

# AGING AND DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

**This pamphlet has been prepared by the Lucas DD Senior Committee to suggest games to promote cognitive functioning and health as people age and/or develop dementia. (Issues of the Aging Gracefully newsletter usually feature a few games and puzzles.)**



# Tetris

Players strategically rotate, move and drop a procession of blocks, called Tetriminos, that fall into the rectangular Matrix at increasing speeds. Computer and board game versions available.



## Benefits for people with dementia

- Simple to learn and accessible, and the difficulty can be adaptable.
- Can enhance Spatial Reasoning, Boost Memory and Processing, and Sharpen Focus and Attention

See More:

<https://tetris.com/products>

<https://tetris.com/products/merchandise/tetris-the-board-game>

# Lifetime Lineup

Lifetime Lineup is a unique card game that prompts players to create a lineup of cards representing various stages and milestones of life. Each card features an image symbolizing different life stages, from childhood to older age.



## Benefits for people with dementia

- encourages memory-sharing, connections, and meaningful conversations
- stimulates cognitive functions associated with memory retrieval and narrative construction.
- Offers a structure for preserving personal narratives
- Helps prompt memories and create moments of joy

### See More:

<https://alwayshomeconnected.com/products/lifetime-lineup>

# Past and Present Pairs

Memory and card-matching game with a deck of cards, each of which has an image from the past or a modern-day counterpart. Players aim to match the images from different eras and prompting discussion about how things have changed over time.



## Benefits for people with dementia

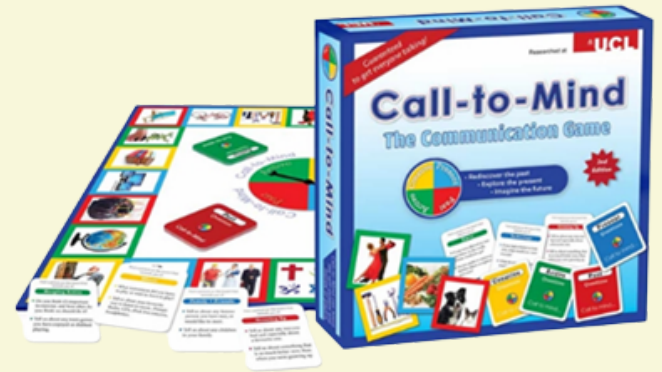
- can help improve memory recall, pattern recognition, and attention to detail
- encourages socialization and meaningful interaction
- can evoke emotions and help with non-verbal communication in the late stages of dementia.

### See More:

<https://alwayshomeconnected.com/products/past-present-pairs>

# Call to Mind

**Specially-designed board game with cards with questions to spark conversation.**



## **Benefits for people with dementia**

- Helps with connecting with, and recalling, positive memories.
- Reduces loneliness by making conversation and interaction easier
- Boosts morale and self-esteem when other players show interest in the opinions and experiences of the person.

**See More:**

**<https://www.alzstore.com/conversation-game-for-dementia-p/h012.htm?srsltid=AfmBOopBpfFaevW2-S1U4lQVctzuew4dr41Z-PR4e0ukcEZSdXj4VBpv>**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUYeKdup2i8>**

# Rummikub

Classic numbers game combining elements of rummy and mahjongg, involving creating sets and runs from numbered tiles - with both strategy and luck.



## Benefits for people with dementia

Builds numerical skills and logical thinking.

See More:

<https://rummikub.com>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rummikub>

# Royal Game of Ur

4600+ year-old race game first played in ancient Mesopotamia during the early third millennium BC and rediscovered in a cemetery sometime between 1922 and 1934. The object is to move your pieces off the board before your opponent.



## Benefits for people with dementia

Involves both luck and strategy, easy to play, but gets you to think

See More:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal\\_Game\\_of\\_Ur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Game_of_Ur)

# Boom Again

Trivia board game with questions that draw on the shared experiences of those who grew up in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s



## Benefits for people with dementia

The questions are NOT designed to trip players up, but rather are designed to be fun, to spark memories of days gone by, and to bring people of all stripes together

**Learn More (about the game and benefits of trivia):**

**<https://wp.nyu.edu/insight/2021/08/16/trivia-game-boom-again-promotes-memory-and-learning-for-older-generations/>**

# WOODEN TILE MATCHING GAME

Wooden block puzzle with  
templates



## Benefits for people with dementia

Training brain activity and improving finger manipulation by checking the templates and correctly placing the puzzle pieces

See More:

[https://www.amazon.com/KUMUNI-Wooden-Tile-Matching-Adults/dp/B0D56TMJSB?ref\\_=fplfs&smid=A2OF4VYJFQGMKR&source=ps-sl-shoppingads-lpcontext&th=1](https://www.amazon.com/KUMUNI-Wooden-Tile-Matching-Adults/dp/B0D56TMJSB?ref_=fplfs&smid=A2OF4VYJFQGMKR&source=ps-sl-shoppingads-lpcontext&th=1)

# ALL ABOUT US

Cooperative, life-story-telling board game involving players sharing their stories and exploring their lives with each other.



## Benefits for people with dementia:

- helps them connect with positive memories.
- sparks conversations, thus promoting quality time with family, friends, and caregivers across all generations - helping to counteract loneliness.
- Boosts the person's morale and self-esteem when other players are interested in their opinions and experiences

**Learn More:**

**<https://www.alzstore.com/memory-activity-game-for-dementia-p/h014.htm>**



# DOMINOES



Games using dominoes:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_domino\\_games](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_domino_games)



**Games with Dominoes are good for people with dementia or Alzheimer's because**

- Dominoes have a familiar design and are easy to hold and maneuver.
- various games can be played depending on the stage of dementia

## Tip:

Put emphasis on playing the game, not scoring, winning or losing, so that the game feels productive and successful for the person with dementia.

**More about the benefits of games with Dominoes:**

<https://www.carewell.com/resources/blog/games-for-adults-with-alzheimers-or-dementia/>

# OUI SI



**OuiSi, pronounced, "We See" is a set of photo cards with games for all ages and abilities.**

- facilitates connection, expression, and fun for those with dementia and mild cognitive impairment
- uniquely designed to stimulate and captivate individuals with AND without dementia, and to create an enjoyable experience for family members and caregivers.

**Learn More:**

**<https://shop.ouisi.co/pages/memory-care>**

# TRIO



A relatively new game, based on the Japanese game called *nana* (a word for *seven* in Japanese). The objective is to collect three sets of three of the same-numbered card, like a “gamer version” of Go Fish.

In “spicy” mode, players can also win by connecting two sets such as 1’s and 6’s to add up to 7.

Benefits for people with dementia include helping with memory and socialization.

Learn More:

<https://boardgamegeek.com/blogpost/155033/happy-camper-launches-trio-in-the-us>

Learn how to play:

<https://happycamper.games/products/trio-game>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsZtEe29GAK>

(second video includes the play for the Japanese game *nana*)

# MAHJONG (MAH-JONGG)



## Mah-jongg benefits seniors through promoting

- cognitive sharpness,
- socialization
- stress relief
- problem-solving ability: as a “game of strategy,” mah-jongg can help combat aging-related decline of problem-solving ability
- overall physical and mental health

### Learn More:

#### The Many Benefits of Playing Mah-Jongg - The Ethel

<https://www.aarpethel.com/lifestyle/the-many-benefits-of-playing-mah-jongg#:~:text=According%20to%20an%20October%202021,Encyclopedia%2C%20treats%20many%20older%20patients>

#### Health Benefits of Mah-Jongg - Dove Med

<https://www.aarpethel.com/lifestyle/the-many-benefits-of-playing-mah-jongg#:~:text=According%20to%20an%20October%202021,Encyclopedia%2C%20treats%20many%20older%20patients>

Play free online on various sites like this one from the AARP:

<https://www.aarp.org/games/category/mahjongg/>

# QWIRKLE



Played much like Dominoes, but involves matching colors and shapes instead of numbers of dots.

People in early and middle stages of memory loss should be able to follow the game's established rules.

Those in the later stages may enjoy

- playing on a “team” and finding a specific color or shape in their team’s “hand”.
- making patterns with the tiles or sorting them by shape or color.

**Learn More:**

**<https://alzheimersactivities.wordpress.com/2014/05/28/play-qwirkle/>**

There is also a card game version of Qwirkle that's a lot like Rummy:

**[https://www.ultraboardgames.com/qwirkle/qwirkle-rummy.php#google\\_vignette](https://www.ultraboardgames.com/qwirkle/qwirkle-rummy.php#google_vignette)**



# FIVE CROWNS

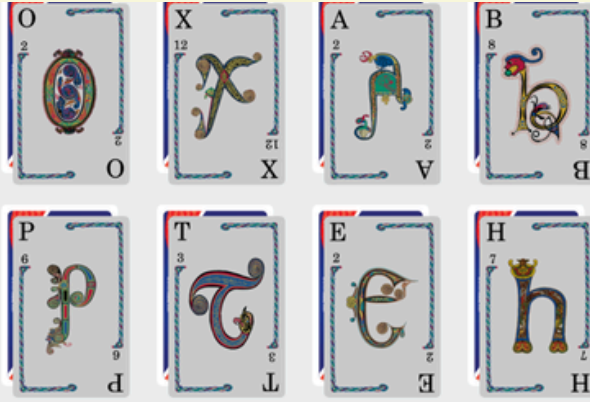


Card game similar to RUMMY but with 5 different suits, jokers, and rotating wild cards.

**Video about how to play:**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BP2B8ifavc>**

# QUIDDLER



Card game that uses letter cards that words are made out of. Each letter has a value.

**More about the benefits - cognitive, physical, social, and more - of playing this game as we age:**

**<https://files.constantcontact.com/dea1e72c801/be7b5273-e66c-4dfa-8e89-473a131031a9.pdf?rdr=true>**

**Video that shows how to play online: [https://youtu.be/\\_lPG4AWMAgo](https://youtu.be/_lPG4AWMAgo)**

**To play online, go to:**

**<https://www.setgame.com/quiddler/puzzle>**