

7 Tips for Taking Family Night to the Next Level



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Article

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Families come in every size and sort, but there's one thing they have in common: wanting the time they spend together to be joyful, meaningful and worth repeating. So no matter your notion of time well spent, here are seven tips for making your next family night memorable and fulfilling.

#1: Make Dinner Fast and Flavorful

Family nights work best when time together is prioritized and cleanup is minimized. Skip the elaborate prep and get to your shared experience as soon as possible with a meal that's simple, adaptable and delicious. [Ben's Original™ Ready Rice™](#) can be prepared in the microwave in as little as 90 seconds and comes in a variety of flavors, from [Whole Grain Brown Rice](#) to [Creamy Four Cheese](#), providing the perfect foundation for a wonderful meal you can make your own. Need inspiration? Check out our [family dinner guide](#).

#2 Get the Kids in the Kitchen

Great food makes great memories. The best culinary traditions start early, so clue your kids in on the secret family recipe. If the children are younger, they'll be eager to take on their

own special responsibilities. Include older, more experienced kids by inviting them to experiment with new takes on old favorites by incorporating unique ingredients.

#3: Invite the Extended Family

Why wait until the holidays? Turn a simple meal festive by inviting grandparents, cousins and in-laws to join you. And because the definition of “family” is what you make of it, bring along your besties and next-door neighbors, too. You’ll thank us after you watch the conversation blossom.

Call Up the Faraway Fam

Is distance keeping part of your family from joining the fun? With video chats now commonplace, consider scheduling a portion of the evening to say hello or sit in with those who are there in spirit, if not in person.

#4: Play a Cooperative Game

No need for a meltdown over your family’s favorite high-stakes board game; there are loads of games your family can play that incentivize whole-group effort. Time-honored classics like charades offer plenty of fun for young and old, while a slew of popular board games inspire cooperation in a race against time. What you get from all this teamwork is a mutual feeling of accomplishment rather than red-hot sibling rivalry.

#5: Pipe in Some Tunes

Nothing enlivens a night like great music, even if it’s just streaming your favorite playlist and letting the kids dance it out. Live music is one way to kick things up another notch. For the performers among you, family night may be just the opportunity they’ve been waiting for to show their stuff, so consider a fun, pressure-free talent show to shine the limelight on those who want it.

Family singalongs just not your speed? Embrace whatever special bond your family shares — whether it’s sports, cars, crafts or something truly unique — and enjoy it together.

Around the World for Dinnertime

For some serious synergy, you can use your family night as a chance for cultural exploration by cooking a meal from another place in the world, listening to the region’s traditional or popular music, and sharing some facts about the country and its people.

#6: Take It Outside

Fresh air does a family good. A back patio, pool deck or a simple picnic blanket in the park can be the venue for a perfectly relaxing and memorable evening. Moving your gathering outdoors provides a refreshing environment that encourages conversation and play for young and old. Plus, grilling out means less cleanup in the kitchen.

#7: Ask for Feedback

Wondering how things went? Be direct with your family. Ask what they liked most about the experience and encourage them to offer their ideas for meals and activities next time. Look for other signals as well; plates that are scraped clean before they make it to the sink are a good sign that your meal was a hit, and nothing shows satisfaction like a burst of laughter during a family game.

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