

5 WAYS TO USE MUSIC

Music is a powerful tool in dementia care – from entertainment to activity to therapy, it can help with daily tasks, provide meaningful stimulation and health and wellbeing benefits. Use our handy tips from experts and celebrities to make music a part of your day.



MOOD CHANGER

Grace Meadows, Music for Dementia Campaign Director and music therapist

Music is our emotions put into sound. It sets off a series of chemical reactions in our brains, altering how we feel about ourselves and the world around us and helps to manage and regulate behaviour. Use familiar up-tempo music to lift mood and distract, or soothing music to calm and reassure.



MAKING NEW MEMORIES

Catherine Loveday, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience

When we think of music, memories are often evoked. However, when we experience music, both old and new, in the here and now, we're also making new memories. For family and carers of someone living with dementia, that's happening across generations and those memories can be treasured for many years to come – remembering the person you care for through music, for who they are beyond their dementia.



PHYSICALLY CONNECTING

Sophie Scott CBE, Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience

Music that we love affects us – emotionally, physically, spiritually. Music can reach parts of the brain that are unaffected by dementia, and be a source of connection, reduce stress, and help improve everyone's mood. Ways to enhance this can include moving to the music – especially dancing together, where possible. Music and affectionate touch (like a hug) are both ways of expressing and communicating love, compassion and comfort.



CREATING CONVERSATION

Lauren Laverne, broadcaster and Music for Dementia Ambassador

Music is a conversation and there are many ways we can have those musical conversations. Be it with words, through eye contact and gestures, singing along to songs or listening to favourite music together, these can all spark moments for connection. Music is a powerful means of communication – use it as your bond to enable people to share and express feelings and emotions beyond the spoken word.



EXERCISE & MOVEMENT

Dame Arlene Phillips, choreographer, theatre director, TV presenter, and former dancer

We are musical beings, with rhythm built into us through our heartbeats. Whatever our age, music increases motivation, reduces feelings of fatigue, helps motor and movement co-ordination. The link between our auditory and motor neurons means our bodies and brains respond to what we hear. Choose music that motivates you to help you incorporate exercise and movement into each day.