



## Take Me Out to the Ball Game

### Revisiting My Youth Sports Days

Baseball is as American as apple pie, and in many communities, playing the sport is a rite of passage. The second week of June is National Little League Baseball Week, and like many, I participated as a kid. I have fond memories of those days, and I loved looking forward to our games every Saturday morning.

Kids from all over our town played, and the coaches did an annual draft to pick their teams. We'd all go out on the field to hit and throw a few balls, and then the coaches would divide us up behind the scenes. I remember one year being thrilled to find out I would be on a team with Mike, who was the tallest and strongest player. No one enjoyed going up against him in batting practice, so knowing he would be on my side was a relief.

Local organizations all sponsored the teams, so your uniform would have the logo of the fire department or VFW on the back. The Little League field was next to the VFW, and I remember running in after games to buy a bag of chips and a soda for \$.25. The veterans always got a kick out of seeing us in the building — especially if we were their team!

Because of the draft-style selection process, you usually weren't on the same team as your friends, but you'd sometimes run into each other at practice or play against each other. Carpooling and competing with your buddies was always good fun. There were two side-by-side fields representing the minor and major leagues. I remember how we'd all look forward to moving up to the majors around fifth or sixth grade. It felt like a monumental step toward adulthood.

When it came time for high school, baseball took a back seat as I switched to soccer and tennis. I still remember my first soccer practice as a freshman, with the soccer players from every high school grade level. We did train runs — one of the most punishing conditioning exercises. The group starts by forming a line of side-by-side players and jogging around the field until the coach blows a whistle. Then, the two people at the back of the line have to sprint to the front of the group. It can go on for what feels like an eternity.

That first practice was ridiculously intimidating, and I couldn't believe this kind of effort was what it took to play soccer. Eventually, our practices were divided into our teams (varsity, junior varsity and

freshman) and things were more my speed once I settled in with the freshman team. But that first day was overwhelming — what an introduction!

All of the sports I played as a kid taught me teamwork — even tennis, where I played doubles. I still play once a week with some guys, though it has become less competitive and more social. That's another lesson sports taught me: the importance of lifelong relationships. Some of the guys I see at tennis have been playing against each other since at least the '70s.

Fortunately, my kids have also taken an interest in sports. With video games and iPads taking over childhood, it's a great way to get outside and away from technology. We have a makeshift baseball field outside, and we like to go out as a group and play after dinner.

My daughter is playing softball this summer, as she has for several years, and the two boys will be playing baseball for their second official season. (Unfortunately, there are no minor and major league fields.) My youngest son is still figuring out the game, but my 9-year-old is starting to pick up some of the finer aspects of the sport and get competitive. Win or lose, I'm glad my kids have embraced youth sports, and I know they'll take away many of the same great memories and lessons as I did.



- Andrew M. Ayers

# When It Rains, It Pours

## A Case Drenched in Disorder

Some people love the rain. After all, there's something magical about thunder rolling through the clouds as lightning illuminates a multitude of raindrops. Yet, if the storm is too strong — or even dangerous to be in — people might not enjoy it at all. And that certainly appears to have been the case in 1996 when an Israeli woman in Haifa, Israel, sued a television station because of their incorrect weather report.

The weather forecaster, Danny Rup, predicted that the day would be beautiful and sunny, but the weather had a mind of its own and ended up being rainy, dark, and gloomy. Because the woman relied upon the accuracy of the report, she left her home without a raincoat or an umbrella and got caught in the pouring rain.

As the old wives' tale goes, if you get caught in the rain, you'll catch a cold. Well, the woman claimed that after being exposed to inclement weather, she caught the flu and subsequently was out of work for four days, had to visit the doctor, and spent \$38 on medicine. Due to such a daunting experience, she also said that she suffered additional stress from the entire situation. The woman ended up taking Channel 2 news station to a small claims court where she sought financial compensation to cover her sickness and suffering — as well as an apology from the



forecaster who wrongly predicted the weather. The woman stated that weather forecasts are legally binding.

Many of us would see this as a frivolous lawsuit, but the TV station settled out of court and the woman received \$1,000 for her pain and suffering and an apology from Danny Rup.

Despite this case, most people take weather predictions from television and radio forecasters with a bit of skepticism thinking that forecasts are just a well-educated guess based on available resources — and it can change on a whim. It's just the nature of it!

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cases, a victim's stalker is someone they know or were once in an intimate relationship with. While it's always important to never engage with your stalker, you can take certain steps to protect your safety and well-being.

First and foremost, you must know the signs and tactics of stalking, which include:

- Receiving unwanted emails, phone calls, text messages, voicemails, social media direct messages, or instant messages
- Appearing uninvited at places such as the victim's home, school, or place of work
- Leaving strange or potentially threatening items for the victim to find
- Watching, following, or tracking a victim
- Sneaking into the victim's home or car and doing things to scare the victim or let them know the perpetrator had been there

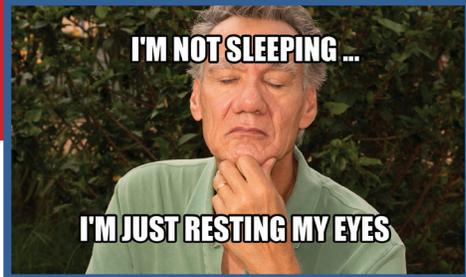


To keep yourself safe, what can be done? Of course, if you are ever in immediate danger or if someone has made a credible threat, you should call the police right away.

Be sure to carry a charged cellphone with you at all times for this reason. If someone is following you, seek out the nearest safe place to go, whether it be a police station, fire station, public place, or a friend's house. Always trust your instincts: If you feel like something is wrong, it likely is. If you feel like someone may be taking an unnatural interest in you, begin varying your routines and routes a bit. Be careful when posting on social media; don't give out information about where you live, work, or enjoy hanging out. Lastly, try to avoid going places alone. Exercise with a friend if you can and walk to your car with a coworker after work.

Stalking is a serious problem and many people assume that ignoring the behavior will take care of the issue. In most cases, that doesn't happen. When people stalk other people, they violate boundaries in order to make their victims feel unsafe. If you ever fall victim to stalking, it's paramount that you take the necessary steps to keep yourself safe as well as involve law enforcement.

# TAKE A *BREAK*



## SWEET AND SPICY BBQ CHICKEN SKEWERS

Summer is here, and you know what that means: It's time to break out the barbecue and meat skewers!

### Ingredients

For the Marinade

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp chili garlic sauce
- 2 tbsp rice vinegar
- 3 tbsp honey
- Juice of 1 lime

- 3/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp salt

For the Skewers

- 2 lbs chicken breast, cut into bite-size cubes
- 1 small pineapple, cut into 1-inch cubes

### Directions

1. In a bowl, whisk together marinade ingredients.
2. In a reusable freezer bag, combine cubed chicken and all but 1/4 cup of the marinade.
3. Seal bag and massage marinade into the chicken. Chill in the fridge overnight.
4. The following day, preheat the grill to 400 F. Thread chicken and pineapple onto skewers, adding two cubes of chicken for each cube of pineapple.
5. Grill the skewers for 3–4 minutes per side, brushing with the reserved marinade in the final minutes.
6. Serve over rice or with your favorite barbecue sides!

Inspired by [RecipeRunner.com](http://RecipeRunner.com)

# IT'S DAD'S DAY!

## 6 Gifts Dad Is Sure to Love

Dad is a very important person in your life! Every year when Father's Day rolls around, it can be tough to come up with the perfect gift, whether it be for your dad, a new father, your grandfather, or a father figure. Getting creative can be tricky, but this list is sure to help you with an idea or two for all different price ranges!

### Wallet

Why not go really classic and opt for a thoughtful and practical gift? Most men's wallets see a lot of wear and tear. After all, they're sat on, toted around in pockets all day long, and sometimes forgotten about and sent through the wash. A new one just may be in order!

### Massage Gun

Massage guns are rising in popularity. To help Dad recover from soreness and injury or just a tough workout, a massage gun will do the trick! The best part is that they range in price, and you can even purchase one on Amazon!

### Apple Watch Strap

Does the dad you're celebrating own an Apple Watch? If so, help him customize it with a new Apple Watch strap. You can choose from many materials, colors, and designs so he can blend in or stand out as much as he wants.

### A New Cooler

Men love their coolers — it's a foolproof Father's Day gift! Whether Dad loves to camp, fish, tailgate, go to the beach, or barbecue in the backyard, he's sure to appreciate a new way to store ice, drinks, food, or bait!

### Tool Bucket Organizer

Is your dad a bit of a handyman? Help him get organized and never lose track of his tools again. Tool bucket organizers come in many forms and, again, can be purchased right online, making your shopping easy!

### Bluetooth Headphones or Speakers

If your father doesn't have Bluetooth headphones or speakers yet, he's missing out. The opportunity to jam out wirelessly while working out, cutting the grass, doing hobby work, or just relaxing is effortless with this thoughtful gift.





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When many think of stalking, the common image is likely a stranger prowling around in the shadows of the night, showing up at random places uninvited, or spying on victims from afar. However, stalking can potentially involve so much more.

Stalking is menacing behavior that makes victims feel unsafe and can lead to some terrifying acts. Stalking is more common than you may think: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 1 in every 6 women and 1 in every 17 men have reported experiencing stalking at some point in their lives. For women, roughly 54% experienced it before the age of 25, and for men, 41%. Research conducted by the CDC revealed that stalking can damage its victims, leading to potential depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. It's reported that roughly 68% of female and 70% of male victims received threats of physical harm in connection with stalking at some point in their lives.

Stalking takes place when a person repeatedly harasses or threatens another person. In most

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