

50 of the Best Online Resources for Senior Citizens

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According to an article published by the University of Minnesota, as people get older they face a myriad of challenges linked to the problem of ageism. The same article notes that the psychological and biological effects of aging result in pronounced mental and physical health challenges for many (Source).

Apart from dealing with health issues, as people get older, they have to deal with other challenges linked to consumer protection, access to education and jobs, and finding affordable housing. Senior citizens also have to think about tax and legal matters, and life after retirement. On the brighter side, they also have lots of time to travel and to get involved in their hobbies. So, they need information about travel and recreation activities which meet their specific needs.

To help seniors navigate life's challenges, the U.S. government used to have a website called Seniors.gov. Unfortunately, however, the site is no longer published. So, where do senior citizens go if they want to find curated resources linked to housing, legal issues, money and taxes, travel and leisure, and others? We did our research and put together a list of the most reputable and helpful sites.

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What Happened to Seniors.gov

The website, Seniors.gov appeared on the internet in 1999 as part of a response to the promise made by the then U.S. Vice President Al Gore in 1997. In the introduction to his report entitled, *Access America: Reengineering Through Information Technology*, Gore wrote that his view of the government of the future was one that would ensure that all Americans had access to services through electronic technology.

During its early days, Seniors.gov, operated under the tagline “*Access America for Seniors is a government-wide initiative to deliver electronic services from government agencies and organizations to seniors.*” Visitors to the site could access information about benefits for seniors, employment opportunities, and education and training, among others (Source).

By 2000, the website was describing itself as “*The website to conduct business with & get information from the government...all in one place!*” (Source). However, by the end of the same year, the site was redirecting to FirstGov.com. Between 2007 and 2015, the website had a new home at usa.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtm. As the year 2015 came to an end, launching the site simply produced an error message.

It isn't clear why the website was consolidated into other sites and what eventually happened to it. What we do know, however, is that there are many credible resources on the internet that senior citizens can use to accomplish their tasks.

Consumer Protection for Seniors

Using Federal funds provided by the United States' Department of Justice, four authors, Kristy Holtfreter, Michael Reising, Daniel Mears, and Scott Wolfe, produced a report entitled, *Financial Exploitation of the Elderly in a Consumer Context*. All four authors work in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice in their respective universities.

Even though this 186-page report is aimed at “researchers, practitioners, and policymakers,” there's useful information for elderly people looking for ways to protect themselves from fraud. It also provides some information about state-based programs that the elderly can use if they have been victims.

CreditUnion.gov has produced a video providing information about scams targeting seniors. You can watch the video below.

The AARP Foundation defines its work as involving “tackling senior poverty by sparking bold, innovative solutions that help vulnerable older adults build economic opportunity and social connectedness.” According to the foundation, it works with hundreds of volunteers to help seniors identify, circumvent, and report fraud scams. The foundation's website provides tools and additional information to help protect consumers against financial exploitation.

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Education, Jobs and Volunteering

The internet has opened up a myriad of opportunities for older people who want to continue their education and learn new skills. One of the leading organizations involved in helping seniors use their existing skills, hobbies, experience, and knowledge to create sustainable incomes is Udemy. Udemy is an educational technology company which connects instructors to students across the world.

An example of a great course for seniors on the Udemy platform is the Work from Home Ideas for Retired Seniors. Even though this course offers a certificate upon completion, students don't have to pay anything to enroll.

The SeniorJobBank describes itself as "a meeting place for over-50 job seekers and the employers seeking their services." According to the owners of the service, they aim to offer opportunities for a full range of employment disciplines and types. Hence, the facility could be useful for people looking either for part-time opportunities or for fulltime work.

VolunteerForever is an online resource for seniors seeking volunteer opportunities and source funding for those initiatives. This resource provides a chance for volunteers to leave reviews about experiences they have had working on different projects. You can learn more about the best volunteer programs, organizations, and projects here.

End-of-life Issues

Seniors looking for wide-ranging information regarding end of life issues can consult an array of books which can help them come to terms with the inevitability of death. We identified a few books that can be useful in this regard.

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End (Access it here)

Being with Dying: Cultivating Compassion and Fearlessness in the Presence of Death (Find the book here)

Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs, and Communication of the Dying (Gain access here).

The University of California San Francisco Health (UCSF) provides resources for end of life. Some of the resources available include the following.

Planning for burial or cremation (Full article here).

Practical tasks following death (Learn about things such as which documents to compile here)

Bereavement resources and services (Find these services here).

Family Caregivers Online provides free courses dealing with end of life. These courses are mostly aimed at caregivers. They provide skills related to funeral planning, talking about death, and how caregivers can take care of themselves while they are also taking care of an older person.

Federal and State Agencies for Seniors

Seniorliving.org provides a comprehensive guide to government aid for seniors. The website offers some information about how the government helps seniors to access services like housing, health, nutrition, and employment. According to the owners of this site, what makes it different is that it doesn't operate from direct paid advertising; hence, it is unbiased.

Eldercare Locator is a resource that describes itself as a "nationwide service that connects older Americans and their caregivers with trustworthy local support resources." This resource is mostly useful for people looking for information about local and state agencies for aging, and community-based organizations which assist seniors and their caregivers.

The National Center on Elder Abuse, established in 1988 by the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA), provides information about research, resources, training, and news on elder abuse. The primary principle guiding this organization is that every individual, no matter what their age is, has the right to live a full and independent life, where they control the choices they make about their experiences.

Health for Seniors

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services provides access to agencies that have programs which give seniors a better quality of life. Seniors can learn more about the programs offered by the state and locate resources here.

Among seniors, Alzheimer's disease is the leading cause of dementia (Source). The National Institute on Ageing website provides more information about the condition. It also delivers tips, news, and resources for healthcare professionals and caregivers. If you'd like to get more information about Alzheimer's and Dementia, you can send an email to adear@nia.nih.gov or call the Alzheimer's & Related Dementias Education & Referral Center at 1-800-438-4380 during the week. They are open between 8:30 am-5:00 pm Eastern Time.

Housing for Seniors

Seniors and their families can seek a home through the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The program pays part of the cost of accommodating an individual to the landlord, and the family pays the difference. To find out if you could be eligible for this benefit, you can answer some questions here.

FindLaw's Elderly Rental Assistance Programs platform provides other options for housing for seniors. This housing resource also educates seniors on tenants' rights and housing/age discrimination.

Laws and Regulations

One of the challenges seniors often face is age discrimination, particularly in the workplace. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission provides details about Age Discrimination in Employment Act which protects employees over 40 from being treated unfavorably based on their age.

Seniors can get more information regarding elder abuse from the U.S. Department of Justice's Elder Justice Initiative (EJI). Interested individuals can access highlighted EJI resources here.

The Pro Bono Project provides legal services to senior citizens who can't afford to pay for a lawyer. Interested individuals can apply for free services on this page.

The Area Agency on Aging also provides legal assistance for seniors. This organization has many branches across America. The Florida-based Alliance for Aging is one of these branches. Elders seeking answers to legal questions can also contact lawyers directly on Elderlawanswers.com.

Money and Taxes

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has a money and tax resource guide which can be downloaded as a PDF here. The guide is useful for someone who wants to know:

- Why seniors are at risk of being financially exploited
- Who the perpetrators of senior financial exploitation usually are
- The methods criminals typically employ when they exploit seniors
- How to plan for unexpected events

Taxes can often be tricky, and even more so when you are older. Seniors can get tax counseling free of charge through the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program. The program provides help with filing tax returns electronically or manually with the assistance of volunteers who have been trained by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Retirement

The Center for Retirement Research is well-suited to an academically-inclined senior. It provides annual reports, graphs, and other data related to retirement. It also provides users with access to research papers and information on public pension plans. This resource also offers a tool to help you reach retirement targets.

Several websites have a wide range of news articles for seniors to help them manage their retirement better. One source is the USNews. This site has a dedicated retirement section and a retirement calculator which gives users an idea of how long their retirement savings are likely to last them.

Travel and Recreation

You finally have time to see the world! However, before you pack your bags, please visit Travel.State.gov to prepare for your trip. This site helps users ensure that they have the right documents for different destinations. It also deals with issues linked to being prepared for emergencies.

TravelSassySeniors.com provides information that makes traveling easier for seniors. Some helpful articles featured on the website include:

- *Travel Insurance for Seniors* (Read the article)
- *Best Seniors Travel Destinations in the USA* (The full report can be found here)
- *What To Do In Quebec City* (Find out here)

SeniorLiving.org has a dedicated page with a broad range of leisurely activities for seniors. The page provides information about activities that can be done from the comfort of your home, such as arts and crafts, gardening, and cooking. It also advises on places you can visit around America such as Florida, Alaska, and New York City. For those seniors who want to broaden their horizons, it has information about England, Italy, and France.

Conclusion

Getting older can be daunting for some people, especially if they are unsure of what to expect. However, being armed with information can make the process easier. With the help of the resources provided in the article, we hope that your experience as a senior citizen will be a much more enjoyable one.