



keeping **active**

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Keeping active

If you can help the person who you care for find activities that they can enjoy you will improve their quality of life as well as your own. You will need to be imaginative and flexible in adapting activities to their changing capabilities.

One of the best places to find out what's going on in your area is your local library. Libraries are an excellent source of information about things such as social activities, events, education & courses, as well as leisure facilities.

Remember that many activities are cheaper for older people as cinemas, theatres, museums & transport services usually offer concessions. It is always a good idea to ask if there are discounts available, as they may not be offered automatically.

Why activities are important

- Activities can help people maintain their skills whilst giving them a sense of achievement.
- Activities can provide interest & fun as well as helping the person in your care feel better about themselves and be more alert and interested in what is going on around them.

Ideas on various activities

Education

There are many opportunities to carry on learning when you're retired. You could learn a language; learn to play a musical instrument or learn a new style of cooking. Now can be a good time to do something you have always wanted to do.

Be it academic, practical or just something new, classes can provide you with a stimulating activity whilst at the same time allowing you to engage with other people who share your interests.

Exercise

There is no doubt that exercise is good for your health and that it increases your well-being. Not only does it lower your blood pressure, reduce the effects of heart disease and help you lose weight, but it also helps with muscle and joint pain. In addition it can help prevent osteoporosis & improve your strength & balance, making you less likely to fall. Take a walk in the fresh air each day or as often as possible. Exercising to music is another good way of keeping fit and often helps to improve people's mood.

Sports such as tennis and badminton can be very invigorating, whilst yoga and pilates may suit you if you seek a more relaxing activity. If you prefer something more private, why not try an exercise video at home.

Music

Listening to music can remain a pleasure for a long time. You might record some favourite pieces for the person to listen to while you are not there. Popular songs from the person's younger days are often appreciated.

Out and about

A walk in the park with a cup of tea in a café, a visit to a garden centre or to a local museum, for example, can provide contact with other people as well as a change of scene and a focal point for conversation.

Hobbies & interests

- If you are interested in art, why not visit your local galleries or pick up some supplies so that you can "dabble" at home.
- Gardening can provide hours of leisure entertainment whilst also providing an eye pleasing home environment. Visit your local garden centre for advice and some basic materials.
- Jigsaws & board games can keep your mind active and you may enjoy the social activity of having some friends around for a regular games day!
- Sewing, knitting and crocheting are useful skills to have, whilst providing enjoyment at the same time. Whether you already possess such skills, or are just starting out, you may find that many a day may be passed whilst enjoying creating various items.
- Many books & publications are available on tape or CD from your local library and these are great for people with visual problems, reading difficulties, etc.
- Many people respond well to pets, particularly if they had a pet earlier in their lives. Animals provide companionship, loyalty and love and caring for a pet can be a happy and rewarding experience.
- Scrapbooking can provide such joy, whilst also allowing you to recreate special memories and share them with your loved ones.