

Visual Arts

Photo collage

This is a great activity to get people thinking about their hopes and wishes. They can think about the future or create a dream where anything is possible!

- Print out photos of residents' faces
- Once this is done, talk to each resident about what they'd love to do most in the world
- Residents can look through old magazines or images online that you can print, and collect images that can be used to make a picture
- Residents can make a collage from the images showing them doing the most amazing things!

Residents could travel into space on a rocket, ride a dinosaur, or simply visit a relative in a distant land.





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Working with clay

Clay is a wonderful material for residents to work with. It comes in many different forms and textures, and can help exercise older people's hand muscles.

An interesting activity is creating a picture using clay as a canvas:

- Create a square of clay 15cm x 15cm and about half an inch thick
- Give residents a selection of stones, shells, twigs, paperclips, whatever-you-can-find, and encourage them to push the objects into the clay, creating their own clay picture



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A large canvas

Working on a large canvas can free people up creatively, encouraging them to try new things. The best way to create a large canvas is to buy a long roll of white paper and cover a whole table with it.

Once residents are sat at the table, encourage them to draw, paint, print, scribble and stick anything they want ... wherever they want!

Try putting some objects on the table to inspire new ideas: sticks to draw with ink, leaves and paint for printing, sponges, chalk, charcoal sticks, different brushes.

Residents can work on their own sections or decide to join their pictures / designs to create a larger piece of art.





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Wool and felt

If you're looking for a more advanced activity, you could try making felt. The easiest way to do this is to make a ball.

- Start with a 15cm piece of wool and wrap it around your fingertips, changing directions and tightening it,
- Roll the ball in your palm until even, then dip it in some warm soapy water,
- Continue to roll the ball in your palm, adding pressure to make it harder,
- Eventually you should have made your very own felt ball. If hard enough it should also bounce!
- Once you've made a few felt balls, join them together with some thread to make a felt necklace, or use them to create a different kind of collage or picture





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Painting & drawing

Painting and drawing are two of the easiest yet most effective activities to try.

Try making this activity more interesting by asking residents to draw around their hands and then paint the lines of their palm and fingers in any way they choose.

An innovative way to approach drawing is to draw on objects you wouldn't usually think of: use acrylic paint on the sides of glasses or mugs, or highlighter pens to draw on records bought in charity shops!

