Think about the last time someone did something nice for you, just because. It probably put a smile on your face. While we may be busy in our day, there’s a very deserving group who’d appreciate a kind gesture: seniors. Need some ideas? We have some—51, in fact. Remember, it isn’t about money or even planning. It’s about finding a moment to make a small difference in another person’s life. We invite you to brighten a senior’s day through a random act of kindness. You may find it will brighten yours too.

51 Random Acts of Kindness Toward Seniors

For those seniors you know:

1. Send older relatives a card just to let them know you’re thinking about them.
2. Consult with a senior loved one about a major life event in your life like changing careers, getting married or starting a family.
3. Ask a senior friend or parishioner to lead you in prayer. The intimate bond may benefit you both.
4. Pay a visit to an older friend who lives alone, in a retirement community or in the hospital.
5. Surprise an elderly neighbor with a home-cooked or baked item.
6. Offer to do grocery shopping for an older friend or neighbor.
7. Take an older person’s dog for a walk or offer to clean the litter box.
8. Download Big Band music to a CD, make copies and give them to older neighbors. Donate copies to senior centers, nursing homes or retirement communities.
9. Take your laptop or iPad when you visit a senior. Use the technology to reference items from his or her past that come up in conversation.
10. Give a dog a bone. Leave a bag of higher quality pet food or treats outside the door of an elderly pet owner.
11. Surprise a neighbor by planting flowers to brighten his or her day and summer.
12. Wash an older person’s car, just because.
13. Offer to check and install new batteries in an older neighbor’s smoke alarms. While there, maybe change some light bulbs too.
14. If you love to scrapbook, offer to arrange a senior’s photos into an album to help make perusing photographs more enjoyable.
15. Find out if you share an interest with an elderly neighbor. If you both like to read, read the same book and discuss it. Or if you share a love for cooking, make a meal together or dine at a favorite restaurant.
16. Volunteer to take an older person who no longer drives to church or synagogue.
17. If you’re tech-savvy, spend time with a senior to show him or her how to use a computer—either his or her own or at a public computer lab. Demonstrate how to surf the web or send an email.
18. Help a senior friend sort his or her mail to help make managing bills, personal mail and junk mail less of a chore.
19. Spend an afternoon talking with an older person and listening to his or her music.
20. Rake a senior’s yard, prune back bushes and pick up twigs and branches.
21. Take a neighbor’s trash to the curb or take the newspaper to his or her door.
22. Read the newspaper—even over the telephone—to a senior with poor eyesight.
23. Set up a bird feeder outside an older person’s window at his or her home or retirement community. Stop by often to refill.
24. Invite your senior neighbor over for a cup of tea, a holiday meal or summer cook-out.
25. Offer a little help around the house by vacuuming, sweeping and mopping floors. Or, help make a bed with fresh linens or fold laundry.

26. Pop up popcorn and spend the afternoon watching classic movies with an older adult.

27. If you like to cook, offer to make a senior’s favorite dish or cookie. Exchange your “secret” recipes.

28. Ask an older adult to share thoughts and ideas about the world around you.

29. Make up a basket of fragrant soaps, hand creams and bath salts for an older woman. Every woman, at any age, loves to feel beautiful.

30. Spend some time with the guys. Take an older man to a high school basketball game or drop by and watch a football game on TV. Ask him to share his sports’ days.

31. Offer to take an older person on a Sunday afternoon drive around town or in the neighborhood where he or she grew up.

32. Ask older relatives or neighbors to share their life stories. Offer to record the memories on video or tape to preserve for other family members.

33. Give an older loved one a hug to warm up the heart and a smile.

34. Seek advice from a senior. They have a lot of wisdom and experiences to impart.

For those seniors you’re soon to meet:

35. Help a senior by returning an empty grocery cart to the store.

36. On a rainy day, offer to escort an older adult to his or her car with an umbrella.

37. Make her day. Compliment a senior woman’s dress or hairstyle.

38. Drop off gently used magazines, books, puzzles and games to your local senior center.

39. Help an older person at the store by reaching an item on the top or bottom shelf.

40. Deliver flowers or meals to seniors from your church or temple who are ill or are in the hospital.

41. Become a pen-pal. Socialization is key to a healthy life. Be an outlet for the senior to share his or her insights on a topic or simply how the day was spent.

42. Look an elderly gentleman in the eye and greet him with a sincere “good day.”

43. Take the time to hold open a door for an older adult. Offer your seat in a waiting room or your place in line.

44. Share your talents with seniors at a nursing home. Offer to play old favorites on the community piano or bring your family or friends to make a craft.

45. Share your children’s smiles and laughter with a visit to a retirement community, senior center or nursing home. Have them use bright crayons and markers to make holiday cards for seniors.

46. Deliver and serve a meal at a senior center.

47. Pick up the tab for an older person or couple while having lunch or getting a cup of coffee.

48. Thank a veteran. Send a thank-you note to a local veterans’ lodge or retirement community asking the sentiment be shared with all residing veterans.

49. Approach a working senior to ask his or her advice on how to get into that line of work or what he or she likes about the job or career.

50. Strike up a conversation with a senior walking his or her dog in the park. Ask about the pet and share any pet stories of your own.

51. Smile and ask how he or she is doing today.

Feel free to pass it on, just because.