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It is important to keep occupied and look after your mental health while cooped up at home. On this site we hope to bring you a wide and varied range of ideas for keeping yourself amused while locked down. Most of our ideas are free and some will be suggestions of helpful items or services that you may find particularly valuable during this time.

1. Make a family quiz. Set aside a couple of hours to prepare a fun quiz for your family. Questions could range from general knowledge to things specific to your own household!
2. Catch up with friends that you haven’t spoken to in a while. Most of us have a lot more time on our hands right now due to less time socialising outside of the home. Why not text that couple you met on holiday last year, or check up with an old schoolfriend?
3. Deep clean your house. With all the extra time spent at home, it´s never been a better time to give your house a full deep clean. Your mental health will soar when your environment is neater and more organised.
4. Declutter and redecorate
5. Take up a hobby
6. Gardening
7. Take in an audiobook with Audible.
8. Cook more exciting meals

**VIDEOCALLING**

We recommend that if you are visiting this page because you don´t like to deal with technology then you use Skype to videocall. This is because it is very easy to get started by going to <https://www.skype.com/en/free-conference-call/> and following the instructions

**What we´re watching**

Keeping occupied while staying home can be as simple as reading a good book.

There´s a wide range of media available to you directly from your electronic devices, from Netflix, to Audible, to Disney+. Below is a list of some of the favourite ways that we´ve been passing the time.

Signup for a free trial, claim your free audiobook to keep, and then cancel anytime with no commitment to pay anything.

Audible is a service giving you access to a library of thousands of audiobooks. There is a 30-day free trial available here, you will have 30 days to browse through Audible´s content as well as being able to claim a free audiobook to keep forever.

Just for signing up, without buying a membership, Audible has free audiobooks for kids.

Audiobooks are super handy for keeping up with books even while homelife is a little bit more hectic. Listening to an audiobook is a great way to keep entertained and to allow your mind some freedom while doing other things such as working, cooking, or looking after kids.

The membership includes :

* Monthly or annual [credits](http://audible.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/6013) good for any title on Audible.
* Select up to 2 [Audible Original titles each month](http://audible.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/9610)
* 30% discount on additional purchases
* [Easy audiobook exchanges](http://audible.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/4592)
* Access to Original Premium Podcasts
* [Daily deals](http://audible.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/6415) - popular and highly-rated titles discounted each day
* [Complimentary newspaper subscriptions](http://audible.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/9742)

Some good ones are…

TOP WAYS TO MAKE A SMALL GARDEN SEEM BIGGER

Fairy lights

Hanging fairy lights is a great way to make you garden seem bigger. A few fairy lights can make a garden seem a lot more welcoming and the oddly shaped shadows that they cast masks the smallness of the space.

Garden furniture (stackable)

Having good quality garden furniture is a must for any garden. In smaller gardens we would especially recommend furniture that can be packed away to use the space for other activities. For this purpose, plastic stackable chairs are brilliant, but beware, some (but by no means all!) plastic chairs can seem tacky. We would recommend something of this (PUT LINK HERE) style from Amazon

Storage box

An outdoor storage box is amazing for reducing clutter and helping to get the most out of your space. Having a secure, weatherproof place to store your gardening tools, extra patio furniture and odd bits and pieces will mean that your garden is easier on the eye and has more breathing room.

Plants

Hanging plants and potted plants around the edges of your garden is a fun way of blurring the boundaries and creating the illusion of more space. Adding a few plant pots will draw the eye and create little centrepieces for entertaining which can also be a great way of displaying the creative personality of your garden.

Free online courses resources

edX edX is a website bringing together free courses from big name universities like MIT, Harvard, and Berkeley. There are a range of free, in-depth courses covering computer science, languages, business, and more. To get an official certification is not free, however the knowledge and skills gained with the courses will speak for themselves.

Duolingo “The best new way to learn a language“ Duolingo is a free that promises to teach you a language using their fun method of bite-sized lessons and gamified elements like leader boards and a (frustratingly addictive) tracker that tells you how many consecutive days of practice you´ve logged. The free version contains some ads but all of the content is completely free.

<https://www.coursera.org/>

Create a scrapbook. Saving your memories of past trips and events in scrapbook is a lot of fun. While looking through your old photos and organising them, you’re reliving past events

Tips for creating a quiz to play with your family

Creating and playing your own quizzes is a cool, competitive way to get everyone engaged. Take it in turns in your household to swap “questionmasters” and ask your questions to the rest of the group. Below are some suggestions to get you started

Don´t make your questions too difficult. The aim is to have fun so add in some elements of randomness by including purely chance elements such as “the youngest player gains 2 points”, or multiple choice questions that are sufficiently hard that they´re almost random “(what´s the population of Argentina, A, B, C?).

Tailor your questions to your group. If you have a lot of music fans, consider adding some guess-the-into rounds, if your group is mostly movie buffs, consider adding some guess-the-quote rounds.

Don´t take it too seriously, it´s supposed to be a bit of fun. Sticking to pop culture, current affairs, and interesting local facts are all good way to make sure that everyone can participate and have fun. Having too many serious questions about dry subject can make the quiz feel slower.

Here are some examples to get you started:

Guess the famous face– Find a paparazzi photo of a celebrity trying to look incognito and have your players guess who it is

Guess the ages – Guess the ages of you favourite celebrities. Does anyone really know how old Meryl Streep is?

Observation – Add some quirky elements, for example, how many photographs are there on each floor of the house?

Guess the theme tune – Play the first 5-10 seconds of the theme song from a TV series and have your players guess.

First line of a book – Read the first line of a book to your players and guess which book.

Writing around 20-30 questions split into three rounds should take around 45 minutes to complete. Adding in drinks breaks between rounds can stretch this out to a full hour of entertainment.

Let´s get quizzy with it!

Learn to cook

Whilst most of us are confined to our homes right now, we can still explore the world through our taste buds. Getting interesting and exotic ingredients is easy for most of use and there are swaths of information and recipes online to guide us through upping our cooking game

Let´s start with some resources for levelling up or cooking.

Here are a few of our favourite recipes

Tortilla Soup by The Spruce Eats <https://www.thespruceeats.com/el-toritos-sopa-de-tortilla-recipe-1809159> This is a super simple and sublimely delicious recipe for tortilla soup. The recipe calls for chicken thighs and chicken broth but I´ve made it without the thighs and with vegetable broth to make a tasty vegetarian version.

Macaroni Cheese by BBC Food <https://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/macaronicheese_83521> This