12 Things I've Learned From My Sons

As the father of four sons I've picked up a lot of life experiences and I understand much more about the journey to manhood than I did when I began. Here are a dozen things I learned in the process.

1. There are a million types of odors that can emit from their bedrooms, cars and duffle bags. One day with my guys could send a bloodhound into shock and awe.
2. Their competitive nature can spring forth in almost any sort of daily experience from car seat assignments, trampoline brawls, frog populations in their bedrooms, and superpowers they are convinced they have.



3. They have more words for gas than Eskimos have words for snow.
4. In a matter of one day during puberty they go from inappropriate nakedness at the drop of a hat to the sudden modesty of an Amish elder.
5. Unlike the girls, when it comes to the boys, clothes are no big deal. Just make sure the five year old doesn't get creative and wear his underwear over his pants.



6. Another note about apparel… Always, *always* check the pockets before washing. Pockets are usually the storage and filing compartments for all types of boy-stuff that can ruin the clothes or ruin washing machines or both.
7. Boys have no concept of time, when they are in "time-out" for five minutes, it is the equivalent of a presidential term. If it is a day at the amusement park, after 10 hours—"They just got there."



8. The boys, I have discovered, are far more gullible than the girls. They easily accept Big Foot sightings, zombie apocalypses, U.F.O.s, and the existence of organic Capt'n Crunch Berry.
9. For boys, unlimited soft serve ice cream is the closest they will come to a spiritual experience before the age of accountability. It's so unbelievable that their brains can't process the idea.
10. Emergency rooms are an unavoidable destination (and you'll be back. Again. And again.) They will go there and so will you, with stories and explanations that will seem impossible to you even though you, yourself, witnessed the feat of daring they attempted.
11. Unlike in the movies, animals *will* be harmed in the raising of this child. Boys don't intentionally harm or torture them. And the animals always survive. But there are just certain things boys want to try out. They learn that large dogs should not be ridden as horses and pillowcases don't work well as cat-parachutes when catapulted from the roof of the house.
12. In the end, boys do grow up and you'll have a lifetime of stories to tell. You'll also learn to love the

Sharpie™ Dinosaur drawings on your white leather couch.