



Whispers from the Willows **NEWSLETTER**

Welcome to our newsletter for December.

We hope that you enjoyed our previous newsletters.

We will continue to bring you as much news, important facts and fun things in our upcoming newsletters and continue here with our December issue.

Hope that you our residents and your family on the outside as well as our staff here at The Willows Private Nursing Home enjoy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

To provide optimum health care and rehabilitation in an environment which respects the rights, dignity and feelings of the residents.

Our health care is given with compassion, care, love and encouragement with every consideration for privacy, comfort and the independence of our residents.

Hello December

A decorative illustration of holly leaves and three red berries, positioned below the word 'December'.

From the Admin Desk



Hi Everyone,

Another year is ending, thank you all for all your patience and support as we have dealt with Covid and Gastro outbreaks and staff changes. Unfortunately, we are once again facing the threat of Covid which is expected to peak at the beginning of December. We have included a letter from the Chief Clinical Advisor regarding keeping the residents safe. Please don't visit if you are feeling sick, proof of negative RAT on entry and masks are mandatory.

Wishing you and your families a Very Merry Christmas. I hope to see you at our Christmas Party.

Maryann Inbari - Operations Manager

From the Lifestyle Desk



Hello everyone!

Welcome to our December and final edition of our newsletter for 2022! How quickly time flies! We look forward to a busy month ahead in December. We have our Annual Resident Lunch Christmas Party on Tuesday December 13th. We look forward to celebrating with you all. We are having a PHOTO BOOTH at second floor lounge room and all are welcome to join anytime.

Please continue to check our notice boards for new and exciting activities.

Cheers,

David and Tess





FALL PREVENTION



Simple tips to prevent falls

Falls put you at risk of serious injury. Prevent falls with these simple fall prevention measures, from reviewing your medications to hazard-proofing your home.

Fall prevention is an important topic to consider as you get older. Physical changes and health conditions – and sometimes the medications used to treat those conditions – make falls more likely as you age. In fact, falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults. Still, fear of falling doesn't need to rule your life. Instead, consider six simple fall prevention strategies.

1. Make an appointment with your health care provider

A good start by making an appointment with your health care provider. To assess your risk and discuss fall prevention strategies, your doctor may want to talk about the following:

- **Your medications.** Make a list of your prescription and non-prescription medications and supplements to the appointment. Your doctor can review your medications for side effects and interactions that may increase your risk of falling. To help with fall prevention, your doctor may consider weaning you off medications that make you tired or affect your thinking, such as sedatives, antihistamines and some types of antidepressants.
- **Any previous falls.** Write down the details, including when, where and how you fell. Be prepared to discuss instances when you almost fell but were caught by someone or managed to grab hold of something just in time. Details such as these may help your doctor identify specific fall prevention strategies.
- **Your health conditions.** Certain eye and ear disorders may increase your risk of falls. Be prepared to discuss your health conditions and how comfortable you are when you walk – for example, do you feel any dizziness, joint pain, shortness of breath, or numbness in your feet and legs when you walk? Your health care provider may evaluate your muscle strength, balance and walking style (gait) as well.

2. Keep moving

Physical activity can go a long way toward fall prevention. With your doctor's OK, consider activities such as walking, water workouts or tai chi. These activities reduce the risk of falls by improving strength, balance, co-ordination and flexibility.

If you avoid physical activity because you're afraid it will make a fall more likely, tell your health care provider. Your provider may recommend carefully monitored exercise programs or refer you to a physiotherapist. They can create a custom exercise program aimed at improving your balance, flexibility and muscle strength.

3. Wear sensible shoes

Consider changing your footwear as part of your fall prevention plan. High heels, floppy slippers and shoes with slick soles can make you slip, stumble and fall.

So can walking in your stocking feet. Instead, wear properly fitting, sturdy, flat shoes with non-skid soles. Sensible shoes may also reduce joint pain.



4. Remove home hazards

Take a look around your home for potential fall hazards. To make your home safer:

- Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical cords and phone cords from walkways.
- Move coffee tables, magazine racks and plant stands from high-traffic areas.
- Secure loose rugs with double-faced tape or a slip-resistant backing – or remove loose rugs from your home.
- Repair loose, wooden floorboards and carpeting right away.
- Store clothing, dishes, food and other necessities within easy reach.
- Immediately clean spilled liquids, grease or food.
- Use nonslip mats in your bathtub or shower. Use a bath chair, which allows you to sit while showering.

5. Light up your living space

Keep your home brightly lit to avoid tripping on objects that are hard to see. Also:

- Place night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
- Place a lamp within reach of your bed in case you need to get up during of the night.
- Make clear paths to light switches that aren't near room entrances.

Consider trading traditional switches for glow-in-the-dark or illuminated switches.

- Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
- Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

6. Use assistive devices

Your doctor might recommend using a cane or walker to keep you steady.

Other assistive devices can help, too. For example:

- Handrails for both sides of stairways
- Non-slip treads for bare-wood steps
- A raised toilet seat or one with armrests
- Grab bars for the shower or tub
- A sturdy plastic seat for the shower or tub – plus a hand-held shower nozzle for bathing while sitting down

If necessary, ask your doctor for a referral to an occupational therapist.

An occupational therapist can help you brainstorm other fall prevention strategies.

Some solutions are easily installed and relatively inexpensive. Others may require professional help or a larger investment. If you're concerned about the cost, remember that an investment in fall prevention is an investment in your independence.

**Please see disclaimer on the last page of this newsletter.*

CYBER SECURITY

STAY SAFE ONLINE



8 Habits to Stay Cyber-Safe

As we grow more dependent upon technology, we need to develop better online security defences.

These eight habits will help you to recognise and counter threats to your digital safety and become less vulnerable to cyberattacks.

1. Think twice before clicking on links or opening attachments.

Even if an email looks like it's from someone you know, take care with attachments. Take that extra second to avoid walking into a digitally dangerous situation. Don't reply to the email because the sender's identity might have been compromised.

2. Verify requests for private information.

Whenever you are requested to provide private information (yours or anyone else's), verify the identity of the requester – even if it appears to be somebody you know. Con artists are clever in how they collect information to steal information and identities. Even if you think you're safe, regularly check your financial statements and credit reports.



3. Protect your passwords.

Never reveal your passwords to anyone.

Make them long, strong, unique and use multi-factor authentication (MFA) wherever possible.

- Use a password manager such as LastPass or RoboForm.
- Use different passwords for different accounts.
- Use different passwords for work and home.
- Don't let apps and websites remember your passwords.



4. Protect your stuff!

Keep a close eye on your belongings when you're in public places.

Lock things up or take them with you before you leave, even if you'll only be away for a second. When you're at work, secure your area and lock your computer screen before leaving your desk. Take your phone and other portable items with you.



5. Keep your devices, browsers, and apps up to date.

At home, automate software updates and periodically restart your devices to ensure that updates are fully installed.



6. Back up critical files.

Store backups in a physically separate location from the originals and periodically test them. For critical work files, use storage options that are approved. For personal files, save a backup on a separate drive (e.g., cloud or encrypted USB) to securely store it.



7. Delete sensitive information when it's no longer needed.

Removing unnecessary information and encrypting confidential data stored on your computer can help prevent an attacker or thief from stealing your identity and compromising your data.



8. If it's suspicious, report it!

Learn how to recognise suspected scams and other suspicious activities.



health &



wellness

LET'S TALK MENTAL HEALTH

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY

You're likely to be in a period where the amount of worry you experience is going to be higher. Anticipate this and be ready to find out how well you can tolerate this level of worry



1 Speak to friends or family and ask how they cope with uncertainty. Could you learn anything from them?



2 Think back to past experiences where you have coped well with uncertainty and and pick out what really helped you feel better back then



3 Take each day one step at a time. Focus on the present moment. A routine can help give you some structure



4 In times like this, increase your focus on self care and kindness. Take time to slow down, to breathe, to connect and to relax



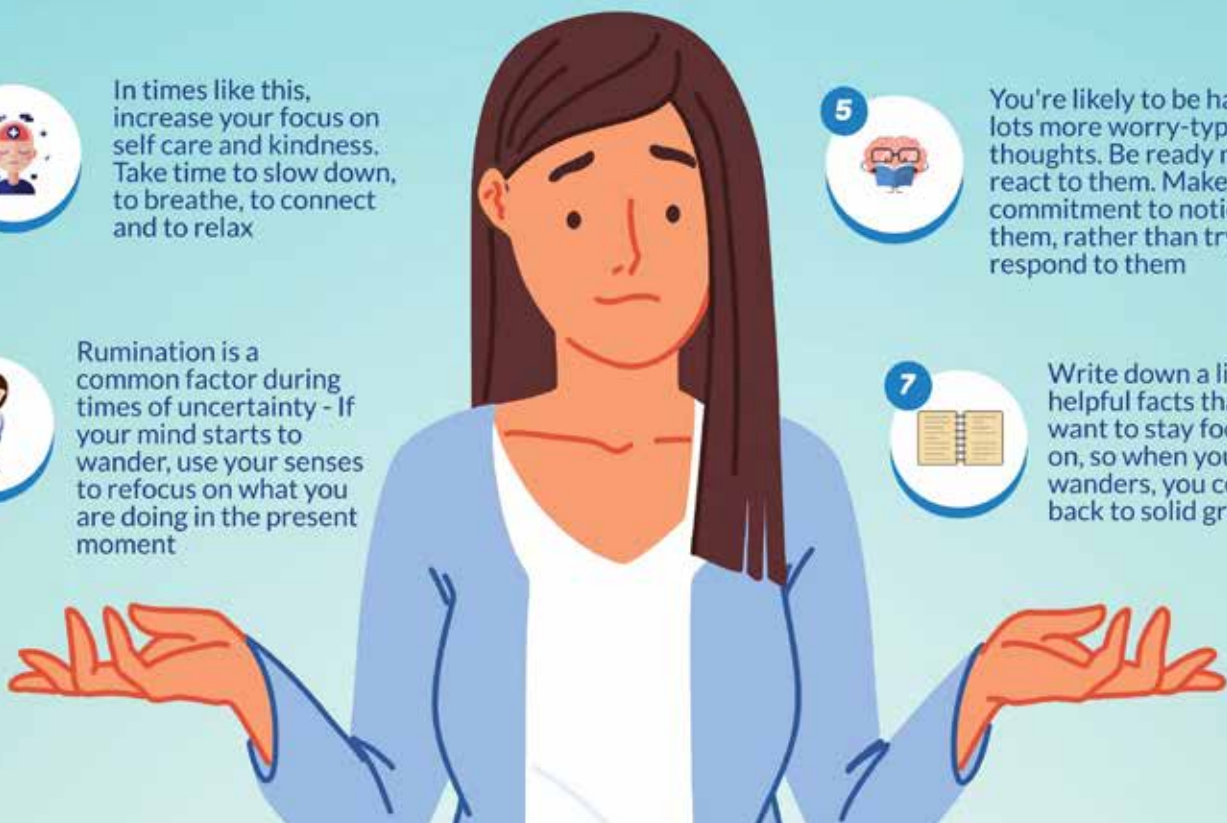
5 You're likely to be having lots more worry-type thoughts. Be ready not to react to them. Make a commitment to noticing them, rather than trying to respond to them



6 Rumination is a common factor during times of uncertainty - If your mind starts to wander, use your senses to refocus on what you are doing in the present moment



7 Write down a list of helpful facts that you want to stay focused on, so when your mind wanders, you come back to solid ground





The Willows

PRIVATE NURSING HOME

Tip of the Month

Rent out your unused space

If you have a spare room in the house, why not rent it out for a little extra cash? Alternatively, you could try renting out your garage space if you no longer use your car and you live in a central location or near a train station.

Watch this space in every issue for a Tip of the Month



Dear aged care resident and family members

I am writing to update you on the steps that your aged care provider is expected to take to keep you and other residents as safe as possible at this stage of the pandemic.

While we would all like to think that COVID-19 is no longer a threat, unfortunately that's not the case. It is true – and reassuring - that the risks to our health posed by this highly infectious virus are far more manageable now than they were two years ago. However, the risks have not been reduced to zero and experts predict more COVID-19 waves over coming months and even years as new variants of the virus spread through local communities. For that reason, we must be careful to maintain COVID vigilance and not to fall back into pre-COVID-19 habits.

We must also recognise that beyond COVID-19 there are other infectious diseases that can affect aged care residents, family members and staff. Managing COVID-19 effectively puts providers in a good position to also better manage other infectious diseases.

I have written to aged care providers this week to ensure that they continue to focus on six key areas of COVID-19 prevention and response (below) to ensure your ongoing protection:

 1 Maintain and audit infection prevention and control practices	 2 Monitor and ensure timely schedule of booster vaccinations	 3 Be attentive to screening/monitoring visitors and staff
 4 Monitor residents' clinical symptoms/status	 5 Ensure access to your GPs for antiviral prescriptions	 6 Check local pharmacy has sufficient antiviral supply

You can expect that your aged care provider has these processes in place. You can also expect that any decisions made about infection control are communicated to you in a clear and timely manner.

Residents and family members have a right to understand what actions their aged care facility management and staff are taking to manage and reduce infection risks. There are also a number of steps that you can take to assist in this regard, helping to protect the health and safety of all aged care residents, staff and visitors.

If you are a family member planning to visit a loved one in care, it would be sensible to take precautions in the days leading up to the visit to reduce your risk of contracting the virus and carrying it into the service (where a rapid antigen test (RAT) may not pick it up on entry screening).

Pay attention to any signs or symptoms of illness. If you feel unwell, regardless of whether you have returned a positive COVID-19 test result, you should avoid interacting with others where possible. A negative RAT result is not proof that you don't have COVID-19, and COVID-19 is not the only infectious disease that can spread within aged care settings.

Keeping up to date with your vaccinations is another way to lower the risk to yourself and those around you. This includes COVID-19 boosters, as well as vaccinations for other infectious diseases that pose a risk to yourself and vulnerable members of the community.

At various stages of the pandemic, restrictions have been placed on visits to residential aged care via state and territory public health directions. All jurisdictions have now relaxed restrictions on access, however additional requirements (such as mask wearing) still apply in most places. If your aged care provider introduces special COVID-19 arrangements that you don't understand or don't support, then you should feel free to talk to the provider about this. They should have processes in place to ensure that any restrictions within the service do not impact on the wellbeing of residents and their families.

To understand more about your rights and responsibilities we encourage you to review the [Industry Code for Visiting Residential Aged Care Homes](#). The Commission has also produced a series of [Partnerships in care resources](#) to support aged care residents and their family or close friends to continue their relationships of care and companionship, even during periods of an infectious disease outbreak.

I hope the above information is useful. Thank you for your ongoing efforts to help manage and mitigate COVID-19 risks for people in residential care. Ensuring that aged care consumers are safe, protected from harm, and enjoy a good quality of life is a set of goals that we all share and take very seriously.

Yours sincerely



Dr Melanie Wroth MB BS, FRACP
Chief Clinical Advisor
25 November 2022

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart



By the time he was 5 years old, Mozart had complete mastery of keyboards and violin and had written his first five compositions. At 6, he toured Europe as a child prodigy; by 16, he'd already written three operas and 25 symphonies. Way to make us feel self-conscious, Mozart!

Christmas
ISN'T A
SEASON. IT'S A
FEELING

DO YOU REMEMBER?

THE VINTAGE DIAL PHONE

The vintage dial phone was once the be all and end all of the telephone with a patent filed in 1891.



Like the mobile phone of today, everybody had one, and they ruled domestic communications for decades. But that all changed in the 1980s when they were superseded by a new upstart, push-button telephones. Their days were numbered (pun intended). Many born after the 1990s have likely never seen one, which is a shame. But for those who do remember, try to explain to our younger generation how this wonderful technology worked.



THE DANGERS OF OVERFILLING YOUR PETROL TANK

You get a few more kilometres by topping off your gas tank, but it's not worth the risk. The temptation to keep clicking the petrol station pump is strong, but it's probably not worth it. The potential damage to your car, your shoes and the environment are significant.

Here's why "topping off" is probably best avoided:

1.You might damage your car:

The majority of cars have a closed circuit system to trap and later burn the fumes from their petrol tanks. A complex array of charcoal canisters, tubes, valves and sensors comprise a system designed to handle petrol vapours only, not liquid fuel. Jamming too much fuel into it repeatedly can result in a **Check Engine** state that will keep your car from passing an emissions test and could cost hundreds of dollars or more to repair.

2.You'll waste money:

When you force-fill, excess either flows out into a little drain below your fuel filler neck and onto your shoes, or it flows back into the gas pump in which case you're paying the petrol station to take some of its own petrol back.

3.You release emissions:

Overfilling can defeat the vapour recovery nozzles found on many pumps. It's not a huge release of fumes, but why do it? After all, you'll breathe it first: You're the one standing right there.

Dear
SANTA CLAUS

Kind Regards.





From the FOOD Studio

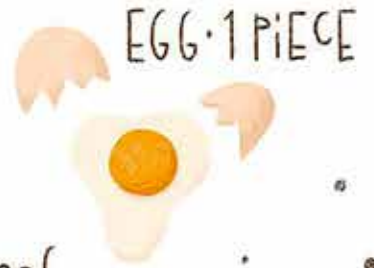


GINGERBREAD COOKIES

CLOVE · 0.5 TSP
CINNAMON · 1 TSP
BAKING SODA · 1.5 TSP
GINGER · 2 TSP
CARDAMOM · 1 TSP



WHEAT FLOUR · 200G



EGG · 1 PIECE

BUTTER · 100G



SUGAR · 100G

MIX IT



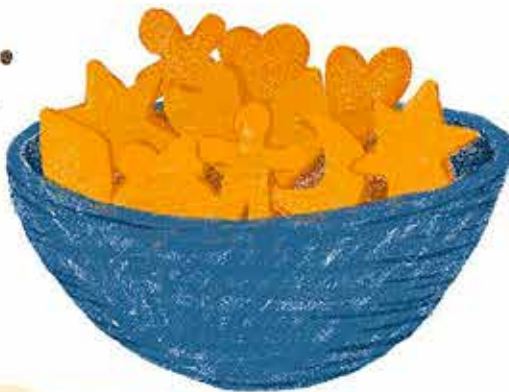
WHISK IT



KNEAD the DOUGH
WRAP IT IN PLASTIC
PLACE IN the FRIDGE
FOR 2 HOURS



ROLL OUT the DOUGH
AS THIN AS POSSIBLE
CUT OUT COOKIES



BAKE IN the OVEN*
FOR 5-10 MIN AT 180°C
OR UNTIL GOLDEN BROWN



*USE PARCHMENT PAPER



NEVER
give up
NEVER

WHAT'S ON?

DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS PARTY

12.00pm Tuesday 13th

Best Dress • Best Hat • Best Make Up

ITALIAN GROUP

2.00pm Pizza Making, Wednesday 7th

GARDENING GROUP

2.00pm Sunday 27th

NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

2.00pm Sunday 30th

ART GROUP THERAPY

2.00pm Sunday 4th, 11th & 18th

MENS CLUB

2.00pm Friday 23rd

LADIES GROUP

2.00pm Friday 2nd

ICE CREAM DAY

2.00pm Thursday 8th and 22nd

SPIRITUAL SERVICES

Every Sunday 11.00am

VIDEO TV and LAPTOP

Catholic Mass, Italian, Arabic, Greek,
Orthodox, Tamil and Croatian Mass

BUS OUTING

9am Wednesday 9th & Friday 23rd

HAPPY HOUR

2.00pm Friday 9th & 30th

BUS OUTING

9.00am Wednesday 14th & Friday 16th

* Subject to change.





What Is Equine Therapy and Equine-Assisted Therapy?

Spending time with animals is beneficial. Pets are good for physical and mental health, thanks to their unconditional love and the stress-reducing effects of being around them. Most people think of dogs and cats as animals that help people. Horses can also be valuable partners in some kinds of therapy.

Equine-assisted therapies are programs where professionals guide clients through activities with horses. There are different kinds of equine programs, and they have different goals for the people involved. Some programs are part of mental health treatment. In other cases, clients ride horses as part of a physical or occupational therapy regimen.

Equine-Assisted Therapy for Mental Health

A horse barn doesn't seem like the typical location for intensive mental health work. Still, some people find that equine-assisted therapy is beneficial. Typically, equine-assisted therapy is a team effort where a mental health professional works with a horse specialist. Clients who participate in equine-assisted therapy are usually seeking help for emotional or behavioral problems.

Clients work with specially trained horses and learn about caring for them. The therapy focuses more on learning to care for the animals rather than learning to ride. Working with horses happens along with methods like cognitive behavioral therapy and experiential therapy.

Caring for horses requires concentration, selflessness, and teamwork. Equine-assisted therapy programs can help people improve self-esteem, self-awareness, confidence, and empathy.

Equine therapy programs can help treat:

- Behavioral problems
- Grief
- Depression
- Addiction
- Relationship issues
- Anxiety
- Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder
- Eating disorders

***Do your own research and speak to professionals in this field before you try it out.**

Best grass to choose...

LAWN TYPES YOU'LL LOVE

BUFFALO

A classic backyard grass. Durable, water friendly and easy to maintain. Wide leaf blade, that can be feel scratchy to the touch. New softer leaf varieties such as Sapphire are now available. Good in shaded areas and remains green year-round.

COUCH

Tough narrow leafed variety with the ability to quickly repair. If you have a high traffic scenario Couch is the answer. Quick growing grass that may need mowing more often. Can be mowed extremely short for that bowling green look. Fertilise, water and mow on repeat for this grass.

TIFF TUFF

Its fine leaf blade, deep green colour with dense growth produces a soft leaf to walk on and yet is able to handle high wear situations. It's a great looking all-round lawn that will retain good summer and winter colour. Once established it's very drought tolerant.

KIKUYU

A favourite for Aussie backyards. Rapid green growth, drought tolerant, wear resistance, tolerant to most soil types and an ability to survive both gardener neglect and a hammering from children and pets. Sounds perfect, however, it can be invasive to garden beds and will require a lot of mowing to maintain.

ZOYSIA

Zoysia is not a new grass but only recently has been added to the list of best grasses for Australian conditions. Better suited to warmer environments. Requires minimal mowing and fertilising, salt tolerant, drought tolerant and not very invasive. It is an ideal coastal grass.



Bingo calls: A complete list of bingo nicknames

If you've ever played or watched bingo in a traditional bingo hall or even just dabbled in some online bingo you may have noticed that there are some strange bingo names that you simply don't understand. Calling bingo numbers out isn't as simple as just 1, 2, 3... and you weren't mistaken if you think you may have heard something about little ducks or Winnie the pooh.

How did the rhymes originate?

Most of the bingo terms associated with the numbers are rhymes.

They were originally used in London in the mid-20th century, where they were used to pass on secret or hidden messages. These rhymes were very quickly picked up by bingo players who used them in the bingo halls to ensure that all 90 letters could be clarified easily when called out. In a big hall, the number 15 and 50 could sound very similar, so they adopted these rhymes/nicknames in order to distinctly tell letter apart. As the use of these nicknames spread, they changed from place to place and some new bingo sayings were added.

On the next page is a complete list of the bingo slang meaning with regards to the numbers and other strange words that you might come across if you play bingo online or in person.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 - Kelly's eye | 46 - Up to tricks |
| 2 - One little duck | 47 - Four and seven |
| 3 - Cup of tea | 48 - Four dozen |
| 4 - Knock at the door | 49 - PC |
| 5 - Man alive | 50 - Half a century |
| 6 - Tom Mix/Half a dozen | 51 - Tweak of the thumb |
| 7 - Lucky seven | 52 - Danny La Rue |
| 8 - Garden gate | 53 - Here comes Herbie/
Stuck in a tree |
| 9 - Doctor's orders | 54 - Clean the floor |
| 10 - [Prime Minister's name's] den | 55 - Snakes alive |
| 11 - Legs eleven | 56 - Shotts Bus |
| 12 - One dozen | 57 - Heinz varieties |
| 13 - Unlucky for some | 58 - Make them wait |
| 14 - Valentine's Day | 59 - Brighton Line |
| 15 - Young and keen | 60 - Five dozen |
| 16 - Sweet 16 and never been kissed | 61 - Baker's bun |
| 17 - Dancing queen | 62 - Turn the screw/Tickety-boo |
| 18 - Coming of age | 63 - Tickle me 63 |
| 19 - Goodbye teens | 64 - Red raw |
| 20 - One score | 65 - Old age pension |
| 21 - Royal salute/Key of the door | 66 - Clickety click |
| 22 - Two little ducks | 67 - Stairway to heaven |
| 23 - Thee and me | 68 - Saving Grace |
| 24 - Two dozen | 69 - Favourite of mine |
| 25 - Duck and dive | 70 - Three score and ten |
| 26 - Pick and mix | 71 - Bang on the drum |
| 27 - Gateway to heaven | 72 - Six dozen |
| 28 - In a state/Over weight | 73 - Queen bee |
| 29 - Rise and shine | 74 - Hit the floor |
| 30 - Dirty Gertie | 75 - Strive and strive |
| 31 - Get up and run | 76 - Trombones |
| 32 - Buckle my shoe | 77 - Sunset strip |
| 33 - Dirty knee/All the threes/
Fish, chips & peas | 78 - 39 more steps |
| 34 - Ask for more | 79 - One more time |
| 35 - Jump and jive | 80 - Eight and blank |
| 36 - Three dozen | 81 - Stop and run |
| 37 - More than eleven | 82 - Straight on through |
| 38 - Christmas cake | 83 - Time for tea |
| 39 - 39 steps | 84 - Seven dozen |
| 40 - Life begins | 85 - Staying alive |
| 41 - Time for fun | 86 - Between the sticks |
| 42 - Winnie the Pooh | 87 - Torquay in Devon |
| 43 - Down on your knees | 88 - Two fat ladies |
| 44 - Droopy drawers | 89 - Nearly there |
| 45 - Halfway there | 90 - Top of the shop |

"I Can't Remember"

Just a line to say I'm living that I'm not among the dead,
Though I'm getting more forgetful and I'm mixed up in my head.

I've got used to my arthritis to my dentures I'm resigned,
I can manage my bi-focals but oh, how I miss my mind.

For sometimes I can't remember, when I stand beneath the stair
If I must go up for something or have just come down from there?

And before my fridge so often my poor mind is filled with doubt,
Have I just put food away or have I come to take some out?

And when the time is dark and I've a night cap on my head
I don't know if I'm retiring or just getting out of bed.
So now if it's my turn to write to you, there is no need for getting sore,
I may or may not have written and don't want to be a bore.

So remember that I love you and wish that you were near,
But now it's nearly mail time, so I'll say goodbye my dear.

Here I stand beside the mailbox, with my face so very red...
For I haven't mailed this letter - I have just opened it instead....

MEMORIES TO MEMOIRS

life stories worth telling

Famous? Not famous? Everyone has a story to tell!

A memoir is a compelling but true story of what you have lived through and to then preserve all those life stories and those key moments that shaped who you are with special memories of the people, places and events that have been important in your life **and we can write it for you.**

Never underestimate the potential of your personal narrative to touch another person's life.

Writing a memoir is not just for the family you have right now, but for the children & grandchildren as well as families that will come after them who will grow up and ask many questions.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Visualising & preparing: We will have an initial informal chat (dependent on Covid restrictions) to get to know each other as well as discussing your requirements, all options available and the journey we take together to a wonderful conclusion. Before interviews start, we will send you a questionnaire sheet to jog your memory which allows you to make some notes in advance. Not all questions will relate to you personally.

2. Interviews: Together, we will arrange times (dependent on Covid restrictions) to meet up in-person, so that you can begin narrating to the Writer, recounting your life story. It is our utmost responsibility to keep your personal information confidential. Don't worry, your writer will have lots of cues and questions to help you along your way! Your writer will record your interviews, transcribe them, then write your story based on the transcripts.

3. First draft and photos: After the interviews are completed, you will have the opportunity of seeing the first draft of your book. This is always such an exciting moment, and it gives you the chance to add anything or give feedback before we do the final proof and book design.

At this time, if you wish, you will be able to give us some photos to include in your book.

4. Printing your books: Once the book design is complete and you have approved it, we will head to the printers for the final stage! At the end of this whole process, we will be confident and in agreement that your books will bring a smile to you and your loved ones.

To discuss further:

contact: Allan Berlinsky 0438 592 309

email: memoriestomemoirs@bigpond.com

'A memoir
isn't the
summary
of a life;
it's a
window
into your
life.'



COLOUR ME IN

PRINT ME • CUT ME OUT • BUILD ME

Build An Elf



use us christmas gnomes however
you wish over the festive season





How to make Christmas crackers

Fed up of peculiar plastic shapes, bad jokes and pricey shop-bought Christmas crackers? The options for making your own are endless. Forget cheap key rings and tacky treasures and instead fill them with thoughtful gifts from the kitchen, include jokes that actually make you laugh or pop in a festive fact alongside your personalised party hats.

What you'll need

- Roll of quality wrapping paper
- Scissors
- Double-sided sticky tape
- Three cardboard rolls for each cracker – each the same size as the inside of a toilet roll
- Cracker snaps (available in craft shops such as Hobbycraft)
- Tissue paper in festive colours
- Some card (to create a template for your hats)
- Glue stick
- Ribbon
- Your gifts to put inside the crackers

Method

- 1** First make your paper hats. Draw and cut a template from card – approximately 30cm in length (shorter for children). If making multiple hats, place several sheets of tissue paper on top of each other and carefully cut out using your template. Take two cut out shapes and gently use glue stick to glue the ends together to make your hat.
- 2** To make your cracker place three cardboard rolls close together onto the plain side of your wrapping paper. Put a cracker snap through the tube and secure to the middle roll. Make sure you'll have enough paper to cover and overlap the cardboard rolls when wrapped.
- 3** Next, cut your paper so it is the same width as the three cardboard rolls. Place three pieces of double sided tape along one end of the wrapping paper, each piece in line with each cardboard roll. (This should be the side that sticks to the wrapping paper – not the cardboard roll.)
- 4** Roll the wrapping paper over the cardboard rolls to completely cover. Overlap the paper (with the side with the tape on top) and press down to stick the double-sided tape firmly to the paper.
- 5** Gently pull the two cardboard rolls on either end slightly away from the middle. Between one end roll and the middle roll tie a loose knot with your ribbon round the paper and gently tighten to create your cracker end. Remove the end roll and continue to tighten until there is only a small gap when you look down the end of the cracker then tie a bow and cut any excess ribbon.
- 6** Fill your cracker with your hat and chosen goodies and then repeat step five on the still open end of your cracker.



Three brothers, age 92, 94 and 96, live in a house together.
One night the 96-year-old draws a bath, puts his foot in and pauses.

He yells down the stairs, "Was I getting in or out of the bath?"

The 94-year-old yells back, "I don't know, I'll come up and see."

He starts up the stairs, pauses and yells, "Was I going up the stairs or coming down?"

The 92-year-old was sitting at the kitchen table having coffee listening to the brothers. He shakes his head and says, "I sure hope I never get that forgetful." He knocks on wood for good luck. He then yells, "I'll come up and help both of you as soon as I see who's at the door."





BRAIN POWER

CHRISTMAS *Trivia!*

1. Who is the singing chipmunk known for his Christmas songs?
2. What is the magic signal Santa gave before he went up the chimney in the poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas?"
3. What do Christian churches call the 28 days before Christmas?
4. What is another name for the log you put on a fire at Christmas?
5. Who is "nipping at your nose" when you go outside in winter?
6. Name the three spirits who visited Scrooge on Christmas Eve.
7. Name two food items that people often string together to make Christmas tree garland.
8. In 1895, Ralph E. Morris, a New England telephone company employee, was inspired by his switchboard to make what popular Christmas decoration?
9. In 1939 Robert May created this Christmas figure as a Christmas promotion for Montgomery Ward Department store in Chicago.
10. What are the names of Santa Clause's eight reindeer as named in Clement Moore's poem "The Night Before Christmas?"
11. What was the name of the dog that belonged to the Grinch in Dr. Seuss' book "How the Grinch Stole Christmas?"
12. What Christmas picture book of a little angel first appeared in 1946?
13. What best selling Christmas song did Gene Autry record in 1951?
14. What hotel is mentioned in "It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like Christmas?"
15. In the 2nd verse of the song "Jingle Bells" who was "seated by my side?"
16. In "The Holly and the Ivy" what color is the blossom?
17. In A Charlie Brown Christmas, what winter recreation is the cast of characters doing in the opening scene?
18. In the song "Silver & Gold" how do you measure its worth?
19. Who wrote all the music for Holiday Inn?
20. In Frosty the Snowman (movie), what were Frosty's first words?
21. What type of poultry does Scrooge send to Bob Cratchit on Christmas?
22. What carol contains the threat "We won't go until we get some?"
23. What day is the most popular for watching holiday football on TV?
24. Which reindeer's name is also the name of a kitchen cleanser?
25. According to the Buddy the Elf (from the movie Elf), what are the four main food groups?

Answers on page 38



TRAIN *YOUR* BRAIN

Apps at Your Fingertips

BY KAREN SZABO

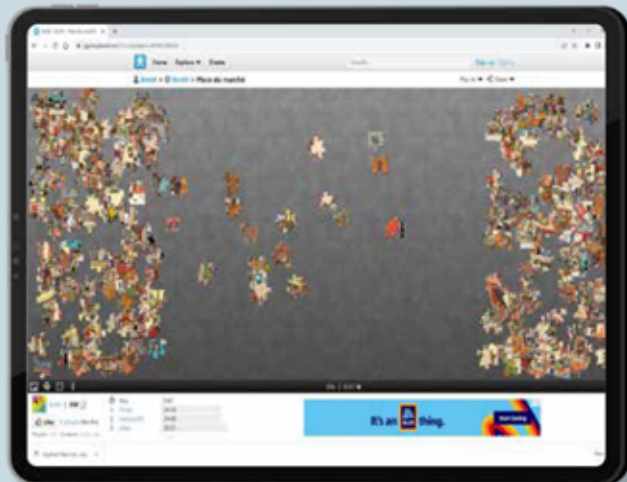
No matter what game, app, or puzzle you choose, keeping your brain active and your body healthy are simply among the best ways to improve your quality of life as you age.

You've probably had a few "senior moments" at one time or another – and that makes you perfectly normal. As we age, our brain function declines and memory lapses can become more frequent. Our processing speed slows down, as does our reaction time, decision-making abilities, short-term memory, and planning skills.

Brain training may be helpful for sharpening these abilities, which is why researchers have been studying the impact of brain training for decades. Studies have found that brain training can reduce the risk of developing dementia, improve basic cognitive skills, and even lead to better scores on standard IQ tests.

While there is disagreement over the extent of the impact of brain training, there is growing advice that we should treat the brain like a muscle that can be exercised and toned. Despite these conflicting views, doctors and scientists do agree that any activity that stimulates your brain can help improve memory.

As a result, an entire industry of apps, games, and other tools has emerged based on the idea that playing these brain games can improve your mental abilities. With so many apps, games, and puzzles literally at your fingertips, which one is right for you? Here's an overview of the top games and apps for improving memory.



BRAIN TRAINING APPS

If you want to give brain-training apps a try, here are four of the top apps available to help you make an informed decision.

1 LUMOSITY

Considered by many as the "original" brain training app, Lumosity is used by more than 85 million people across the globe. The app consists of more than 40 colorful and fun minigames. It is designed to train five cognitive functions: speed, memory, attention, flexibility, and problem-solving. Daily brain workouts involve playing three minigames – five with the premium version – each focusing on the five cognitive functions.

2 ELEVATE

According to CNET, Elevate "comes out ahead" among brain training apps and is Apple's App of the Year. The app consists of more than 40 minigames designed to boost math and speaking skills, as well as improve memory, attention, and processing speed. Like Lumosity, Elevate encourages daily brain training, which involves the completion of three games, or five games with the "PRO" version.

3 PEAK

Developed with the help of scientists from Yale University and the University of Cambridge, Peak offers more than 45 games that focus on memory, problem-solving, language, mental agility, and focus. The Peak creators recommend brain training three days per week and you can select the days and times you want to receive training reminders from the app.

4 COGNIFIT

With a variety of minigames designed to train more than 20 cognitive skills, including short-term memory, planning, hand-eye coordination, and auditory perception, CogniFit provides tools that researchers and healthcare professionals can use to assess cognitive functioning in patients. All of CogniFit's brain training tools have been validated by scientists – including researchers from the University of Washington and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.

PUZZLES

Whether crossword or jigsaw, doing a puzzle reinforces connections between brain cells, improves mental speed, and is an especially effective way to improve short-term memory.

1 PROPROFS BRAIN GAMES

Proprofsgames.com has free puzzle games available to suit nearly every fancy, from crossword puzzles and sudoku to chess and mahjong.

2 CROSSWORDS

Two classic crosswords, the New York Magazine and Washington Post crossword puzzles, are available online for free. Find them at nymag.com/crossword and washingtonpost.com/crossword-puzzles/daily.

3 SUDOKU

Like crosswords, Sudoku stimulates the brain and can help reduce memory loss. WebSudoku.com offers free, interactive Sudoku puzzles to do online, along with interactive tutorials as well as variations of Sudoku puzzles, like JigSawDoku, and different types of free picture logic puzzles.

4 JIGSAW PLANET

Jigsawplanet.com is one of the most popular free online websites for puzzle fans with thousands of puzzles that can be played on your browser or in full-screen mode.

to rack one's brain = think hard
about something



You need to rack your brain



BRAIN TEASERS

QUESTIONS

1. A man pushes his car to a hotel and tells the owner he's bankrupt. Why?
2. You are in a room that has three switches and a closed door. The switches control three light bulbs on the other side of the door. Once you open the door, you may never touch the switches again. How can you definitively tell which switch is connected to each of the light bulbs?
3. I left my campsite and hiked south for 3 miles. Then I turned east and hiked for 3 miles. I then turned north and hiked for 3 miles at which time I came upon a bear inside my tent eating my food! What colour was the bear?
4. A man is looking at a photograph of someone. His friend asks who it is. The man replies, "Brothers and sisters, I have none. But that man's father is my father's son." Who was in the photograph?

ANSWERS

1. He's playing Monopoly.
2. Turn on the first two switches. Leave them on for five minutes. Once five minutes has passed, turn off the second switch, leaving one switch on. Now go through the door. The light that is still on is connected to the first switch. Whichever of the other two is warm to the touch is connected to the second switch. The bulb that is cold is connected to the switch that was never turned on.
3. White. The only place you can hike 3 miles south, then east for 3 miles, then north for 3 miles and end up back at your starting point is the North Pole. Polar bears are the only bears that live at the North Pole, and they are white.
4. His son.

SUDOKU

		4		5				
9			7	3	4	6		
		3		2	1		4	9
	3	5		9		4	8	
	9						3	
	7	6		1		9	2	
3	1		9	7		2		
		9	1	8	2			3
				6		1		

Answer on the last page



COMMONYM

What's a commonym you ask?

It is a group of words that have a common trait in the three words/items listed. For example: the words; Ice / Sugar / Rubik's - they are all cubes.

1) Let's have a go....

- 1. A Ball - A Fish - A Cold**
- 2. A Ball - A Salad - A Coin**
- 3. A Cork - A Question - A Balloon**
- 4. A Bottle - A Baseball Player - A Mushroom**
- 5. A Bell - Mouth - A Shoe**
- 6. A Tug of War - The Nightly News - A Boat**
- 7. Seventeen - Time - People**
- 8. A Basketball Court - A Highway - A Bowling Alley**
- 9. Fog - A Jack - A Body Builder**
- 10. A Hockey Game - A Restaurant - A Bank**

2) Let's have another go....

- 1. Hair - A Brain - An Ocean**
- 2. A Bride & Groom - A Boat & Trailer - A Horse & Buggy**
- 3. A Scale - A Tyre - A Cheque book**
- 4. An Aquarium - An Army - A Car**
- 5. A Sports Page - A Movie - A Broadway Musical**
- 6. A Cook - A Toilet - College Football**
- 7. A Doughnut - A Cavity - A Prescription**
- 8. A Coal Miner - A Dentist - A Guitar Player**
- 9. A Male Goat - A Dollar - A Male Rabbit**
- 10. A Doctor - A Mailman - Domino's**

3) It should be getting easier now....

1. Home - Diner - License
2. Jackie - Dolly - Eleanor
3. Corn - Baby - Olive
4. America - Kangaroo - Crunch
5. Sharp - Cream - Cottage
6. Santa's Sleigh - Churches - Schools
7. Debtors - Congress - Ducks
8. Picnic - Easter - Wastepaper
9. Twilight - End - No Parking
10. Secret - Double - Real Estate

4) Okay, this is fun....

1. Wagon - Ferris - Cart
2. Love - Chain - Dear John
3. Hot - Chili - Corn
4. Bricks - Eggs - Carpets
5. A Skyscraper - Ernest Hemingway - Mark Twain
6. Tone - Zest - Dove
7. Door - Grand - Nobel
8. Pillow - Dog - Fist
9. Dinner - Straight - Leather
10. Labour - Columbus - Ground Hog

ANSWERS:

ONE

1. they are caught
2. they are tossed
3. they are popped
4. they have caps
5. they have tongues
6. they have anchors
7. they are magazines
8. they have lanes
9. they lift
10. they have cheques

TWO

1. they have waves
2. they are hitched
3. they are balanced
4. they have tanks
5. they have scores
6. they have bowls
7. they are filled
8. they have picks
9. they are bucks
10. they deliver

THREE

1. plates
2. first ladies
3. oils
4. captains
5. cheese
6. they have bells
7. they have bills
8. baskets
9. zones
10. agents

FOUR

1. wheels
2. letters
3. types of dogs
4. they are laid
5. they have stories
6. soap brand names
7. prizes
8. fights
9. jackets
10. days

Merry Christmas



FIND TWO IDENTICAL OBJECTS





CHRISTMAS

Trivia Answers!

1. Alvin the Chipmunk
2. Laid a finger beside his nose.
3. Advent
4. Yule log
5. Jack Frost
6. Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present & Future
7. Popcorn & Cranberries
8. Christmas lights
9. Rudolph
10. Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Dunder, Blixem
11. Max
12. The Littlest Angel
13. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
14. The Grand Hotel
15. Miss Fanny Bright
16. White
17. Ice Skating
18. By the "pleasure it brings here on Earth"
19. Irving Berlin
20. Happy Birthday!
21. Turkey
22. We Wish You A Merry Christmas
23. New Year's Day
24. Comet
25. Candy, Candy Canes, Candy Corns and Syrup

SUDOKU

Answer

2	6	4	8	5	9	3	1	7
9	8	1	7	3	4	6	5	2
7	5	3	6	2	1	8	4	9
1	3	5	2	9	7	4	8	6
8	9	2	5	4	6	7	3	1
4	7	6	3	1	8	9	2	5
3	1	8	9	7	5	2	6	4
6	4	9	1	8	2	5	7	3
5	2	7	4	6	3	1	9	8

Hope you enjoyed our newsletter

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