

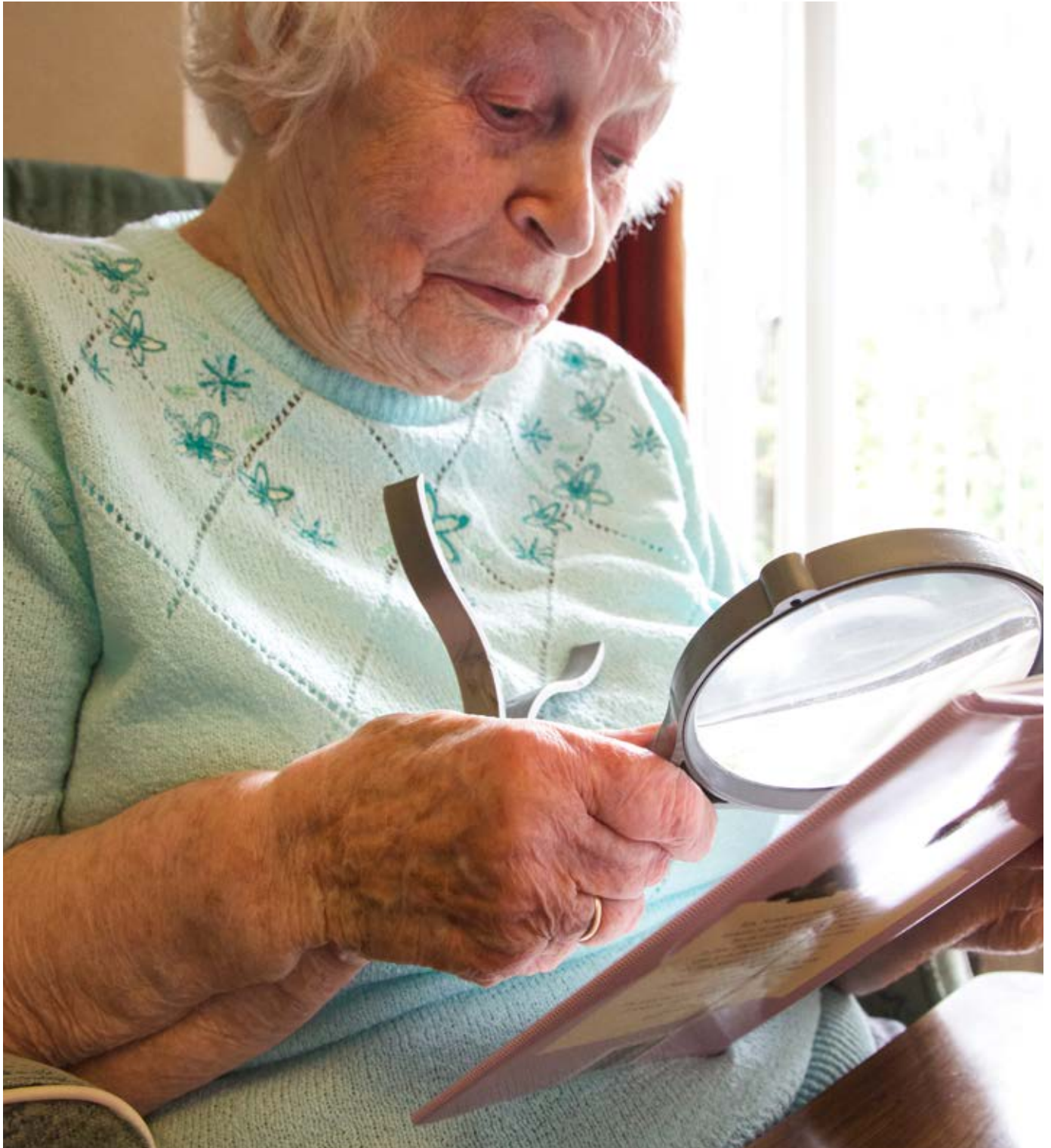


## **Tips to help people with dementia and sight loss in the home**

Nearly a third of people with dementia have significant sight loss and many more are wearing the wrong glasses. Regular eye health check-ups, applying simple use of colour contrast features and appropriate lighting in the home can support someone living with dementia to understand their environment better and be as independent as possible for longer. Below are important considerations to help reduce falls, anxiety and frustrations and promote independence.

- 1.** Avoid patterns on surfaces such as carpets, walls, bedding and kitchen worktops and remove loose rugs.
- 2.** Avoid contrasted grouting around tiles. Blend in colour of grouting similar to the surrounding tiles.
- 3.** Light switches should contrast with the walls and ideally have a wider switch that is easier to press than traditional wall light switches.
- 4.** Removing cupboard doors in the kitchen or replacing with clear perspex doors can aid better sight of contents and memory prompting.
- 5.** Use a contrasting toilet seat to the white porcelain. Tiles behind the sink and shower should contrast to the white fixtures also.
- 6.** Plain bed covers and a headboard that contrasts with the walls and floors can help people with dementia and sight loss locate the bed easier.
- 7.** Contrasting doors or frames are easier to see. Using pictures, braille or signifiers on doors of key rooms such as bathroom, will help with identification.

- 8.** A dark sofa on a dark carpet can have light plain cushions to support their identification.
- 9.** Furniture should remain in a consistent position to support orientation or wayfinding and reduce trip hazards.
- 10.** Sensory experiences such as wind chimes, water features or plants that rustle in the wind, can provide a multi-sensory environment and help those with sight loss orientate their way around the garden.



## Lighting for people with dementia and sight loss

As we get older, we need more light, with a 60 year old needing around three times as much light as a 20 year old. Most people with sight loss benefit from enhanced lighting, although some eye conditions cause painful glare in normal lighting levels. People with dementia and sight loss can benefit from good lighting to help reduce the stress caused by not being able to interpret the environment.

- 1.** A good, even spread of light (ambient lighting) across rooms is vital for people with dementia and sight loss to help reduce the incidences of falls and hallucinations.
- 2.** Non-permanent lighting in wardrobes and in kitchen cupboards supports older eyes in darker spaces.
- 3.** Under-cupboard lighting in kitchens can help illuminate task work on the worktop. A pelmet may be needed to shield the user from glare.
- 4.** Beware of pools of light on floors from windows as they can be confusing and can sometimes be mistaken as obstructions.
- 5.** Glare-preventing blinds such as vertical blinds allow enough daylight into rooms whilst reducing glare.
- 6.** Moveable cordless task lamps are great to support tasks such as reading and writing.
- 7.** All lampshades should fully cover the bulb to avoid painful glare.
- 8.** LED bulbs light up immediately whereas many CFL bulbs can take time to get up to full brightness. Immediate lighting is particularly important in hallways, on stairs, and in bathrooms and so LED bulbs are recommended in those areas to support people with dementia and sight loss.

### Sight Loss Advice Service

**We're here for everyone  
affected by sight loss.**

Get in touch with us on  
**0303 123 9999** or visit  
**[rnib.org.uk/advice](https://rnib.org.uk/advice)**



**You can also  
contact  
Alzheimer  
Society**

**Helpline: 0333 150 3456**  
**Visit: [alzheimers.org.uk](https://alzheimers.org.uk)**