

# Father Knows Best: 5 Relationship Rules Dad Taught Us



By Ché Blackwood

Fathers have the ability to influence all aspects of their daughters' lives, including areas most wouldn't even imagine. According to numerous psychological studies, a father's temperament, sense of humor and even facial features are stored in his daughter's memory bank, becoming favorable traits in her search for a partner. While some of this happens automatically, most dads aren't exactly passive when it comes to doling out their wisdom, *especially* when it comes to dating. In honor of Father's Day, we've compiled the five best pieces of relationship advice ever given by dear ol' Dad:

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**1. Teach them how to treat you:** Every woman remembers the night she brought home her first boyfriend, and how terrified she was when Dad brought him into the next room for “a talk.” Sure, it mortified us then, but Dad was ensuring our dates knew his standards up front and that we were to be treated accordingly...or else. When you're on your own, it's still important to set ground rules at the beginning of every relationship. Being confident enough to strike out behavior you wouldn't normally accept without fear of scaring your new beau away is the key to creating the type of relationship you ultimately want.

**2. Love isn't a guessing game:** Dad was there on prom night, shocked by how beautiful we looked in our poufy pastel dresses. He was there at graduation with flowers and a look of pride on his face. And when we couldn't stop crying over our first breakup, Dad came armed with a box of tissues and an arsenal of hugs. We never had to wonder if he loved us or if he was interested in our lives because his behavior showed it. In the dating scene, you also shouldn't have to wonder whether your partner cares about you. Even if they're usually busy, it shouldn't be a stretch to expect our honey to accompany us to dinner parties or pencil in mid-afternoon phone calls just to say “hello.”

**3. Learn to spot red flags:** Whether forbidding us from hanging around with a bad crowd or scowling at our leather-clad boyfriends, Dad seemed to judge people based on his own invisible list of “Disqualifying Characteristics.” It frustrated us when we were 16, but his dedication to our well-being mattered. As an adult, be sure to make your own list of “Disqualifying Characteristics.” If you can't stand someone who drinks too often, has a short temper or simply refuses to clean up after dinner, it's important to keep a mental record of things that bother you. The more red flags your beau

exhibits, the less likely he's Mr. Right.

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**4. Make him come to the door:** One quick way to make Dad angry was for a young suitor to come to the house and honk the horn rather than come to the front door. If Dad got his way, your date was probably sitting in that driveway for a very long time. Dad was right: it's not old fashioned to want to be treated like a lady. If your potential sweetheart thinks it's okay to honk the horn on your first date, how is he going to treat you six months later? Dad never forgot that the little things make for a special relationship, and neither should you.

**5. A good father is priceless:** The greatest lesson Dad taught was the importance of fathers in children's lives. Whether he was at every recital or didn't make it to a single one, Dad's presence (or lack thereof) left a lasting impression. His choices, behavior and actions had major effects that still influence you today. There are few things as important as a Dad's relationship with his children, so keep that in mind when you're looking for a long term partner. If you wouldn't want your beau's behavior being repeated by your potential kids, maybe you need to rethink your status.

**What did you learn from Dad? Tell us below.**