



Adapt a home: Living room

- Principles 1 and 6:** Ensure ample circulation space. Remove rugs and excess clutter from the main circulation space and so reduce the possibility of trips and falls. **Principle 3:** To allow the person living with dementia to see the environment clearly, ensure that the flooring is of a contrasting colour to the furniture.
- Principle 4:** Reduce unwanted stimulation by turning the television off if it isn't being used. **Principle 8:** Consider using a television with video calling capabilities or similar devices to enable the person living with dementia to keep in touch with friends and relatives.
- Principle 3:** A door with contrasting coloured door frames and handles allow it to be seen easily and can therefore encourage movement through to other indoor/outdoor spaces.
- Principle 3:** To help with day/time orientation consider using a clock which clearly displays the time, day and date on a large face or in bold numbers so that it can be seen easily. **Principle 7:** There are many different types of clocks available, so choose one that is familiar to the person living with dementia.
- Principle 7:** The environment should include familiar and personal objects to encourage reminiscence.
- Principle 5:** People with dementia require greater than average light levels. Check that your house is sufficiently and evenly lit to reduce shadows and to achieve recommended lux levels. **Principle 4:** Ensure that lights and window treatments reduce glare and reflections lighting.
- Principle 1:** To ensure safety in the case of a fire, check that smoke detectors are working.
- Principle 3:** Ensure that the colours of tables and chairs clearly contrast with the colour of the carpet, and that the edges of table and chairs are clearly defined. **Principle 1:** Avoid sharp edges on tables, and avoid furniture with glass as it may pose a safety hazard.
- Principle 7:** Furniture must be recognisable and look like what it is supposed to be. Furniture and items must also be familiar to the person living with dementia. Encourage their choice of colour, style and furnishings where possible. Furniture should be at an appropriate height for occupants. Use furniture that is comfortable and has good back and arm supports. Upholstery must be comfortable and durable.
- Principle 5:** Keep curtains open during the day to let in natural light. **Principle 4:** Avoid bold patterns on curtains which may be confusing or disturbing to a person living with dementia. A person living with dementia may find shadows disturbing. If so, consider 'black-out blinds' to keep out natural or artificial light at sunset and at night.
- Principles 3 and 7:** A door-chime or door knocker for the main entrance can act as a prompt to go answer the door. To ensure its effectiveness, use a type that is most familiar to the person living with dementia.
- Principle 5:** Use different textures in the living room to add sensory variation to the space. For example, a knitted throw on the couch and soft cushions.
- Principle 1:** Be mindful of potential hazards such as electrical cords from lamps.
- Principle 5:** Encourage personal interests such as puzzles that provide opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Ensure that there are clear colour contrasts between the door and the door frame so that the person living with dementia can locate the exits easily (see our info page on "Colour Perception and Contrast" for more helpful hints).