

## Great Dating Ideas for Teenagers!



Let's say you have found a person you would really like to go out with, and you are ready to ask that person out on a date. You will immediately have the question, "What are we going to do on our date?" This question can be particularly tough on the first date because you are trying to make a good first impression and you may or may not know what your partner likes to do. On subsequent dates things tend to get easier. But there are few things more uncomfortable than the conversation that goes like this:

H: "Would you like to go out this weekend?"

S: "I would love to!"

H: "What would you like to do?"

S: "I don't know, what would you like to do?"

H: "I don't know..."

To avoid this little scene, it is helpful to have something in mind when you call!

The activity you pick for the date plays a big part in the date itself. A great activity that feels comfortable to both people can make for a great date. The activity also determines, for example, how much talking you will have to do. If you choose a movie you won't have to say anything once the movie starts. That can be a real relief if you find you are both tongue-tied. If you go out to dinner you will have to carry a conversation all night long. That can be tough sometimes, especially on the first date. You can also earn points for the creativity of your date - if you have a really great idea then your partner will be impressed by your ingenuity.

This page gives you a catalogue of over 50 dating ideas. Use them as a starting point - let these ideas trigger off other ideas in your own head. Focus on the ones that sound good to you and go from there.

## **The Big Three**

Every one knows about "The Big Three". These are the normal, safe dates that will cause no waves. They aren't very creative, but they are universally accepted:

? A Movie - Inviting someone to a movie is definitely safe. It is probably the #1 first date. You can go to a first-run film or a 99¢ movie. One good way to make it a little interesting is to let your date choose the film, or put a bunch of movie names in a hat and pick one at random when you get together. You might also check out the "Alternative" movie scene, especially if you live in a good-size city. Most cities have a small theater that plays foreign or limited-run films. Local museums may also have off-the-wall films. A museum in our area, for example, plays movies outside in the summer and people bring picnics and blankets to watch the films. They also have an animation festival every year that is lots of fun.

? A nice dinner - Another classic. As mentioned above, dinner out means that you are going to have to think of something to talk about for an hour or two. Sometimes that can be hard, especially on the first date. One way to lessen that problem is to go on a double date.

? A Dance or a game - High schools are always having dances and football games, so you can invite your date to one of these. It's a good, safe bet.

## Other Classic Dates

There are several other "classic" dates that you might consider. Most of these are more fun if you invite two or three other couples to go along with you:

- ? Bowling
- ? Roller skating
- ? Ice skating
- ? Miniature golf
- ? Amusement parks
- ? Water parks
- ? Concerts
- ? Getting ice cream together

## Athletic Dates

If you and your date are athletic and/or outdoorsy, an athletic date can be a great way to spend time together. Just be sure to make it a date, not a competition:

- ? Hiking and nature walks - Local city, state or national parks almost always have hiking and nature trails. Throw some drinks or a lunch in a backpack and have fun.
- ? Bike riding - Find a bike path or trail in your area and go for a ride.
- ? Roller blading - Go rent a pair of roller blades together and spend the day at it. If you have never roller bladed before, make sure the first date includes taking a class so you can learn how to stop!
- ? Tennis
- ? Horse back riding
- ? Skiing
- ? Water skiing
- ? Billiards - It's hard to say whether or not billiards is a sport, but they do show it on ESPN. It can be a relaxing and friendly way to spend time together.
- ? Exercising regularly - If you are both trying to exercise regularly, try getting together a couple of times a week for walking, riding, jogging, etc.

## Educational dates

? Museums - Most cities and towns have museums: art museums, history museums, nature museums, etc. If you and your partner like this sort of thing, a museum can be a great place to go on a date.

? Historical sites - Historical sites, like museums, can be interesting if you are into that sort of thing. You might be surprised by how many historical attractions there are once you start looking.

? The Zoo - If your city has a zoo, it can be a fun place to go.

? Factory tour - There are lots of factories that offer really interesting factory tours. For example, Ben and Jerry's ice cream offers a great factory tour if you happen to live in Vermont. If you live near Napa Valley in California, most wineries offer really interesting tours. Look in your area and see what you can find, or check out this [list of great factory tours](#).

? Take a one-day class together - If you can find a one-day class at a local community center or college on something like painting, photography, sailing or dancing, this can be a great date.

? Walking tours - Large cities usually have self-guided walking tours of the historical areas of the city. Even if you have lived in the city for 15 years, it is amazing what you will learn.

? Public gardens - If you like flowers and trees, a botanical garden, arboretum or a community garden can be a great place to visit, especially in the spring.

## Parties

One way to break the ice with a group of people is to have a small party with a theme at your house. Invite your date as one of the people at the party. As a teenager you will probably have to get your parents involved - if that is comfortable for you it can be fun for your parents too. Most of these ideas work well for parties with 6 to 10 people:

? Pizza Party - Buy some pre-made pizza crusts, pizza or spaghetti sauce, and toppings (sausage, pepperoni, cheese, mushrooms, etc.) Pair people up and let each person create half of a pizza with whatever toppings they like. Cook the pizzas and then share them among the group. You can then all go to an ice cream place for dessert.

? Pot luck dinner - The idea behind a pot luck dinner is that everyone brings something. As the host of a small party you would want to make the "main dish" and then have people bring other things like salads, side dishes, desserts, etc. *You want to be sure to tell everyone exactly what to bring.* If you don't then funny, strange things can happen.

? Progressive dinner - If you and your friends live close together, then a progressive dinner can be lots of fun. The idea is to go from house to house for each phase of the dinner. At one house you have appetizers, at another the salad, at another the main dish, and so on. You might stop at four to six houses for the full meal. Organizing it can be half the fun.

? Fondue party - Get a good fondue recipe and have a fondue dinner.

? Sundae party - Buy several different flavors of ice cream, some toppings (hot fudge, sprinkles, etc.) and let people make their own sundaes. You might use this idea as the dessert for some of the other parties described here.

? Cook out - Organize a cookout, either in your back yard or at a park. Cook hamburgers and hot dogs, serve chips and potato salad, and make ice cream for dessert if someone has a hand-cranked ice cream churn.

? Video party - Pick up a video or two and invite some people over. Serve snacks and beverages. Or combine a pizza party or a sundae party with a video party.

## **Charitable dates**

On a charitable date, you and your partner go volunteer to do something together. Here are some ideas:

? Habitat for humanity - Work one day building a house with habitat for humanity.

? Charity walks/runs/bike rides - lots of charities have charity walks or rides. You and your date can collect money together and then go on the walk together. Pick a cause you both believe in.

? Volunteer activities - The two of you might volunteer at a fund raising event, a blood drive, etc.

## **Other Ideas**

"Non-traditional" or "casual" dates can take some of the pressure off of going out. A casual date won't necessarily feel like a "real date", so it is more relaxed. When you ask someone to a movie, everyone knows it is a DATE. That can create pressure. But if you ask someone to go shopping with you it might be a lot more comfortable. If someone is unsure how they feel about you, then a casual date (especially if it occurs during the day rather than at night) is easier to accept. There will be a lot less tension.

? Day trips - Pick a place an hour or two away and make a day of it.

The place might be another city, a historic site, a mountain trail or a nice beach. Be *sure* you get home on time. My wife and I have made day trips to Washington DC, historic towns, beaches, etc. when we were dating. Planning the trip can be as much fun as the trip itself.

? Shopping together - Let's say you are looking for a gift for someone like your mother or father. Take your date along with you to the mall and look for the gift together.

? Picnic - Plan a picnic at a local park or natural area. Invite some friends along if you want a little less intimacy.

? Ball game - Get a group together and go to a professional baseball/football/hockey/basketball game. Eat lunch or dinner at the game. This can be a little expensive if you aren't careful, so plan ahead. Or try going to a minor league game rather than a big league game. Not only is it cheaper, but you can get a lot closer to the players and the field.

? Star gazing - Get a book on constellations (or invite a friend with a telescope) and watch the stars. This can be especially fun during a meteor shower.

? Do something neither of you have done before - find an activity neither of you have tried but that you have both thought would be interesting. Figuring out the thing to do that you have in common can be as much fun as the thing itself.

? Walk on the beach - If you live near the ocean or a large lake, taking a walk on the beach or the shoreline at sunset or in the moonlight can be very romantic. It can also be a lot more contemplative and peaceful.

? Visit a park. You can swing together or ride down the slide. If you go in the evening it will be less crowded.

? Cheer on a mutual friend - If the two of you have a mutual friend who is playing in a game or a concert at school, attend the performance together to cheer your friend on.

? Go to church together - If you are both religious, take your date to your church and then go to your date's church the next week.

? Go to a club event - If one of you is in a club, the other can tag along to see what it is like, make new friends and participate in club activities.

? Try something spontaneous - Pick a nearby town neither of you have been to before and go explore it to see what you find. Or put a bunch of restaurant names in a hat and pick one. Spontaneous dates are probably not good for the first date, but can be fun if you have been going out for awhile.

? Poetry reading, book reading - lots of time local authors will have poetry or book-reading sessions at local bookstores. If you like that sort of thing find one in your area.

? Boat ride - Lots of municipal lakes have boat rentals (canoes, paddle boats, fishing boats, sail boats). Take a picnic lunch, rent a boat and see where you end up.

? Take photographs together - Get a couple of disposable cameras and go some place to take pictures. Then once the pictures are developed compare how different they are!

? Look up special events in the paper - The Saturday or Sunday paper in your area will have a list of special events for the weekend. You can find some really interesting things to try that way.

? Have a dance - Usually you think of "going to the dance" at School, but what about having your own dance? Get a group of friends together, pick the music and dance.

? Get a guide book for your city - Go to the library or a bookstore and get a tour book for your city. You will be *amazed* at all the attractions that are hidden nearby. A guide book may also contain self-guided walking tours that are fun. Or get a guide book for a nearby city and make a day trip there.

? Berry picking - In the spring or summer go strawberry/blueberry/blackberry picking if available in your area. Apple picking in the fall is another option.

? Flea market - Go explore a local flea market one Saturday.