

## Prince for a Day

Prince Baltasar Carlos in Silver,  
painted in 1633 by Diego Velázquez



**This is a portrait of the son of Philip IV, King of Spain and his first queen, Isabel de Bourbon. The prince is depicted at around three years old but in some ways, he already looks very grown up.**

In his right hand the prince is holding a baton of office, which is a ceremonial stick used to show his importance. In his left hand, he's holding a real sword. He's even wearing a piece of armour. His clothes look quite grown up and are made of expensive cloth with real silver threads. In the 1600s, both young boys and girls would wear gowns with skirts. When boys became older they would begin to wear breeches, which were a type of short trouser. This change from wearing gowns to short trousers was called breeching.

Growing up in the Spanish royal family would have meant life was very different for Baltasar Carlos compared to other young boys at the time. He would have spent lots of time learning to read and write, as well as more unusual activities such as jousting and sword fighting. Tragically, Prince Baltasar Carlos died from a fever when he was only sixteen years old.

What do you think life would have been like for the young prince growing up? Put yourself in his shoes (or riding boots!) with our creative writing challenge.

### Prince for a Day Creative Writing Challenge.

Imagine you are the young Prince. What does a typical day look like? Perhaps your day is filled with riding and jousting in the Spanish sunshine or maybe you have to spend it posing for a portrait. Describe your day in the style of a diary entry to give it a princely, personal touch.

Whatever your story, share it with us.

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**The silver thread cloth and armour would have been heavy to wear.**



**This portrait depicts the prince when he was older. It was made by artists working with Diego Velázquez .**