

# Essential tech for seniors

10 devices that all older adults should know about

Mon., March 5, 2018

Today's older adults are the first generation to routinely use high technology in their day-to-day lives. Here are 10 of the best devices that all seniors should embrace, as recommended by Delmanor LivingWell Managers Kristina Lopez Paptic and Tiffany Moraes.

## 1. Tablets, computers and laptops

These devices have been real game changers. And for seniors, tablets — portable and loaded with apps — play an especially important role in communication and cognitive stimulation. “Some favourite apps of our residents include Mind Games and Left vs. Right,” says Lopez. “It’s great for mental stimulation, they can play every day to stay cognitively engaged.” Newspaper apps are also big hits, adds Moraes. “Of course, tablets also open up the world to seniors through email, Skype, Facebook, YouTube and more.”

## 2. Smart phones

The go-to device when you're on the move, seniors love their phones “to communicate with friends and family, and they're also great for emergencies,” says Lopez, who says one of her seniors' favourite phone apps is Uber.

## 3. Smart watches

Apple watches and Fit Bits have lots of applications, but older adults primarily use them as fitness trackers, says Moraes. “Seniors love the novelty of connecting to their steps. Smart watches are more accurate than pedometers at calculating steps. They also show distance, calories burned and more. They have so many functions and they're easy to use.”

## 4. Foldable keyboards

Many seniors find the keyboard on their phone and even their tablet too small for easy use. “Foldable keyboards are very portable and connect to devices using wireless Bluetooth technology so you don't have to use the touchscreens,” says Lopez.

## 5. E-books

Can't get to a bookstore or library? E-books offer great advantages: “You can order a book from the comfort of your home,” says Moraes. “Plus you can adjust the font size if you require larger print.”

## **6. Tiles**

These small tracking devices can attach to almost any item and use Bluetooth technology to connect to your mobile device, locating the item when it goes missing. “For anyone who constantly loses their keys, phone, wallet and more, this is an amazing piece of technology,” enthuses Lopez.

## **7. Assistive technology**

Whether to aid with hearing or sight, there are some great new products, including technology to enlarge your desktop or special phones to help those who have hearing impairments, says Moraes. “There are also devices that connect wirelessly to the television via Bluetooth so a person hard of hearing doesn’t have to turn the volume way up.”

## **8. Light therapy**

These are light boxes that fight off seasonal affective disorder, “recreating light for those who have issues with mood over lack of sunshine,” explains Lopez. The devices and bulbs are portable, affordable and don’t take up much space.

## **9. Sound sleep machines**

This device plays different soothing sounds and blocks out ambient noise to help you sleep. “It’s great for those with short sleep cycles and insomnia,” says Lopez.

## **10. Medical alert systems**

These send alerts for those who may require emergency medical attention, particularly if you’ve fallen or are experiencing a traumatic medical event.