

# How To Help Aging Adults Adapt To Technology

Children, adolescents and young adults likely cannot imagine a life without modern technology. Technology may have pervaded every part of life in the 21st century, but it wasn't so long ago that phones were still attached to walls and people had to watch their favorite shows and films exclusively on televisions instead of having the option to watch them on devices like smartphones and tablets.

The transition to life in the age of technology went smoothly for most segments of the population, but some aging adults have had a more difficult time making the adjustment. That difficulty was apparent throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, when public health agencies like the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urged aging adults to limit interactions with people outside their homes. Such recommendations forced many seniors to communicate with their families exclusively over the phone or via video conferencing apps like Zoom.

If seniors have had a hard time adapting to technology, their families can try these strategies to make that transition go more smoothly.

- Go over product manuals with seniors. The senior caregiving experts at Home Care Assistance note that older adults are less likely to learn through experimentation than they are by reading instructions in the manual. When helping seniors learn to use new devices, go over the owner's manual with them as

you set up the device. Mark important pages in the manual so seniors know where to go for quick answers if they experience any issues logging in or using certain apps.

- Look for senior-specific devices and guidebooks. Seniors make up an enormous segment of the population, and tech companies have long since recognized that there's a market for products designed specifically for aging men and women. When shopping for devices for seniors, look for those that have been designed to help them overcome issues that have proven

problematic for aging adults in the past. Devices that feature touchscreens with large menus, easily accessible navigation tools and simplified features can help seniors as they learn to use new technology.

- Be patient. Some seniors are excited by the prospect of learning to use new technology, while others may be hesitant. Patience is essential when working with an aging loved one who's intimidated by technology. Take the time to explain apps and features and don't take it for granted that seniors will know how to use a device or recognize what a device can do.

Today's seniors may not have grown up with technology at their fingertips, but they can still learn to use devices to their advantage.



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