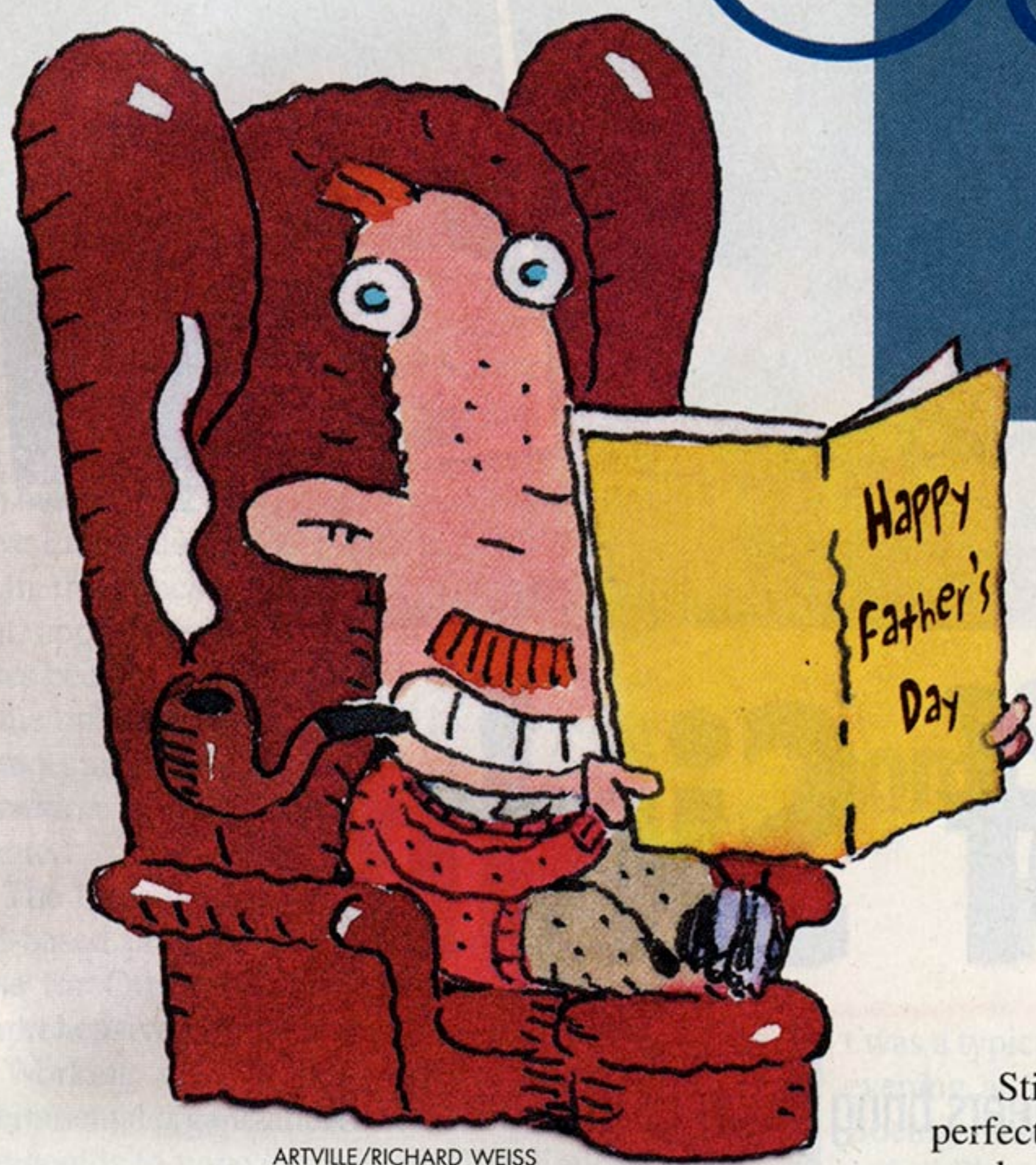


Ode to Dad



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We offer some great gift ideas to honor thy father on his special day

By Robyn Freedman Spizman

Still having trouble finding a Father's Day gift for dear old Dad? You're definitely not alone. Many people find that the hardest person to shop for is their father. A recent survey done by the International Mass Retail Association confirmed this fact and found that almost half of Father's Day consumers still have no idea what to buy Dad.

Some dads can be quite a challenge, but worry not! With a little help, you, too, can be a gift-giving pro and please Dad this coming Father's Day.

Finding the perfect present for Dad isn't as tough as it seems. The first rule of thumb is that, to give the perfect present, you must make a match. To please him, you'll have to do some super-sleuthing and a little detective work. Observe what colors he wears often. Is he a fashion plate or a more conservative dresser? Does he love fine wines, have an affinity for high-tech gadgets, or is he devoted to his tools and workshop? In other words, get the scoop on your dad's likes and dislikes.

Next, ask questions. Encourage your dad to start talking about things he might like for Father's Day. Don't ask him, "What do you want for Father's Day?" Instead, ask him, "Dad, would you rather have clothing, a new watch or a camera?" If he still insists that he doesn't want to you buy him anything, then try this: "Dad, what's the worst gift you've ever been given (not just the best)?" You're sure to get an earful about what he *doesn't* want.

Still stuck? Here's a list of perfect presents for dad. Add your heartfelt words of appreciation for all that he means to you and just watch the smile on his face.

Have yourself a do-it-yourself dad? Check out packaged sets of tools. From the latest electric or gas pressure washers to state-of-the-art gadgets, you'll definitely find some new gizmos to update Dad's workshop.

Love spending time with Dad? Tell him in a letter how you treasure the time you spend together. Combine your timely letter with a stylish Swiss Military watch or a Perry Ellis, Casio or Timex watch.

Have a travelin' dad? Wrap up a stainless steel commuter mug for the dad on the go. He's bound to appreciate this gift on board. You know Dad has to have his coffee, or else!

For the world's greatest dad: Give him a month's supply of his favorite candy and snacks. And tell him he's the sweetest dad on earth.

THE COSTCO CONNECTION

Costco features a variety of great Father's Day gifts from top manufacturers. Here's a quick suggestion list: Norelco electric razors, power tools, hand tools from Stanley and Leatherman, Homac tool chests, Jourdan attachés, fine watches from Swiss Military, Perry Ellis, Seiko and Timex, cameras, pressure washers, stainless-steel commuter mugs, humidors, wine accessory sets, the Links LS 99 computer golf game, brushed-cotton shorts, men's polo shirts and sunglasses.

For the photo buff: Tell Dad he's the picture-perfect father and give him a camera. There are a variety of models and accessories available, such as lenses, mini tripods and camera gadget bags. Combine the camera with a few notes that promise you'll cooperate while posing during all those family photos!

Have a high-tech dad? Check out computer software games, such as a golf game, for a fun gift that will keep him occupied for hours. You know how some boys still love toys. This gift is definitely for the dad who's young at heart!

Dress in style. Clothes are always a good bet, from printed piqué polo shirts to brushed-cotton shorts. Your dad will definitely appreciate a break from those ties you give him year after year. This year, give him something he can relax in.

Have a novel dad? Tell him he wrote the book on being the world's greatest father and give him a novel or real page-turner that he'll enjoy reading. Inscribe it with your words of appreciation and give him the day off to begin enjoying your novel gift!

These gifts should get you started on the road to finding the perfect present. With a little undercover work, you should be able to please even the most discriminating dad. But regardless of what you give your father, be sure to give him a great big hug on Father's Day and tell him how you love him. That's still the best gift of all! **☐**

Robyn Freedman Spizman, known as The Gift Guru, is a television consumer advocate and author of more than 64 books, including her most recent work, The Perfect Present: The Ultimate Gift Guide For Every Occasion, published by Crown Publishers, Random House 1998.