

ACTIVITIES FOR SENIORS



ACTIVITIES

Children aren't the only ones who pipe up with "I'm bored. There's nothing to do." Our older family members often feel the same way. As we age, the things that interested us in our younger years either have long since been conquered or we are simply unable to do those things with the same aptitude. Sometimes our loved ones are simply too tired to come up with new activities that suit their current stage in life.



Did you know that creative activities can help people battling serious illnesses to decrease negativity and stress? Improving health is a great reason to suggest your loved one find hobbies and activities that might lift their spirits.

Activities you can suggest might include:



Reading or listening to audiobooks. It's a bonus for everyone if they can find a book club and interact with other readers either virtually or in-person. Ask them what their reading passions were as they grew up – fiction, non-fiction, biography, how-to, science fiction...



Cooking and baking. Get the grandchildren involved in a baking extravaganza to learn some of grandma or grandpa's favorite recipes. Make sure someone writes them down as we all know of the infamous "it's all in my head" comments from our favorite home chefs. A cookbook from grandma might be a great gift next year.



Birdwatching. This can be as passive as simply watching the birds or as active as taking a walk and documenting the birds. If this is of interest, bookmark the National Audubon Society as a reference.



Knitting, crocheting, and quilting. These are all fun activities if your loved one still has dexterity in their hands. It's also a perfect way for older adults on a limited budget to create gifts that will be cherished for years.



Gardening. There are many ways to adapt growing a garden to suit the mobility level of your older adult – from simply getting out in the existing garden, to building raised beds to eliminate the kneeling and stooping, to creating smaller window planters that can be tended inside or outside the home.



Playing an instrument. Whether or not they played an instrument in their youth, learning or improving on musical skills are great for the mind and soul. Consider that even the voice is an instrument if they would just like to sing along to their favorite songs. Set up a favorites list on a streaming app and let them belt it out.



Drawing, coloring, painting, and sculpture. If your loved one has a creative streak, encourage them to embrace one of these outlets. Help them acquire the necessary tools and set up a space in their home for them to easily work on their projects.



Recounting memories. Find ways in which your loved one can share their memories, either with you or with younger family members. Fun projects might be scrapbooks, photo albums, recipe books, or simply storytelling time that can be documented either in audio or video.



Playing games or doing puzzles. These can be done alone or with someone and in physical or virtual formats.



Television watching. While not a stimulating activity all on its own, it might be a great avenue to inspire your loved one into a new hobby. Encourage things like cooking shows, documentaries, travel channels, or DIY shows. Monitor that they are not falling into the trap of mindlessly watching whatever is in front of them.

Source: [Daily Caring](#) and [Seniors Matter](#)

Some ideas for activities outside of the home might include:



Museums



Senior centers



Theater or movies



Sporting events – even their grandkids' games



Restaurants



Walking clubs



Recreational classes



Volunteer opportunities

Source: [National Institute on Aging](https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/active-living)



Volunteer Opportunities

If your loved one has been active in their community, encourage them to explore volunteer opportunities in the following areas:



- Soup kitchens
- Animal shelters
- Church ministry
- Political advocacy
- Schools, libraries, museums, or hospitals
- Community gardening
- Neighborhood cleanup

Source: [National Institute on Aging](https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/active-living)

Benefits of Staying Active

Research shows that people with an active lifestyle:



- Are more disease resistant
- Have a longer and happier lifespan
- Are less depressed and more resilient
- Have an easier time coping with loss
- Maintain their ability to communicate and reason

Source: [National Institute on Aging](https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/active-living)