

# Fun Visits for Everyone: 7 Fun Activities for the Blind Elderly



Sharing activities with a loved one who is blind helps you bond and keeps your favorite senior active and social. Blindness can make planning those activities a little more challenging since many activities involve vision. But there are many activities for the blind elderly that can provide entertainment and engagement.

Legal blindness encompasses vision that's 20/200 or worse. It's estimated that 1.1 million Americans qualify as legally blind.

Whether your senior is legally blind or has severely diminished eyesight, adapting activities to accommodate the vision issues makes your time together more enjoyable.

Many of a senior's favorite activities are still possible even without vision.

They may require a little adaptation and some help from you, but that can make the experience more memorable and improve your bond.

Try these activities on your next visit.

## 1. Listen to Audiobooks

Seniors who lose their vision later in life may not learn Braille like someone who became blind earlier in life.

That can make reading impossible.

Bring audiobooks to listen to together so your senior can still enjoy a good story.

Another option is to bring hardcopy books and read to the person. This can be a positive bonding experience because the person gets to hear your voice.

If you choose a longer book, you can listen to it in sections each time you visit. This option works best if you visit frequently so everyone remembers what the story is about.

## 2. Try Pet Therapy

You don't need to see a cat or dog to enjoy the happiness they cause.

Feeling an animal wiggling in your lap and touching its fur can be just as rewarding.

Pet therapy benefits include improvements in mood, improved behavior in people with dementia, and a calmer feeling.

Petting a cat can be very soothing. It's a tactile experience, making it ideal for a senior with vision problems. Pets can also be playful, which adds a fun, lighthearted feel to the visit.

Some senior care facilities have resident pets or offer pet therapy. Check with the facility where your senior loved one lives to see if it's an option.

Another option is bringing your pet to visit.

Make sure the facility allows outside pets before planning this option. You might also take an excursion away from the nursing home to a local pet store or animal shelter to visit the pets.

## 3. Play Adaptive Games

Many board games require vision to play independently, but some options work even for people who are blind.

Other games have adaptive versions that are modified for different disabilities.

Seniors who are blind or have low vision can feel the dots on dominoes. Opt for larger dominoes to make them easier to feel and manipulate. You can play different versions of games with dominoes to keep your senior entertained.

If the senior you're visiting has some vision, choose larger versions of games.

You can get oversized playing cards that might be easier for the senior to distinguish. Jigsaw puzzles with oversized pieces may also work.

## 4. Enjoy Music

Music requires no visual ability, which makes it a perfect way to enjoy time with a visually impaired elderly person.

Music may also help ease the symptoms of Alzheimer's if that's a concern for your loved one.

Choose a selection of favorite songs of yours and theirs. If you're visiting a parent or other relative, you might play songs from your childhood that bring back family memories.

Have more fun with it by dancing to the music. If the senior you're visiting uses a wheelchair, move the wheelchair to the beat of the music. Encourage as much movement as possible from the chair to help them connect with the music.

Another option is to plan your visit around live music or other entertainment at the senior home.

Facilities often schedule musician performances for resident entertainment. Attend the concert together for a fun bonding experience.

If you're in a band or know someone who is, consider volunteering your time to play at the nursing home.

Seniors enjoy visiting with kids so another option is organizing a youth group or choir to perform for the residents.

## 5. Get Into Nature

Head outdoors so your sight-impaired senior can feel the breeze and sunshine.

You normally think of looking at the beauty of nature, but you can also feel and hear it. Take a walk near a creek or water feature to hear nature.

If the nursing home has a garden area for residents, enjoy some time together tending the garden.

Seniors who are blind might enjoy the feeling of the soil in their hands. Smelling flowers and feeling the leaves on the plants are sensory experiences that some seniors may enjoy.

## 6. Enjoy Crafts

Crafts are considered visual arts, but anyone can create artistic pieces.

Working with clay offers a sensory experience that can feel therapeutic.

Create simple pinch pots or clay sculptures together. Another simple project is rolling clay into a snake-like piece and cutting it into slices to make homemade clay beads.

Painting, either with brushes or fingers, can be an enjoyable craft project for blind seniors. It can help improve fine motor skills as well as being a fun activity.

## 7. Cook Together

If you have access to a kitchen, cook or bake together.

You can read the recipe to the visually impaired senior and help gather the ingredients. You may need to provide verbal assistance or help guide the senior's hands for parts of the recipe.

If you can't cook a recipe at the nursing home, consider projects such as decorating cookies.

Bring the cookies already baked along with the ingredients to decorate them.

Cooking can help spark memories if you're visiting a family member. You might cook a favorite family recipe together. If you always decorated cookies together at the holidays, you can recreate that memory at the nursing home.

## Enjoy These Activities for the Blind Elderly

Losing vision doesn't mean seniors have to lose their enjoyment for life.

Activities for the blind elderly can fit many different categories and match the interests of the senior. Simple adaptations and a little help from you make most activities possible for elderly people with low or no vision.

If your sight-impaired senior isn't quite ready for a nursing home, consider our home care services.

Our friendly caregivers can help with everyday activities and provide companionship for your loved one. Contact Families Choice Home Care today to learn more about how we can help you and your loved one.



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