

Linda's Favorite Activity Kits

Start Purchasing at Dollar Tree:

- **Greeting Cards in a plastic sorting box:** Buy 12-15 greeting cards – pictures of babies, weddings, dogs and cats, and religious pictures are best – the front needs to have a great photo on it. Mix it up in a box and ask “Can you help me find a birthday card? Can you help me match the envelopes with the cards??”
- **Arranging flowers in Vase for a Centerpiece:** Buy silk flowers and a couple of plastic vases... and buy a plastic container to contain them in. Ask: “Can you help me make a centerpiece for the table?”
- **Sorting Decks of Cards:** Buy a red deck of cards and a blue or black deck of cards, and a plastic shoe box to contain them in. Mix up the cards in the box. Ask: “My cards are a mess, I don’t even know if they are all there. Can you help separate the two decks of cards, the red deck from the black deck?” If the elder can do that, then ask: “Can you count all the cards? Does each deck have 52 cards?” Or even: “Can you sort the decks by suite – hearts, diamonds, clubs and spades, so I can see if I have all the cards?”
- **Sorting / Organizing a Tool Box:** Buy as many items for a tool box (including the tool box) as you can at Dollar Tree, including a small flashlight, work gloves, a measuring tape, etc. You will need to finish at Walmart if Dollar Tree doesn’t have enough items. Mess up the box and ask: “My tool box is a mess, can you help me organize it?”
- **Sorting / Organizing a Fish Tackle Box:** Buy as many items for a fish tackle box (including a toll box) as you can at Dollar Tree, you will need to finish purchasing items at Walmart. Have maintenance remove any hooks from fishing lures. Mess up the box and ask: “My fishing box is a mess, can you help me organize it?”
- **Sorting / Organizing a Sewing Box:** Buy as many items for a sewing box that you can at Dollar Tree, you will need to finish at Walmart – including buying the sewing box itself. I often buy discount spools of lace that the organizer needs to roll back up for the bottom section. Mess up the sewing box and ask: “My sewing box is a mess, can you help me organize it?”
- **Folding Laundry:** Buy a laundry basket from Dollar Tree, along with some baby clothes if they have them – and at least 12 pairs of different socks. Fill the basket with lost laundry items at the facility, but the trick is to include at least 12 pairs of socks – because then laundry folding lasts longer as it takes awhile to sort and match the socks. It also lasts longer if you include baby clothes if you can find them at Dollar Tree. Ask: “Can you help me fold the laundry...we need some of the items in here, we really need the help.”

Other items to purchase at Dollar Tree:

- Feather duster = to have someone help dusting

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Finish Purchasing at Walmart:

- **Sorting Buttons:** Buy a plastic sort box in the craft section. Buy a bag of assorted buttons – different sizes and colors. Ask: "I need to do some mending this weekend, and my buttons are a mess! Can you help me sort them by color?"
- **Sorting Quilting Fabric:** Buy a large plastic box. In the sewing section you can buy pre-cut squares of fabric. Buy at least 4 packages of different patterns, and mess them up in the box. Ask: "I want to make a quilt with some of the ladies.... But I need to organize my quilting squares by color and by pattern. Can you help me?"
- **Sorting Poker Chips:** Buy a set of poker chips and a poker caddy. The poker caddy may be pricey, but it is worth it. Ask: We want to play some cards...but our poker chips are a mess. Can you help us organize the poker chips?"
- **Sorting Screws & Washers:** Buy two small plastic sorting containers in the craft section. Go to the hardware section and for one box – buy different size nuts and bolts, and for the other one – different sizes of washers. Ask: "Our maintenance department have asked for some help....can you help sort these by size? They are a mess..... we really need the help."
- **Rolling Yarn:** This one is best for elders with late stage dementia. Buy a wicker basket, and several skeins of yarn. The yarn should be thicker – and variegated if possible. In the basket start the ball of yarn – rolling it into a ball. Start several of the skeins into a small ball that the elder can finish. Ask: "We want to do some knitting and crocheting. Can you help us roll the yarn into a ball?"
- **Sorting / Rolling Lace:** Buy a plastic box / container. In the sewing section buy several different kinds of lace – at least 8 different skeins – the more old-fashioned the better. Buy skeins of lace on the roll that are almost empty and at a bargain price... not a full one. Go to a fabric store if you can't find almost empty rolls at Walmart. Mess them up and unroll them all the way in the box. Ask: "We want to do some sewing projects, but our lace is a mess. Can you help us organize it and place it back on the rolls?"
- **Sanding a Birdhouse:** Buy a plastic box, and some sandpaper. In the craft section you should be able to find some small sanding woodwork projects such as a birdhouse that can fit into the box. Ask: "We want to put out some birdhouses outside of our windows, will you help us sand this down before we paint or stain it?"

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Purchase elsewhere:

Rolling Pennies into a Bank Roll: Purchase a plastic box. Go to the bank and get \$5 in pennies, and several coin rolls for rolling the pennies into it. Ask: "We need some help before we go to the bank, would you help us roll these pennies up into the rolls?"

Old Jewelry Kit: This kit works well for elders with late stage dementia, but needs donations from family members to create a lot of older jewelry pieces in an old jewelry box. When you put it together – Mess it up. Ask: "Will you help us organize this jewelry box?"

