

STAYING CONNECTED

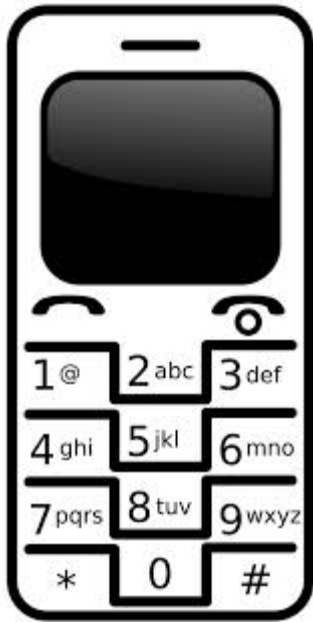
According to Meals on Wheels, 1 in 4 seniors lives alone and 1 in 5 feels lonely. With a growing population of individuals over 60, and the way we stay socially connected rapidly changing, it can be difficult for seniors to stay connected. Mobile devices, such as phones and tablets, can be expensive, confusing, and impractical for many seniors. Here we talk about practical mobile devices and other ways to help keep seniors connected.



Best Phones for Seniors

Smart phones vs. Basic phones

Smart phones provide users with an abundance of possibility. With plenty of storage, better cameras, and a variety of applications, these phones are great for someone who is looking to get more out of their phone. This type of phone is well suited to someone who is interested in taking and sharing videos and pictures. And for those who would like to go beyond calling and texting, these phones allow for use of many popular social media platforms (for more on social media see the section below), and other seemingly infinite applications. Most come with a voice activation system to allow for hands-free use of many features.



Basic phones are perfect for someone who is primarily interested in making calls and texts. These phones tend to be less expensive and more compact, and typically have options to prepay for usage to avoid signing a contract.

Phones designed for seniors come with features such as larger font size & dial pad, one-touch emergency buttons, and photo contact lists.

Factors to consider when purchasing a phone include whether you would like to sign a contract or choose a prepaid option, how much you would like to spend, and which features are most important to you. Choose whichever option feels most comfortable to you.

Social Media

Social media consists of virtual communities in which users share ideas, information, and other content. These platforms can be used to facilitate connections between individuals. Many seniors use social media to stay connected with friends and family, and to explore new interests and social connections.



The most commonly used social media platforms are free, and only require users to make an account, which usually requires an email address.



Check out this comprehensive guide to social media for seniors provided by Caring Senior Services:

https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/433510/docs/Senior%20Social%20Media%20Guide.pdf?_hssc=44263035.1.1591871833184&_hstc=44263035.2d68007bb05b74c50073cb33e933ca98.1591871833180.1591871833180.1591871833180.1&_hsfp=2984226727&hsCtaTracking=3bdecce9-bdfa-4445-bf7b-ab8e72155fe1%7C0c805a80-b514-4bcd-a325-d9d5a13eae11

The Best Cell Phones for Seniors

Other factors to consider when choosing a phone include things like battery life, storage, durability, touchscreen vs. dial pad, display screen size, and camera quality. Below are links to sites comparing the best phones for seniors, feature by feature.

<https://www.seniorlink.com/blog/the-50-best-cell-phones-for-seniors>

<https://www.caring.com/best-cell-phones-for-seniors/>

Best Tablet devices for seniors

Tablet devices often perform many, sometimes even all, of the functions found on a smartphone device. They have larger screens, which can make them easier to use for many seniors. These devices also boast longer battery lives when compared to cellphones and are a practical option for many seniors. Check out this link for the best tablets for seniors.

<https://assistedlivingtoday.com/blog/best-tablets-for-seniors/>

Affordability

Many seniors are on a fixed income and may not have the financial resources required to purchase a phone. The Lifeline program provides one phone per household for those who qualify and can also help to provide internet service. For more information, visit the link below:

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/lifeline-support-affordable-communications>