often that others will remember them for. It doesn’t have to be fancy. In fact, simple dishes that kids can pitch in on, like weekend pancakes, are perfect because it’s in the moments when everyone is gathered together cooking and eating that memories get made. Pancakes are also easy to make your own by adding ingredients, like the PB&J pancakes in my cookbook.”

“Antiquing is just another word for treasure hunting.”

—Mike Wolfe, host of the History Channel’s American Pickers and coauthor of Kid Pickers: How to Turn Junk into Treasure

“Kids are natural collectors. When my daughter, Charlie, now 9, was little, she was always gathering rocks and animal bones when we were out on hikes. Then she started collecting cowgirl boots. We would make up stories about the kids these boots once belonged to and invent tales about their lives on ranches. Helping kids connect stories to things—family heirlooms or antiques—will capture their imaginations, and they’ll also get to know more about their personal and community histories. Encourage their curiosity. Stories are the most powerful part of collecting, and I think true collectors never lose the desire to know more. We’re basically all big kids out searching for treasure.”



“Pick a place that’s special to your family, where you can see changes in nature taking place alongside you.”



"Embrace the eccentricity."

by David Coggins

The author with his father (also David Coggins) at their family cabin



We're rarely aware of the singular

nature of our family until much later when we can take a broader view. In my twenties, I was curious, if not skeptical, when my dad suggested that he get himself a present for his own

50th birthday. Not any present either—a wooden boat, built to his specifications, by Lowell's Boat Shop in Amesbury, Massachusetts, on the Merrimack River, which has been building dories and skiffs since 1793. The boat [pictured at right] is white, and the interior, at his request, was painted an Amesbury green (akin to a robin's egg or a Tiffany box). I knew this was eccentric behavior and wasn't sure what to make of it.

This was a row boat. I associated rowing with what we did when our temperamental motorboat broke down or what I did to keep in place while I fished. In time, however, I learned to appreciate the virtues of rowing, especially in a boat designed for just that. You can sit upright and at ease, and

movement through the water is easy, even dignified.

My dad took on other unconventional endeavors. He bought another wooden boat, a Larson, a tinder, which was designed to take people from their much bigger boat to shore. In this case, it would be our main boat and circle the lake the exact duration of cocktail hour. It cruises comfortably, if not silently, at a clip I can only describe as first gear. When people see that boat, they are usually happy, partly because they can't believe it's used on a body of water. There's something wonderfully improbable about it. The same is true for the 1949 Chevrolet truck he bought (different birthday, no first gear, engine popular among small nesting animals).

My father also had a fieldstone grill built [pictured at left] that I'm now obsessed with and use for my ambitious (though not always successful) full-day smoking sessions. Then he moved on to building stone stairs. The huge fieldstones were beautiful, but also a hernia waiting to happen. Against all odds, he finished the staircase without medical incident. Another grill showed up—an original hibachi from Japan. Why would we need another grill? That's asking the wrong question.

These days, I don't doubt my dad's projects, dreams, whims, and fancies. I'm not sure I inherited my father's sense of the improbable—I'm not buying motorboats for sale on the side the road, which he did, if you can believe it—but these days I'm very proud to appreciate it.

—David Coggins writes the *Contender*, a newsletter on style and travel, and is author of the new book *The Optimist: A Case for the Fly Fishing Life*.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DAVID COGGINS.

SKIP GRANT, NATE PALMER; ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOBIAS HALL.



Skip Grant was interviewed and photographed for **Project Tell Me**, which records the wisdom and life experiences of Black Americans ages 75 and older by connecting them with a new generation of Black journalists. The complete oral history series will run across *Hearst Magazine*, *Newspaper*, and *Television* websites starting **Juneteenth 2021**. Go to hearst.com/projecttellme for links.



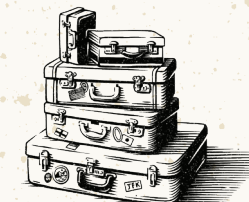
"Perseverance builds self-confidence."

—Skip Grant, longtime athletic director at St. Albans School in Washington, D.C., where he also oversaw a program that seeks out and supports students from underrepresented backgrounds

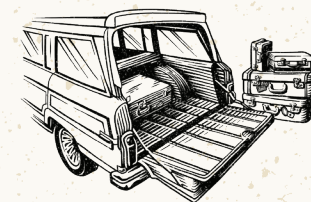
"I had the benefit of growing up around a community of men who had high ideals and values. I learned that a willingness to take on tough challenges is necessary to overcome adversity, particularly as a person of color. As a coach, I'd add intervals to workouts when athletes were tired, and they'd be amazed they were able to do it because they didn't think they had anything left. To me, the job of a coach or teacher is to be the person who says, 'You're capable of doing even more than you think you can.' These interactions I had with the young men that were involved in St. Albans School's Risk Program [now renamed the Skip Grant Program] for the 23 years I was there are ones I cherish. I was always so impressed and inspired by their courage and resiliency. We built strength from each other."

—As told to Kristian Rhim, a journalism major and varsity track-and-field athlete at Springfield College

"Never pack a trunk piecemeal."



#1 Set everything you need to pack next to the car, and organize it by size. Make sure essentials are packed in smaller bags, so they'll be easy to access.



#2 Start with the largest bag. Push it to the way back of the trunk with the handle facing out. Follow large bags with the heaviest, medium-size bags.



#3 If there's a pass-through to the trunk, use it to check for free space in back corners. Fill spaces with small items, then finish with light bags on top.

“But really, you don’t need to get me anything.”

Oh, but you know we’re going to. And the gift wrapping will be perfection.



POCKET PLEASER

Cut out a pocket shape from denim-colored paper, affix it to card stock, stitch three edges with embroidery floss, then tape sides to the package. Add card. Wrap with leather cording.



MADE TO MEASURE

Wrap gift with measuring tape, and adhere. Cut four 14-inch lengths of measuring tape; fold ends into center, and hot-glue to create a rosette. Glue a stack of metal washers in the center.



PRIZE PAPA

Thread ribbon through the handles of a mini vintage trophy, and tape ribbon ends to back of package. Loop gift tag through trophy handle.



ALL DRESSED UP

Wrap gift with graph paper for a patterned-shirt effect. Cut collar from same paper and a “bow tie” from plaid paper. Add ribbon and small buttons.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER; STYLING BY ALISON ALLSOPP; CRAFTING BY CHARLYNE MATTOX.



EXTERIOR, FRANK FRANCES; MARTIN COOPER COURTESY OF THE PUNCTILIOUS MR. P'S PLACE CARD CO.; TAYLOR CLAMUS PLAY FORT COURTESY OF MAGNOLIA NETWORK.



“Make others feel at home.”

—Martin Cooper, fashion designer and cofounder of the Punctilious Mr. P's Place Card Co.

“I grew up living next to my grandparents. My grandmother was a fantastic hostess, and my job as a kid was to set the table. Now my family and I love to host at our home, B'ellow [at left], and my son, Pax [above], helps do the same. Even for casual gatherings, we like to make settings feel special by including place cards—my wife and I started a company making ones with unique designs [mrpsplacecards.com]. They're a gesture that lets guests know you're not only excited to host them, but that you took time to think through who they might enjoy talking with and how they might feel most at home during a visit.”

“If it doesn’t exist, invent it.”

—Taylor Calmus, host of Magnolia Network's Super Dad

“My favorite dad inventions are those that answer a need, like the car-ride simulator I made because my kids would only nap while we were out driving [see it at youtube.com/dudedad]. There's nothing better than hearing your kid brag to the neighbors about how you built something special for them. On my show, I help other dads build things like forts that'll make their kids' imaginations run wild, but simple projects can do that, too. An easy one to start with is a cardboard-box car. Cut out windows, pop out the bottom for their feet, add paint and tape, and in 20 minutes you've made something new they'll love.”



A play fort takes shape on Taylor's show, *Super Dad*.

“When in doubt, dance.”

by Mitchell S. Jackson



The writer in 1985, all dressed up and ready to dance

Maybe it all goes back to M.J.

Back in 1985, I, like countless others, was a fan of the moonwalking, crystal-gloved Michael Joseph Jackson. In fact, there’s a picture [above] of me headed to my very first grade-school dance with my Jheri curl juiced up (a strand pulled so it spiraled across my forehead) wearing off-brand shades, a *Thriller* replica jacket, and blue pleather pants—a youngin’ prepared to prove that I, like the Jackson Five once sang, was a “dancing machine.”

Twenty-five years later, I had a son of my own—my second born—a boy I hoped would inherit my incipient love and talent for boogying. But truth be told, those first few years I worried if he possessed any rhythm at all. At family gatherings, his mother and I would play music and goad him to dance, then share worried whispers that whatever beat we heard was not the one he felt.

High on the list of disappointments for a Black parent is admitting their child is rhythmless. Rhythm has been linked to the soul, so a child’s lack thereof is a serious concern among people known as the “soul folk.”

Then, around his seventh birthday, something miraculous happened: My boy started dancing. Dancing—on beat! The first time I saw it, I wondered whether it was a fluke, but within a year, there was no mistaking it: I had a soulful little dancer on my hands. As a proud father, I sang his praises and seized chances to show off his newfound rhythm.

Ergo: the family dance-offs.

The inaugural competition, a Christmas break affair, was supposed to include both my kids, but my daughter was adamant against competing. She did, however, offer to be our videographer and judge.

We agreed on three rounds of a minute and thirty seconds each. Off my children went to prepare, conspiring on song selections and choreography. Off I went alone to hunt my music library and pray I could conjure the MJ-esque moves of my child-tween-teenhood.

Let’s just say it wasn’t the most competitive contest. Picture a somewhat stiff, late-30-something-year-old up against a cute little boy who’d discovered he owned both a left and a right foot.

Yeah, my son won that first holiday dance-off. He won the second and third as well. In an effort to secure less biased judging, I asked family members to weigh in. When that failed, I posted the videos on my social media and courted votes.

The verdict: My son remains the undefeated (though father-disputed) dance champion of the Jacksons. In the years since his reign began, our dance-offs have become a cherished pastime, drawn us closer, and helped us to mark time, as well as personal and familial growth.

“You remember that dance-off when...” I’ll ask my kids. And the memory will coax smiles, dance always synonymous with joy.

—Mitchell S. Jackson is the author of *Survival Math: Notes on an All-American Family*.



“You’re never too old to learn something new.”

—Rob Kenney, YouTube star and author of *Dad, How Do I?*

“I started my YouTube channel, ‘Dad, How Do I?’, as a response to the questions my adult kids would often ask me. I thought the info could be helpful to other people who were navigating life and, like me, didn’t grow up with a dad to call with questions. I offer advice and how-tos on practical skills such as tying a tie or changing a tire. Take it from me, you can learn new things any time. I only joined YouTube a year ago and now have 3.24 million subscribers. My daughter still helps me with social media.”



“You’ll turn into your parent—and that’s okay.”

—Thomas Rhett, musician

“There was a phase when I was little where every photo seems to be of me in red cowboy boots with a guitar singing ‘90s country songs in the living room with my dad [musician Rhett Akins]. He used to pick me up from school blasting the Beatles and follow me around with a camcorder. Of course, I was embarrassed, but now I have three daughters, and I’m totally that guy. I wear house slippers—and occasionally a robe. I put my kids in a gigantic camping backpack to walk around the mall. Like my dad, I love sharing music with my girls. He and I wrote many of the songs on my new album, *Country Again: Side A*, together. He’s still my go-to collaborator.”

“A good ‘mallow is all about the ember.”



#1 Pick a hardwood stick that’s about two feet long and sturdy. Whittle the end to a point. Skewer your ‘mallow.



#2 Roast the marshmallow about six inches above hot embers from a fire that’s been burning for at least an hour. Turn the stick to cook all sides evenly.



#3 Even if you want a charred marshmallow, don’t stick it into the fire. Roast slowly to heat the inside first, then finish it off closer to the fire’s base.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MITCHELL S. JACKSON.

ROB KENNEY, ALLISON FANN: FAMILY PORTRAIT COURTESY OF THOMAS RHETT; ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOBIAS HALL.

"My dad reminded my brothers and me to stand up straight and walk with confidence, which has come in handy now that I get my picture taken more often. And always be prepared! So I keep tools in the car and never leave the house without a knife and handkerchief in my pocket."

—Ben Napier, host of *Home Town* and owner of *Scotsman Co. Woodshop*

"WD40, duct tape, and zip ties can fix just about anything."

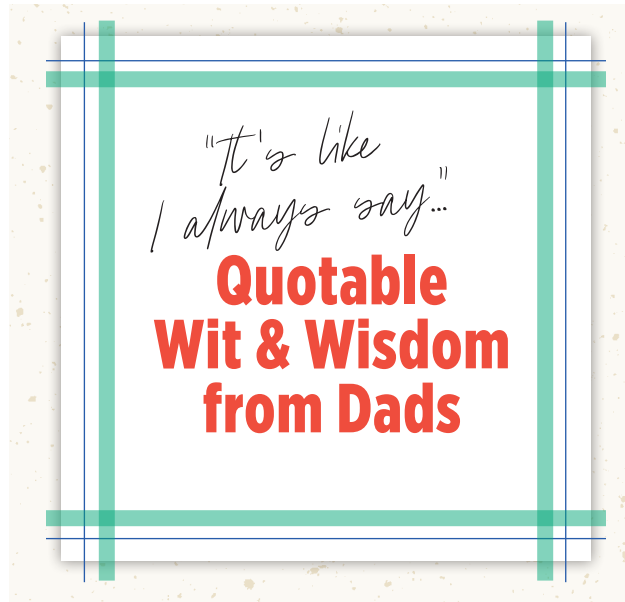
—Rob Kenney of *"Dad, How Do I?"* on YouTube

"When I was five years old, my father bought a small farm where we raised a menagerie of creatures. 'Learn how to treat animals well, and you will treat people well,' he'd say. Living with animals taught us kindness, respect, dignity, and made us aware of how precious little time we have here, so fill it with pats on the head and belly rubs."

—Dr. Tricia Earley, CL's resident veterinarian

"My dad always said, 'The world needs you to be your authentic self.'"

—Jose Galvan, @whitecottagefarm, co-author of *We Belong to Each Other*



TOTALLY GRATUITOUS DAD JOKE

Q.

What do you call someone who tells a dad joke who isn't a dad?

A.

A faux pa.

"My father always told me not to be afraid to fail, to make the effort, to try. He even had a key ring that said, 'No Guts, No Glory'."

—Michiel Perry, founder of *Black Southern Belle* and CL Contributor

"Embrace glitter. Crafting and creating with your kids is time well spent, and the more you do it, the more you'll get into it. Experiment. It doesn't have to work for it to be fun."

—Sergei Urban, creator of *TheDadLab*

TOTALLY GRATUITOUS DAD JOKE

Q.

What do you call a bett made of watches?

A.

A waist of time.

"Stay true to who you are and what's coming from the inside. The rest will follow."

—Holly Williams, musician and CL Contributor, on her dad's advice

"My dad taught me that, just like a house, the relationships in your life require care and attention if you want to make them last."

—Syd McGee, costar of *Dream Home Makeover*

"Travel with your kids, even if it's close to home. It will help them grow to understand that the world's diversity and wonders are things to celebrate."

—Rick Steves, guidebook author and travel TV host

"When decorating kids' rooms, pick furniture they can use long-term, so you won't have to update pieces every few years. It's better for the environment and your pocketbook."

—Vern Yip, interior designer and HGTV host

"A good flannel shirt is the Swiss Army knife of dad fashion because you can wear it lots of different ways, layered or not. Just be sure your flannel doesn't look brand new. It's like a clean pick-up truck. Something just doesn't seem right."

—Kiel James Patrick, fashion designer

"My dad always signed his emails with 'I have no advice to give you, just be yourself and take chances.'"

—Max Humphrey, interior designer

"'If that's what makes you happy' was my dad's way of saying I had his unconditional love and support. My dad took on my passions like they were his own, and it made all the difference."

—Elizabeth Finkelstein, founder of @cheapoldhouses and CL Contributor

TOTALLY GRATUITOUS DAD JOKE

Q.

What do you call a fake noodle?

A.

An impasta.

"When I called my dad to tell him he was a grandfather, he said, 'You're in for the most wonderful experience of your life. Also, it's going to go by in five minutes. I know because I just had this conversation with your grandfather five minutes ago.'"

—Will Leitch, author of *How Lucky*

"Procrastination is the opponent. If you think something is worthwhile, get after it while it's fresh in your mind. Use your time wisely, purposefully, and in a positive fashion."

—Skip Grant, coach and longtime athletic director at St. Albans School

"Trust your eye and your instinct, Dad would say. Don't try to talk yourself into something, be it value or importance. Your first instinct is usually the correct one. This applies to antiques appraisals and to life."

—Lucy Grogan Edwards, Grogan & Company and Antiques Roadshow appraiser

TOTALLY GRATUITOUS DAD JOKE

Q.

Why couldn't the bicycle stand up by itself?

A.

It was two tired.