

ALL ABOUT SMART HOME SPEAKERS

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Agenda

- What is a smart home speaker/device
- What you need to get started
- Most popular smart home speakers/devices
- Amazon's Echo, Google Home, Apple Homepod
- Smart Home Products – lights, thermostat, garage door etc
- Are Smart Devices secure

Amazon Echo



Amazon Dot



Amazon Spot



Amazon Show



Apple
HomePod



Google Home



What is a Smart Home Speaker?

“Like a genie on your countertop, smart speakers let you speak a command and have your wish come true”

A smart home speaker is a device plugged in at home that uses its internet connection to adhere to spoken commands such as turning on music, setting reminders and timers.

Smart speakers are dominating the smart home market and are now owned by 1 in 4 Americans

Smart speakers now work in conjunction with smart home devices such as lighting, thermostat and locks. Imagine not having to look for the remote to change the channel.

What do you need to start

1. A “smart” speaker - plugged in and connected to your home’s internet.
2. The accompanying APP downloaded to your smartphone - can be used to control features and settings on your speaker.
3. You need an account for your speaker/app – create a username and strong password.
4. Lastly, your voice.

Popular Smart Home Speakers

- Amazon Echo (using Alexa)
- Google Home (using Google Assistant)
- Apple Homepod (using Siri)



Amazon Echo - Alexa



- Echo, Echo Dot and new Echo Show are the speakers/device, Alexa is the voice – use the prompt “Alexa”
- Features:
 - **Play Music** - from your preferred music streaming services, including Amazon Music, Pandora, and Spotify – “Alexa play Elton John”
 - **Hands-free communication** - message or call loved ones but only those using Alexa
 - **Control smart home devices** - dim the lights, adjust room temperature, or find content on your TV
 - **Alexa** - ask Alexa to read the news, do math problems, report the weather, and a lot more using Alexa skills.
- For more information on Echo products: tomsguide.com/us/amazon-alexa-buying-guide,review-3904.html

All About Alexa

- Alexa voice command is free with an Amazon account. If you have a Prime Membership (\$119/yr) then additional benefits for Alexa are included.
- Prime Members receive more benefits from Alexa:
 - Voice Shopping – “Alexa, add toothpaste to my cart”
 - Exclusive deals - “Alexa, what are your deals?”
 - Prime Music – “Alexa, play 70’s disco”
 - Track Amazon Packages – “Alexa, where’s my stuff”
- Order a meal, Recipes, 7-Minute Workout, Watch TV and Movies (using firestick)

Popular Alexa Command - The Intercom

- If you have more than one Echo, you can turn both Echos into an in-home intercom system. Even if you don't have two devices, you can still use this feature with the Alexa app for mobile devices – It's called “DROP IN” - you need to turn it on before you can use Drop In - *Go to Communicate, then Contacts, then Profile.*
- To Use - Go to Devices, Tap Device name, then Communications, then Drop In “on”. You can choose which of your devices you want to connect to, place the call on speaker, and mute your mic.
- You can turn on “Drop In” for specific people/contacts. I can now “DROP IN” on my Mom in Florida! They need to have an Alexa
- Please note - You can use the Alexa app to drop in on other devices, but other devices can't drop in on the Alexa app. (no one can “drop in” to your smartphone)

Click here for step-by-step instructions on Drop In <https://tinyurl.com/y673nq5j>

Alexa Skills

Alexa listens to basic commands by knowing what Amazon software has programmed. Alexa already knows how to tell the time, set alarms and timers, or answer general questions such as how many feet in a mile.

- But Alexa also has the ability to learn more commands based on your customized needs.
- These are called “Skills” – Add Skills for Meditation, Find your Phone, Local Weather alerts. If you have smart products in your home, then Alexa Skills can also turn off your lights, shut the garage door, and lock the door after you leave the house.
- For more Skills information :
 - www.cnet.com/how-to/amazon-echo-most-useful-alexa-skills/
 - <https://tinyurl.com/y4yf9nfm>

"Alexa, what are your top skills?"



"Alexa, Play Jeopardy!"

Jeopardy!

★★★★★ 1,819



"Alexa, ask Question of the Day."

Question of the Day

★★★★★ 1,806



"Alexa, ask Jurassic Bark to bark"

Jurassic Bark

★★★★★ 37



"Alexa, open Thunderstorm Sounds"

Ambient Sounds: Thunderstorm Sou...

★★★★★ 7,708

"Alexa, recommend some skills."



"Alexa launch Daily Meditations"

Daily Meditations

★★★★★ 1



"Alexa, open the magic door"

The Magic Door

★★★★★ 780



"Alexa, ask Meditation Studio to play a meditation."

Meditation Studio

★★★★★ 37



"Alexa, start Peaceful Habit"

Peaceful Habit

★★★★★ 64

"Alexa, what are your popular skills?"



"Alexa, open Fireplace Sounds"

Ambient Sounds: Fireplace Sounds

★★★★★ 765



"Alexa, play Teen Jeopardy!"

Teen Jeopardy!

★★★★★ 42



"Alexa, start seven minute workout."

7-Minute Workout

★★★★★ 320



"Alexa, play Sports Jeopardy!"

Sports Jeopardy!

★★★★★ 28

Go to Amazon.com - Alexa User Guide

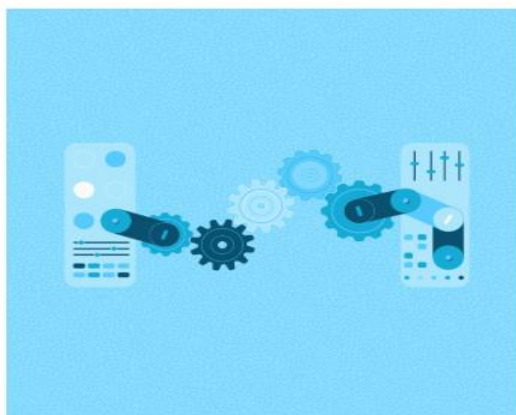
Alexa User Guide: Learn What Alexa Can Do



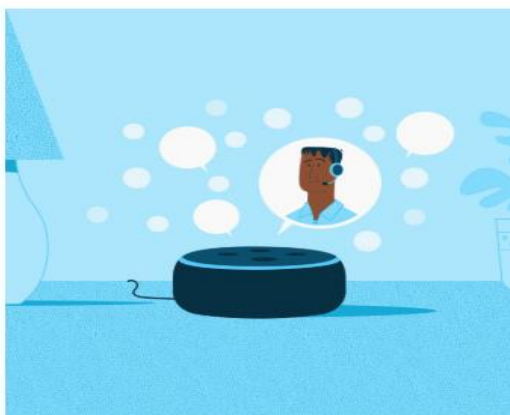
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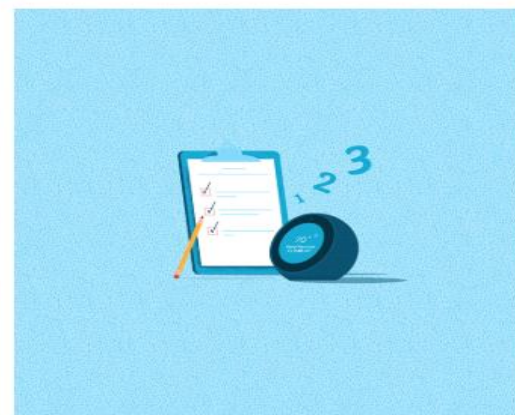
Alexa Blog



Alexa Settings & Controls

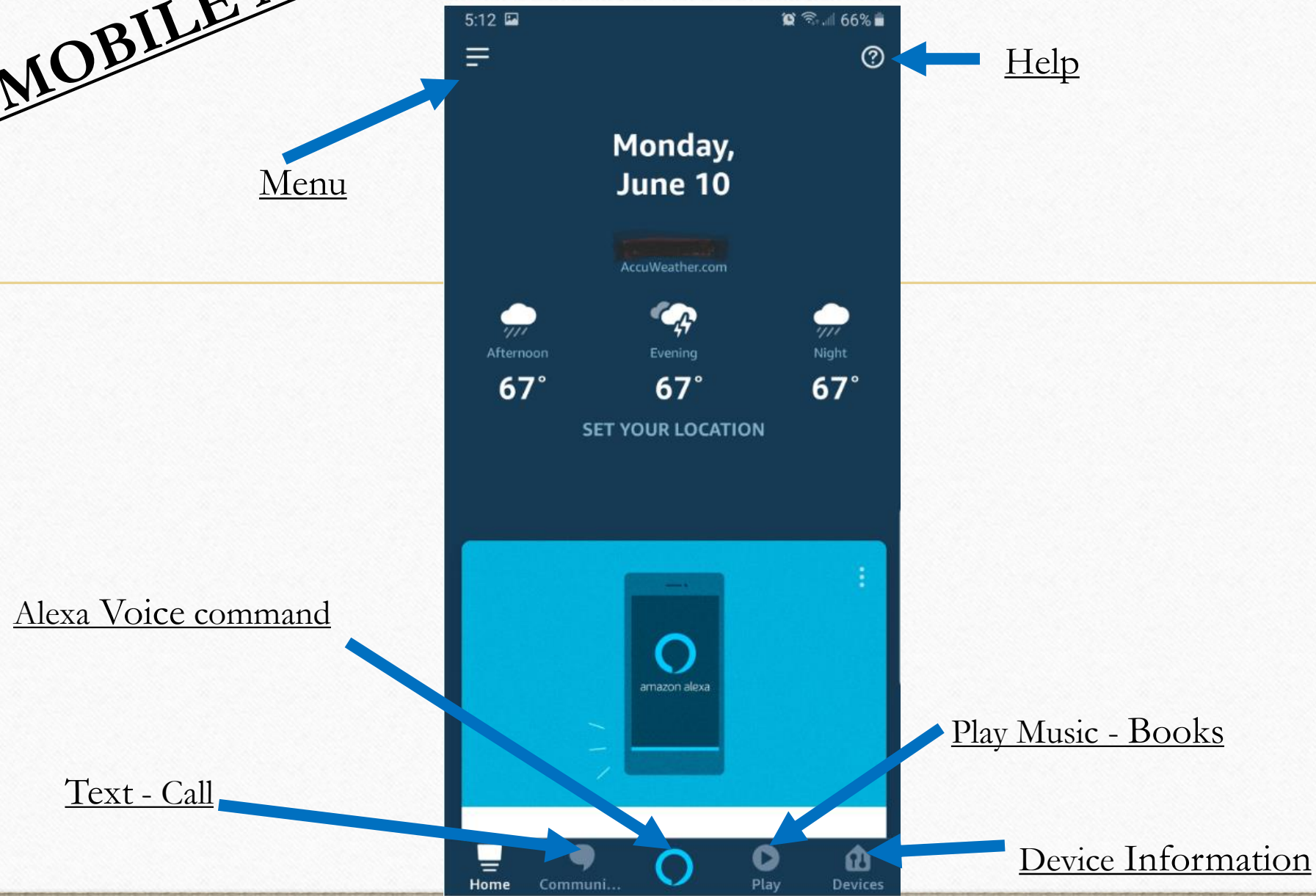


Alexa Help & Support



Getting Started with Alexa

ALEXA MOBILE APP



Alexa App

To use all of Alexa's features you need to download the Alexa app (no charge) from your phone's app store:

App Features:

Home screen shows your Alexa activity. You can use the icons at the bottom of the screen to switch between the following views:

- **Home** - Scroll through the "cards" to see descriptions of your recent Alexa interactions.
- **Communication** - Access and manage your Alexa Calling and Messaging conversations.
- **Alexa** - Talk to Alexa and use supported Alexa features directly through the app.
- **Play - Music & Books** - View and control playback for music and media.
- **Devices** - View, add, or remove your Alexa and Alexa-enabled devices.

App Menu - menu icon to manage Alexa features and settings.



- **Lists** - View and manage your Shopping and To-do lists.
- **Reminders & Alarms** - View and manage timers and alarms.
- **Routines** - Set up a series of actions to complete from a single voice command.
- **Skills & Games** - Find and enable skills and games, which add various voice-driven capabilities to your Alexa device.
- **Things to Try** - View a list of example phrases you can say.
- **Help & Feedback** - Get help for your Alexa device, contact customer service, or submit feedback about your experience.
- **Settings** – device settings, notifications etc

Google Home – Google Assistant



- Google Home, Hub and Google Home Mini are the speakers and Google Assistant is the voice - using prompts “Ok Google or Hey Google”
- Features:
 - **Play Music** - from your preferred music streaming services, including Google Music, Pandora, and Spotify
 - **Hands-free communication** - message or call loved ones actual phone
 - **Find my Phone** – “Hey Google, find my phone”
 - **Control smart devices** - dim the lights, adjust room temperature, or find content on your TV
 - **Hey Google** - ask Google to read the news, do math problems, report the weather, and a lot more using Google Routines.
- For more information on Google Home products: <https://www.androidcentral.com/google-home-vs-google-home-mini>

All About Google Assistant

- Begin a conversation with Google Assistant by simply saying “Ok Google or Hey Google”
- Need a Google account and the Google Home app downloaded from your phone’s app store
- Google Assistant is their version of Amazon’s Alexa – both provide hundreds of commands
 - Hey Google, set timer for 15 minutes
 - Hey Google, will it rain today?
 - Google Assistant can also set Calendar events: “Hey Google, add an event to my calendar”
 - For more Google commands go to <https://www.cnet.com/how-to/google-home-complete-list-of-commands-so-far/>
 - Please note – Google Assistant for iPhones has limitations

Google Home Mobile App



Google Home

Home



Off



On



Play



Broadcast



Add



Settings

Living room

1 device



Living Room TV

[Play music](#)

Office

6 devices



3

Office lights



Office TV

Apple's Homepod - Siri



- Homepod is the speaker/device and Siri is the voice – using prompt “Siri” – no additional app needed
- Homepod is a great speaker for Apple users who are *music enthusiasts*.
- In the smart speaker world, Homepod does not compete overall with Alexa or Google Home, who offer more crossover apps.
- ****Important**** Homepods are not compatible with Android or other speaker devices. As with all Apple products, they like to keep it in the family.
- HomePods tend to be expensive- Apple will be releasing a smaller less expensive model soon
- For more Information: <https://techcrub.com/apple-homepod-review/>

Smart Home Products



Latest Information for Smart Home Products: <https://www.cnet.com/news/the-best-smart-home-devices-of-2020-amazon-alexa-google-assistant-echo-dot-nest-hello-arlo/>

What is a Smart Home Product

- Smart Home Products are the newest technology to hit mainstream
- Smart products let you control your lighting, thermostat, or even your crockpot from your smartphone.
- From GE to Belkin to Home Depot, tons of products and whole ecosystems help you control your home via a single iOS, Android or Samsung app.
- Today, most smart products work with smart speakers – use voice commands to turn off your lights! “Alexa, lock my front door” “Hey Google, turn on my AC”

Reviews for best Smart Products: www.cnet.com/topics/smart-home/best-smart-home-devices/

We are one step closer to living next door to the Jetsons!

Smart Home Products



- Lighting – Smart lighting allows you to control your lights from an app or voice – turn off the lights around your home while lying in your bed!
 - For more information <https://www.cnet.com/news/best-smart-light-bulbs-of-2020-switches-colors-light-strips-panels-and-more/>
 - www.techradar.com/news/what-is-smart-lighting-everything-you-need-to-know-for-your-connected-home
- Thermostats – Smart Thermostats allow you to control the climate in your home remotely, show your energy consumption in real-time, and can even adjust themselves based on ambient conditions like humidity. They learn from your behaviors
 - <https://www.digitaltrends.com/home/best-smart-thermostats/>
- Locks – Smart Locks are an electronic and mechanical locking device that opens wirelessly with an authorized users permission.

Will Smart speaker work with my Smart Home Product



- Chances are your smart product will work with a smart speaker.
- Smart products are a fast growing technology and using your voice to command your garage door or crockpot are very possible.
- However, always check to see if your smart product does allow voice commands with a smart speaker.
- This link from CNET is an amazing resource to find compatibility with your smart products. www.cnet.com/smart-home/compatibility/



Smart Home Product Compatibility

Choose a platform to see what products work with it.



Apple HomeKit

If you own a recent iPhone or iPad, you have HomeKit. Control products with Siri or Apple's Home app.



Belkin WeMo

These smart home devices offer simple app controls for things like lights, power outlets and appliances.



Google Assistant

The Google Home is a speaker; Google Assistant is the voice inside. Play music, look up facts and control smart home gadgets -- just ask.



Lutron

Makes a variety of lighting products, including smart light switches and app-enabled, motorized window shades.



What is the Most Popular Smart Product?

SMART DOORBELL



SMART DOORBELLS

Smart Doorbells - Who is ringing your doorbell at 2am? Wonder if your package was delivered while you were out?

- Products like Ring or Nest connect to your home's Wi-Fi network and send real-time notifications to your smart phone when someone is at your door.
- Using the app, you can see a video stream of the person at your door and speak to them using two-way audio communication. They can alert you when someone presses the button on your doorbell or when motion is detected.
- Smart Doorbells can operate on battery power or hooked up to your home doorbell wiring.
- You have more choices (than Ring or Nest) for doorbell systems:
<https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-video-doorbells>

Smart Devices – Safety and Security

How Secure are Smart Devices?

Consider your Wi-Fi router the “front door” to your smart home. Like any front door, it should be solid and equipped with strong locks, in case cybercriminals come knocking:

- Change name of your WiFi Router
- Use Strong Wifi Encryption like WPA2 (stronger data protection and network)
- Set up Guest Network on your Wifi
- Use strong passwords for your Wi-fi and smart device accounts
- Check your smart device privacy settings – Keep device software up to date
- If you need to use Public Wi-fi to control your AC or Lights then use a VPN

More Information:

<https://readwrite.com/2020/04/05/7-actionable-tips-to-secure-your-smart-home-and-iot-devices/>

<https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-protect-your-smart-home-from-hackers>

Are They Listening?

Yes – They have to listen and be ready when you say the command name. Apple, Amazon and Google admit their speakers are constantly listening – unless you turn them off.

- They also stress that none of the recordings ever leave your device *unless* you speak the all-important keyword “Alexa, Siri, Hey Google”. Only then is data sent to the relevant cloud service for processing your command.
- Please note - smart speakers save every conversation it hears. These recordings are not sent to Amazon/Apple/Google immediately, and are deleted when it becomes clear you are not talking to the speaker. But there is a very short timeframe (usually a matter of minutes) where a hacker could steal those recordings if they can break into your speaker.
- Fortunately, Amazon's Alexa allows you to change the activation word. Currently, the choices are Amazon, Echo or Computer.
- Users also have the ability to track and delete what Alexa and Google have recorded. Unfortunately, you cannot do this with Apple devices.

Continued

- Amazon, Google and Apple are considered to be relatively secure. Each supports WPA-2 encryption, a secure WiFi connection that can prevent data and instructions being intercepted by hackers.
- In addition, they use two-factor authentication. Whenever you try to make a purchase using your smart device you will be asked to speak a 4 or 6 digit code
- Both Google Home and Amazon Echo speakers are able to register and recognize multiple voices. This allows you to secure the system so that unrecognized voices cannot trigger voice commands.

Questions?
