

A piece of the puzzle

Information for older adults
and their families and friends



*helping you solve your puzzle
so all the pieces fall into place*

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Gift ideas for people with dementia

For people in the earlier stages of dementia: they may be aware of their problems. Choose gifts that will support their independence and engagement in meaningful activities.

- Tickets to a concert, musical or sporting event
- A fruit basket or healthy snacks
- Photo albums or a collage of old family photos

For people in the middle stages: they need more assistance and have a shorter attention span. Consider gifts that focus on organization and familiar themes.

- Gifts that involve sorting or arranging, puzzles
- Picture books of celebrities, historical places, nature
- Taped religious services and music from services

For people in the later stages: they can't handle complicated things, so choose gifts that keep in mind that comprehension and understanding is poor.

- Memory books or boxes with old photos and mementos
- Visits from well-behaved animals
- Lap robes, shawls and warm footwear
- Stuffed animals, dolls, or pillows for comfort
- Hand and body lotion along with a massage

Other gift ideas for people at all stages of dementia:

- Music: research shows it improves mood and soothes agitation in people with dementia. Get a few CDs or load a playlist of old-time music on an iPod for them.
- Stage-appropriate toys: protect their dignity with items specifically designed for people with dementia, such as poker chips to sort by color, or larger-piece puzzles.
- Comfortable clothing: declining dexterity and coordination make getting dressed more difficult. A stylish jogging suit is easy to get on and off, and looks and feels good.
- Bird feeder or bird bath: studies show that watching birds can be calming for a person with dementia.