

Frequent participation in cognitively stimulating leisure activities, such as reading, dancing, playing chess or musical instruments, can help preserve cognitive function and lower the chance of developing dementia. With the help of simple tools, elderly can also design brain-stimulating exercises at home to keep their minds active. Here are four simple games, suitable for the elderly, and people with mild cognitive impairment or at early stage of dementia.

Simple Games to Stimulate the Brain



Game 1 <Try and find>

Benefits

- 😊 Improve attention
- 😊 Train eye-hand co-ordination

Equipment Required

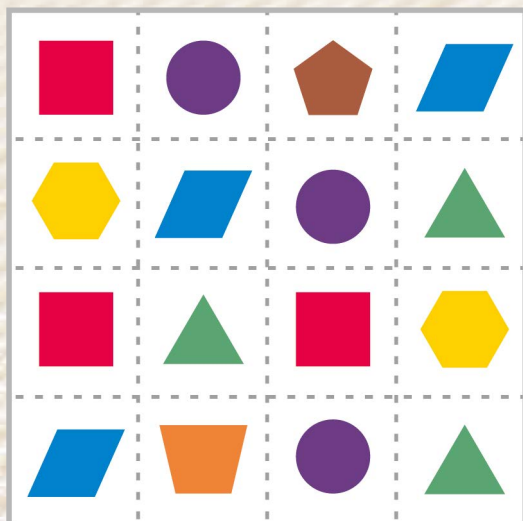
A pen and a piece of paper showing various shapes

How to Play

- 😊 Circle the specified shape (e.g. green triangle ▲)
- 😊 For those with poor eyesight, enlarge the shape so that they can participate as well.
- 😊 Reduce the variety of shapes for those who find it difficult.

Suggestion for Improvement

- 😊 For elderly who are literate, modify the game by replacing the shapes with Chinese characters.



Game 2 <Price Expert>

Benefits

- 😊 Improve attention
- 😊 Train arithmetic calculation

Equipment Required

Newspapers or magazines printed with supermarket advertisements

How to Play

- 😊 Pay attention to supermarket advertisements showing discounted prices. Find and circle items that are priced at or below \$20.
- 😊 You can modify the rules by changing the target price. For example, find and circle all items priced at or below \$10. Alternatively, find and circle as many items as possible within a budget of \$50.

\$8



\$12.5



\$6



\$2.5



\$20.5



\$9



\$30



\$28.5



\$12



\$5



\$10



\$7.5



Game 3 <Slapjack>



Benefits

- 😊 Improve attention and reaction
- 😊 Practise recognising numbers

Equipment Required

The cards "ace" to "10" from any pack of playing cards (40 cards in total, excluding all "J"s, "Q"s, "K"s, and "Joker"s)

How to Play

Number of players:

Family members and elderly are encouraged to participate together

1. Distribute the cards evenly to all players. Remind players not to look at the cards and not to let others see their cards.
2. Ask the elderly person to put one card on the table and call out the number "1" at the same time. Then, ask the next player to put his/her card and call out the next number in sequence. Carry on counting from 1 to 10, and then start again from number "1".
3. If the number on the card shown is the same as the number being called out, all players should try as fast as possible to place his/her hand on the card. The last person to place his/her hand on the card takes all the cards on the table.
4. Continue the game until one of the players has no cards left. That player wins the game.

Simplified playing method

If there is difficulty, reduce the number of playing cards; for example, use the cards numbered 1 to 5 only (20 cards in total).

Game 4 <Counting Money>

Benefits

- 😊 Improve attention and reaction
- 😊 Train arithmetic calculation

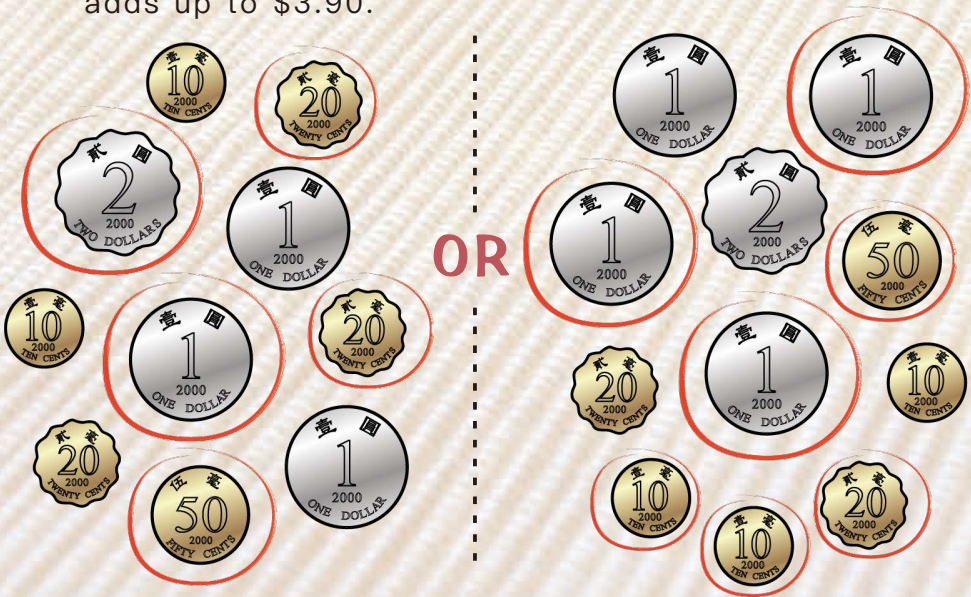
Equipment Required

Prepare around 20 coins of different monetary values (from 10 cents to 10 dollars)

How to Play

Family members and elderly are encouraged to participate together

1. Set a value first, for example \$3.90.
2. Working together, pick a combination of coins that adds up to \$3.90.



3. Repeat steps 1 and 2, changing the targeted value each time, for example, \$5.70, \$4.80, \$13.30 and so on.

Summary

Besides cognitively stimulating activities, leisure activities can also increase self-fulfillment and reduce the rate of cognitive decline. District Elderly Community Centres, Neighbourhood Elderly Centres and Social Centres for the Elderly provide many social and recreational activities for elderly with different interests and abilities. If you have any queries about picking a suitable leisure activity, check with your local elderly centre or consult a healthcare professional.

Community Resources

Some hospitals provide evaluation, diagnosis and treatment services for elderly with suspected memory problems. A doctor's referral is required. Please contact the listed hospitals/centres for more information.

	Hospital/Centres	Enquiry number
Hong Kong	David Trench Rehabilitation Centre	2517 8131
	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	2595 7609
Kowloon	Kowloon Hospital	3129 6708
	United Christian Hospital	3949 4830
	Yung Fung Shee Memorial Centre	2727 8260
New Territories	Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital	2689 3070
	Haven of Hope Hospital	2703 8888
	Kwai Chung Hospital	2742 7030
	North District Hospital	2683 7653
	Prince of Wales Hospital	3505 3415
	Tseung Kwan O Hospital	2208 1534
	Tuen Mun Hospital	2456 8000

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