



A Family Guide to Inauguration 2021

Inauguration Day is upon us. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will soon take their oaths of office. This year there is more attention on the event and more questions than ever. This guide is meant to give you some ideas and resources to use as a family.

When Is The Inauguration Ceremony?

The ceremony will be held on the West Lawn of the Capitol on Wednesday, Jan. 20 at 12 p.m. EST, preceded by opening remarks, which usually begin around 11 or 11:30 a.m. EST. At noon, the official ceremony begins with Vice President-elect Harris taking her oath, then President-elect Biden, followed by the inaugural address.

What Can I Expect?

One of the biggest differences between Biden's inauguration and those of the past is size: the usual 200,000 tickets have been limited to just over 1,000, one for each member of Congress and one guest. Some of the traditional pageantry will be seen, including a musical performance from Jennifer Lopez and Lady Gaga singing the National Anthem. Poet Amanda Gorman will read one of her works.

Following the ceremony, President Biden, Vice President Harris, and their spouses will also participate in a socially distanced military ceremony that represents the peaceful transfer of power from one administration to another and for the Commander in Chief to review the readiness of the troops. This is known as a Pass in Review.

In place of the traditional parade, virtual performances from across the country will be included and Biden will be escorted to the White House by representatives from every branch of the military.

How Can I Watch It?

Live coverage will be aired on most major networks.

I'm Watching With My Kids, What Should We Discuss?

There is no dearth of teachable moments that present themselves at a ceremony like this, particularly when we're more involved than ever before in the day-to-day education of our children. Obviously, a lot of specific discussions and activities will depend on your child's age (and what, exactly, you hope to convey). But don't worry: the internet exists to help you out (and so do various educational institutions and resources)! Here are a few ideas to get started:

What Is Inauguration Day, Anyway?

It's always good to start with the basics. One good source of information is the good old Farmer's Almanac, found at almanac.com. You might have each person talk about a quote on this site and why they choose it.

The Importance Of Taking An Oath

You may want to start with addressing what it means to “take an oath”, why is it important? You can then explore what promises you and your children have made, what that means in your family and in society as a whole.

The Inaugural Address

The inaugural address is about what the president wants for the country. Depending on your child's age, you can ask what they heard talked about and what they want for their country and community. What is important to them? You can keep this to a simple talking point, have younger children draw pictures of their vision of America and ask older children to outline what they would include in THEIR inaugural addresses.

The Inaugural Theme Is "America United"

Have a conversation about what this may mean and why it's important right now. Explore questions such as:

- What does it mean to be “united”
- Who are we currently united with?
- What are ways we can unite with others?

The Historic Nature Of Kamala Harris As Vice President

Once she is sworn in, Harris will be the first woman, Black person and Indian-American ever to serve as Vice President. How does that make your child feel? Why have there not been women or people of color in this position before? It's a hopeful jumping off point to talk about people who have been held back, and what it means to move forward.

Feelings & Observations In General

It's a good opportunity to talk to your kids about their thoughts and feelings? Sometimes they can be the best person to guide the conversation just based on what they notice. Ask questions and follow their lead and chances are you end up with a really great discussion.

- What do they think of the ceremony?
- What do they see?
- What do they hear?
- How does it make them feel?

The President Is Not The Only Person With The Power To Change The Country

Of course, any civic ceremony is a great opportunity to remind kids that no one is too small to make a difference in their community or country. What are ways they make their community better? What can they do moving forward? What are their hopes for the future and what are the things (even little things) they can do to make their world a better place.

If you'd like to explore more information, here is the link to the [Official Inauguration Website](#)