

6 Senior Tips on Technology Use for Connection



Being far away from family can be tough on seniors, whether it's because of pandemic restrictions or just geography. The ability to see and interact with your family and friends on a screen may not be as wonderful as in-person visits, but technology offers countless ways to keep connected in the meantime. Consider these six tech tips on using technology for senior connection, courtesy of [LeadingAge Wyoming](#).

Video Chat

Chatting over video is one of the best ways to keep in touch with loved ones. You can see facial expressions, share photos or other items in real-time, and avoid miscommunication through written text.

Tip 1: Learn Zoom First

Zoom is the leading video chat platform, and while it's great for business, it's also a handy tool for families to "see" one another remotely. The platform is free, and it's [simple](#) to set up chats, notes AARP. With Zoom, you can see and hear your loved ones, share a screen to draw or play games, and there are no time limits if you're only chatting with one other person.

Tip 2: Try Smartphone Video Calling

If you have a smartphone, it may feature built-in video calling. While Zoom is compatible with every smart device, if you and your loved one both have Apple devices, the company's proprietary [video chat system](#) (FaceTime) might be a good fit. Most modern smartphones feature video calling, so this can be a simple way to connect face-to-face.

Gaming

Gaming can be mentally stimulating for all ages, and it's also an excellent way to connect with others. Seniors can play games via smartphone, tablet, or gaming console and compete against their loved ones or just share updates on their achievements.

Tip 3: Try Different Platforms

For seniors who are already active on Facebook, [built-in](#) gaming can be an easy way to stay connected and entertained. But if you aren't interested in social media sites, a gaming system that can connect to the internet is another option for gaming against the grandkids (and other adults, too). Game systems like PlayStation, Xbox, and Nintendo all connect seamlessly for downloading games, competing online, and more.

Tip 4: Upgrade Internet Speed

Fast internet is a must for gaming of all types, but your needs will vary based on what type of games you play and how. For example, multiplayer games through a console run more smoothly with faster internet speeds. Ultra-fast 5G connections can help avoid lag times and keep you gaming [without interruption](#).

Smart Devices

Smart devices can provide easy access to your loved ones, plus reminders, services, and information. Speaking to a voice assistant is as simple as asking a human for help, and you have a ton of choices for devices and systems.

Tip 5: Choose Your Voice Assistant

You can choose from a range of voice assistant models, and each is available on a different device. For example, Amazon's Alexa is available through Kindle Fire devices and plug-in home

devices (some with screens). You can chat with Siri on any Apple device, such as an iPhone, iPad, or Mac, and Google's voice assistant is reachable on smartphones and standalone devices. Most of these tools have [similar interfaces](#), so it comes down to product choice and which device you prefer to use and interact with.

Tip 6: Connect Multiple Devices

Regardless of which voice assistant you choose, the system can tie into other home devices for your comfort, security, and convenience. For example, many doorbell cameras [connect](#) with voice assistants, so you can see who is at the door without actually going to the door. You can also use devices with screens (whether tablets, phones, or standalone speaker devices) to video call your friends and family, just by telling your voice assistant to "call the grandkids." There are [countless](#) other uses for voice assistants, too, notes HP, so try them all!

Learning to navigate new technology is a great exercise in flexing your brainpower *and* staying connected with your loved ones at a distance. With all these options for keeping in touch, you'll feel closer to your family and friends and enjoy your devices more, too.

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