

Activity Guide for New Activity Director's Kit

This kit and activity guide were put together in partnership with Not Just Bingo, an online resource of fun senior activity ideas for activity professionals of assisted living facilities.

Activities included:

- Giant Crossword Puzzle Set 1
- Everyday Life Trivia Book
- Music Bingo Game
- Music Bingo Jukebox Version Game
- Nancy Pitkin Music 'n Motion Sing-Along DVD
- Music - Memories 'n Motion Seasons Sing-Along DVD
- Juggling Scarves 18in, Pack of 12
- Classic Cars of Yesteryear Wood Craft Kit, Pack of 6
- 8oz Elmer's Carpenter's Wood Glue
- You Be The Judge Book Volume 1
- You Be The Judge Book Volume 2

As you implement new activities in this kit, we recommend taking note of the types of activities that work best for your residents and the times of day that work best. For example, if you find that your residents enjoy cognitive activities before lunch (when your residents are most alert), then continue scheduling cognitive activities at that time, and provide a different one each day in that time slot (e.g., crossword puzzles on Mondays and Fridays and Trivia on Wednesdays).

Cognitive Activities

- Giant Crossword Puzzle Set 1
- Everyday Life Trivia Book

These activities engage and stimulate the minds of your senior residents. They include concentration activities, memory activities, and problem-solving activities. Provide these activities when your residents are most alert, like late morning before lunch or late afternoon before dinner.

To use the giant crossword puzzles that are included in the kit, simply post a giant puzzle sheet at the front of the room, and seat residents in a large semi-circle so that everyone can see the puzzle. Then read a crossword clue and show where on the puzzle the answer fits. If you find that no one is giving a correct answer to the clue, then just go to another crossword clue and come back later once more letters have been filled in. In addition, use the trivia book found in the kit to schedule fun trivia games like a Trivia Challenge: Men vs. Women or a Trivia Challenge: First Floor vs. Second Floor, in which you quiz teams of residents to see who can answer the most questions correctly.

Musical Activities

- Music Bingo Game
- Music Bingo Jukebox Version Game

Music is known to bring people together, so it makes sense to use it as a fun staple in your senior activity program. Musical activities can be as simple as listening to Big Band music being played on a CD, playing musical instruments while listening to a musical entertainer, or even participating in a karaoke singalong.

Your kit contains a few sets of a game that pairs music with the popular game of bingo – musical bingo. To play one of the musical bingo games in the kit, first pass out the bingo cards to residents. Then play the CD of songs to see if residents can identify the song before finding the song title on their bingo card. This game can also be played without the bingo cards as a fun game of Name That Tune.

Physical Activities

- Nancy Pitkin Music 'n Motion Sing-Along DVD
- Music - Memories 'n Motion Seasons Sing-Along DVD
- Juggling Scarves 18in, Pack of 12

Getting residents to your exercise activities can be quite challenging. But what if you arranged it so that your exercise activities didn't quite feel like exercise. One way to eliminate the feel of “exercise” is to use props, like using plastic tennis rackets to hit an inflated balloon over a net or tossing a bean bag back and forth among a circle of residents. Also note that while most senior activity programs include physical activities in the morning hours, these types of activities are also ideal for times of the day when you find that your residents are a bit sluggish, like after lunch. Physical activities can help them get reenergized and moving again.

This kit provides a few Music and Motion DVDs that allow residents to hear and sing along to music while expressing themselves through movement. Be sure to pass out the scarves that are included in the kit to help residents exaggerate their movements as they move their arms to the music.

Tactile Activities

- Classic Cars of Yesteryear Wood Craft Kit, Pack of 6
- 8oz Elmer's Carpenter's Wood Glue

Providing activities that relate to touch can interest a wide variety of senior residents, especially those who prefer working with their hands when doing activities. These types of activities are also very popular among the men in senior facilities. The activities can work well at any time of the day and can be used as a fun intergenerational activity for when the grandchildren come to visit.

In this kit, you'll find a collection of unfinished classic cars, which residents can assemble with wood glue. The models that are included provide a variety of pieces that allow residents to assemble by themselves or in small groups.

Discussion Activities

- You Be The Judge Book Volume 1
- You Be The Judge Book Volume 2

We all have a story, and a great way to get your residents to share their story is through discussion activities. These types of activities will provide opportunities for your residents to get to know one another while also allowing for a fun environment where they can exchange ideas and points of view.

This kit includes a few discussion books from the popular You Be The Judge series. For the activity, simply read the short summaries of the facts of a real case before having residents share how they would rule if they were the judge.

Tips to Increase Resident Participation in Your Activities

Planning fun and engaging activities for your senior residents doesn't mean much if your residents don't attend. Here are a few ideas on how you can increase participation in your senior activities:

- Plan as far ahead as possible so that you can include all your activities in your monthly activity calendar.
- Create a list of the day's activities and post it every day in a well-traveled location of your facility for residents to read. Consider posting a copy in the nurse's station so that the nurses can remind your residents of the day's activities.
- Use your monthly Resident Council meetings as a time to get residents involved in activity planning. At the meetings, encourage residents to offer suggestions.
- Use flyers to promote and advertise your events. Post the ads in elevators, near the front lobby, and anywhere else you think is appropriate.
- Keep your big monthly events on the same day each month. For instance, have your Resident Council meeting always on the first Thursday of the month, or your monthly birthday party always on the last Friday of the month. That way residents will know when to look for the event.
- Be sure to send monthly activity calendars to family and friends of residents. Family members who see the activity calendar may help remind or persuade their loved ones to attend certain activities.

[Not Just Bingo](http://www.notjustbingo.com) has been providing fun activity ideas online since 2009 and continue to assist activity professionals across the country by creating meaningful and engaging activity ideas for their residents that go "beyond bingo." Not Just Bingo feels privileged to help activity directors better the living experiences of their residents while demonstrating that a senior's quality of life can actually improve when they move to a senior facility!



Visit www.notjustbingo.com for how-to activity ideas, monthly newsletters, and daily holiday ideas. You can also sign up for the [Notjustbingo Membership](#) to receive specialized activity ideas to keep your residents and staff engaged, active, and having fun!