ALEXA SMART HOME

BEST ALEXA HOME PRODUCTS

OUR EXPERT ADVICE

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

UPLYNK.CA

THE ALEXA SMART HOME PRODUCTS FOR GIFT-GIVING IN 2023

Alexa Smart Home Holiday Gift Guide

Although the holidays are swiftly approaching, it's not too late to take advantage of this season's deals — especially when it comes to smart home products. A quick Google search will tell you there are countless brands and products to choose from, so how do you know which ones will work best for yourself or the person you're gifting to? Read on for solid advice on this year's essential Alexa Smart Home products.

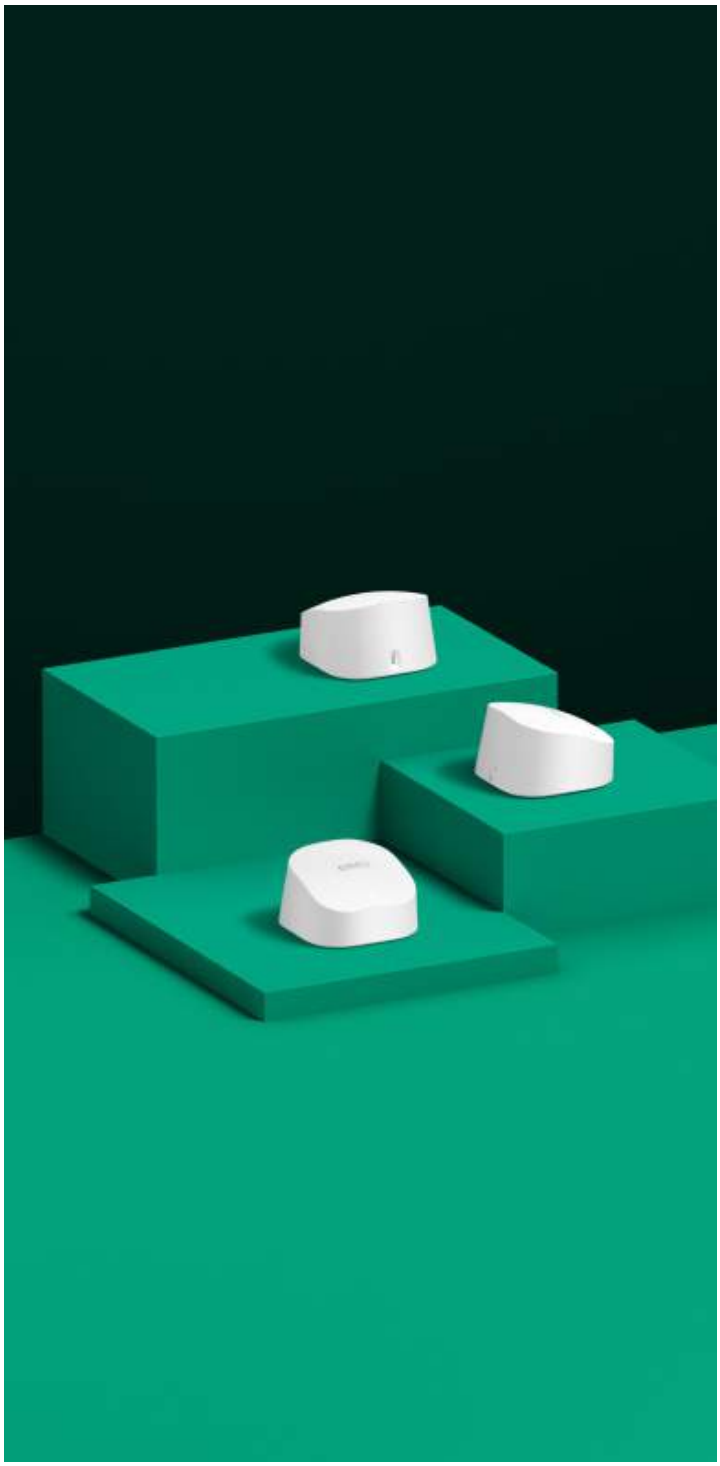
If you're feeling overwhelmed by all the smart home tech on the market, you are not alone. This industry is saturated and can be confusing for newcomers and even seasoned experts. As a smart home consultant and designer, as well as a business owner of a multi-award-winning smart home company, my goal with this gift guide is to make the gift-buying process easier this year for anyone interested in purchasing smart home devices.

First, there are some foundational choices you can make in the beginning that will ensure your smart home journey is a positive one. A good foundation also means a user can easily expand it with more devices that offer different benefits. Warning! It's easy to get hooked on the convenience and fun of smart home technology. Gift with caution (ha ha!), and bundle devices together for the ultimate effect.

This guide focuses on products that integrate well with Alexa. For Google products, see our **Google Smart Home Holiday Gift Guide.** Each smart home ecosystem has its unique style, advantages, and disadvantages. I recommend picking one ecosystem and sticking with it as you buy smart home products. Many devices you may already own, say your iPhone, Android phone, or smartwatch you may use to control your devices, are compatible with both systems — albeit some limitations may occur per device and brand.

THE ALEXA SMART HOME PRODUCTS FOR GIFT-GIVING IN 2023

eero 6+ Mesh WiFi



Smart homes start with a solid foundation of a stable home network. A reliable, strong home WiFi network allows smart home devices to communicate with each other and yourself. Big names like Rogers or Bell are incapable of creating a strong network in your home, and their “solutions” should be avoided at all costs.

Instead, look to mesh WiFi for the strongest signal throughout your (or your loved one’s) home. I recommend the eero 6+ Mesh WiFi kit. This kit has powerful WiFi 6+ capabilities and a range of over 4,500 square feet. This will maximize smart home potential inside and outside of the home. Boost coverage as much as possible with multiple units, I recommend at least three for the ultimate coverage. For larger homes, add more to extend the range even further.

Ring Video Doorbell Pro 2 and Schlage Encode

Smart doorbells and locks are a great combination for anyone's front door. You can see who is there and even remotely open the door for guests, cleaners, or contractors, no matter where you are. Some other benefits of combining the Schlage Encode with a Ring Video doorbell are:

- 2K video security
- Integrate together in the Ring app for one single app for all front door security
- Assign different entry codes for different people, at certain times
- Enhance security including package delivery; allow delivery person to place packages directly inside your home and then lock up again after
- A variety of colours to choose from to match a home's aesthetic
- Smart security that uses AI smarts and trigger notifications to alert you when necessary
- Lost keys? No problem with a smart lock

This security combo is perfect for anyone you think may need an extra layer of security — and convenience. The only additional cost is a $5/month fee for cloud video storage and access to additional smart features.

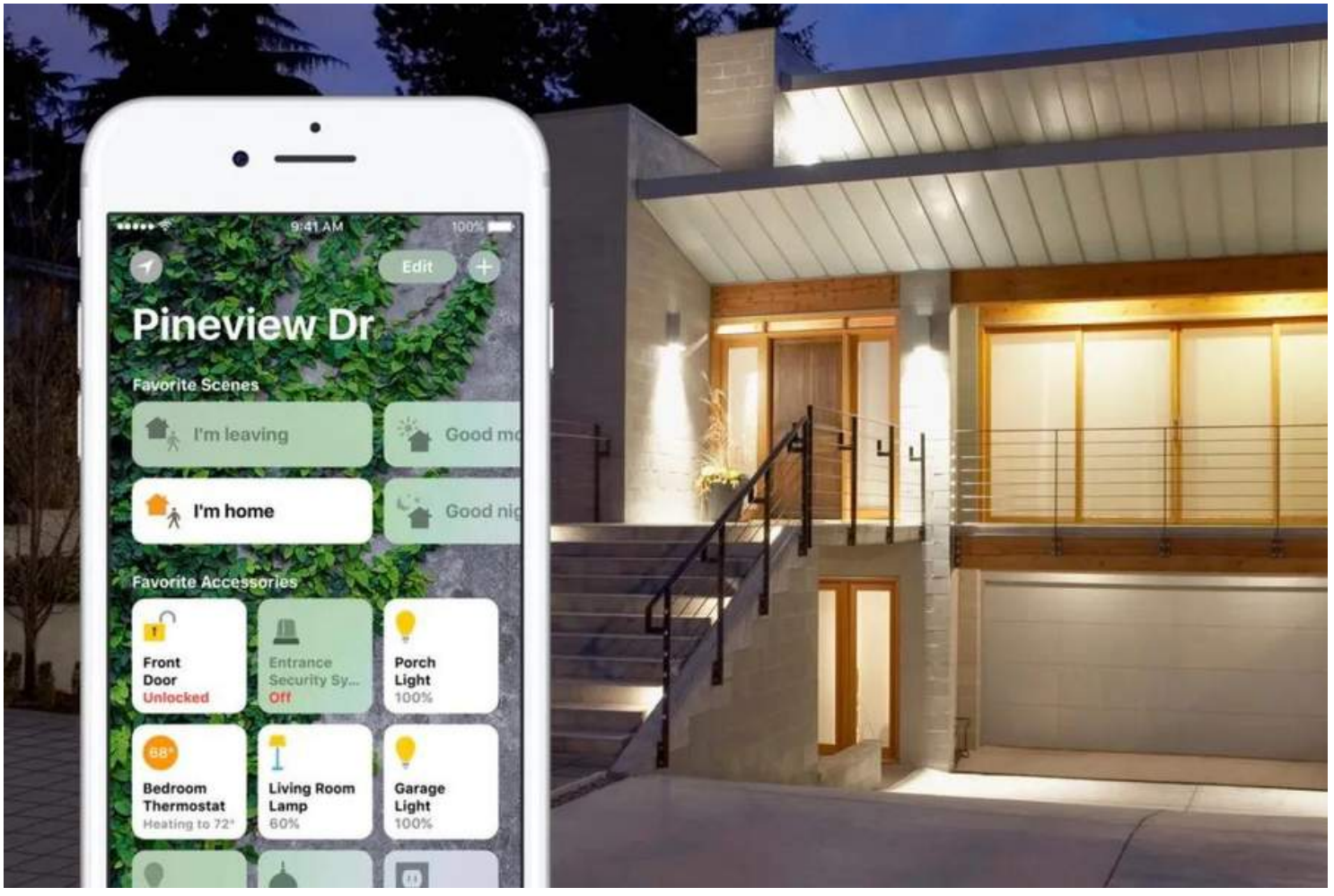
Wait, did I leave the garage door open?

myQ Garage Door Opener

THE ALEXA SMART HOME PRODUCTS FOR GIFT-GIVING IN 2023

myQ Smart Garage Door Opener

Know anyone a little forgetful? Gift them some peace of mind this year with a myQ Smart Garage Door Opener. With a myQ, you can easily check the status of your garage door with your smartwatch or phone app and close it remotely. The good news is that if you have a newer garage door opener from Chamberlain, Liftmaster, or Craftsman, your lift quite likely has myQ built in already. If not, a user can purchase a myQ Hub, an inexpensive add-on worth it for the benefit of this product. Since myQ allows users to open or close their garage door from anywhere, it serves as another way you can control an entry point over your home to let guests, packages, or whatever you need in while you are not there.



THE ALEXA SMART HOME PRODUCTS FOR GIFT-GIVING IN 2023

ECOBEE SMART THERMOSTAT

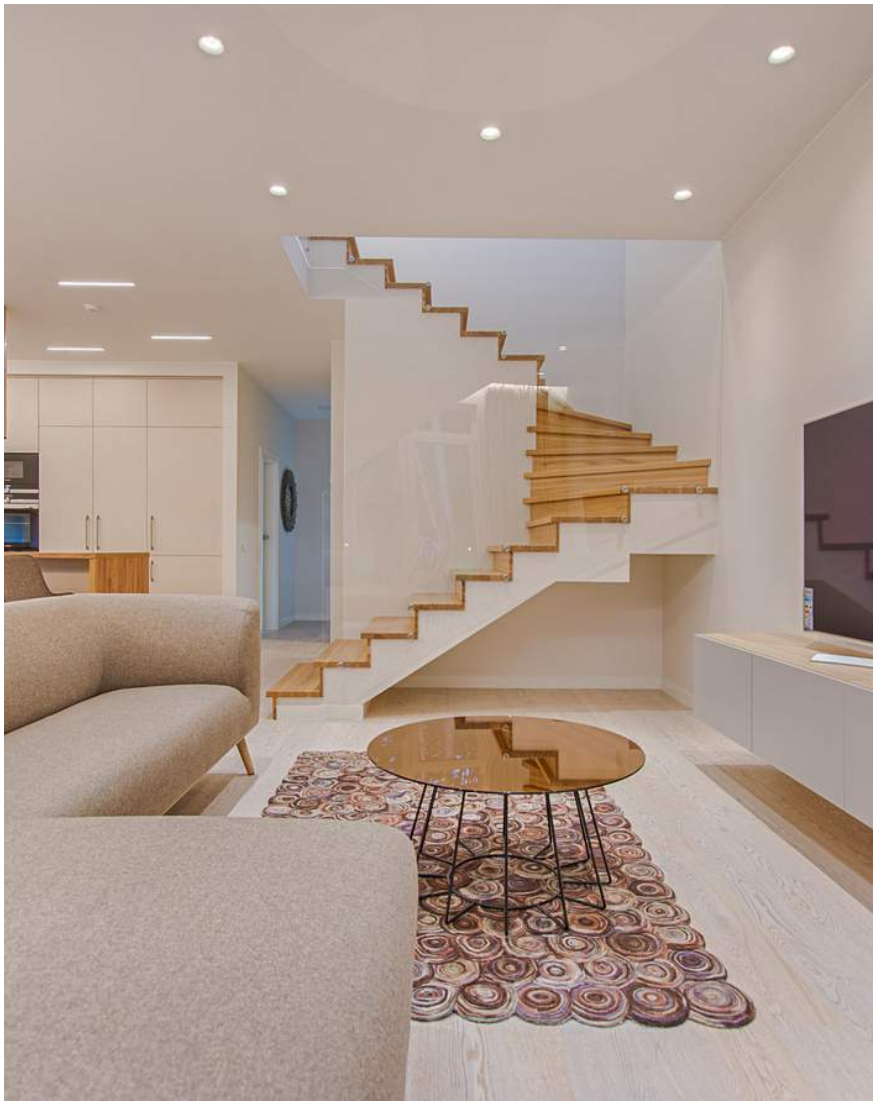
Help your loved ones stay warm (or cool!) this season and all year round with an Ecobee Smart Thermostat. This smart thermostat learns users' routines as they manually raise and lower temps and then adjust based on past heating and cooling settings. It also goes into eco mode to save energy costs when no one is home (yes, it knows). On top of that, it's sleek, powerful, and works with many different furnace types.

With Alexa built-in, this feature-rich thermostat gives you even more control over your home. It's also compatible with more brands of furnaces, boilers, and in-floor heating and cooling systems than any other smart thermostat on the market.

THE ALEXA SMART HOME PRODUCTS FOR GIFT-GIVING IN 2023

Smart Lights with GE CYNC

One product we think is underrated in the market? Smart lights. Alleviate yourself or a loved one from ever having to get up again to manually turn the lights on or off. Instead, smart lights allow the user to create routines like “bedtime” where all lights turn off in the house. This game changer of a smart home product is available in a variety of options:



Smart Dimming Switch or Smart Light Switch.

A smart light switch to pair with an already existing light fixture. Dimming is a nice feature for lights in the dining room or a place you watch TV.

With this product, you can control the entire fixture and even adjust brightness settings for different times of day. For an even more simple switch (on/off) you can opt for a Smart Light Switch.

Either way, you’re getting convenience and eliminating the need to manually adjust lighting.

THE ALEXA SMART HOME PRODUCTS FOR GIFT-GIVING IN 2023

Smart Colour Changing Bulbs or *Colour Changing Pot Lights*

These lights offer the same abilities as a smart dimming switch but change colour and sync to your routines and rhythms as well. These colour-changing bulbs are great to set the mood, counteract blue light with red light before bedtime, and more for hands-free convenience.

Help your loved one illuminate their home with smart home lighting.

SMART PLUGS

This holiday, make your loved one's life a little easier. Smart plugs offer many benefits from having the ability to run on a desired schedule to turning on or off remotely. This product doesn't just offer a convenient benefit to those who use it, it's ideal for cost-savings and energy efficiency.

DID YOU KNOW?

I recommend the GE CYNC Indoor Smart Plug, but the **KASA Smart Plug** is another good, cost-efficient option.

JUST ASK UPLYNK

THE ALEXA SMART HOME PRODUCTS FOR GIFT-GIVING IN 2023

Echo Show and Echo Dot

The Echo Show and Dot are your gateway to Alexa controlling your home with just your voice. Together, they create a touch screen and voice-activated smart home hub that act like a command centre for a user's home. This hub controls all the smart home devices a person may own, and the new Echo Dot even has a built-in motion sensor to trigger lights or other routines when someone enters a room. With this, you can control your smart lights, doorbells, and other smart products within the Alexa ecosystem. It also can play music, podcasts, audiobooks, and more — including streaming services.

Give or get this gift duo and see how it easily lets one control the home, provide entertainment, and do useful tasks like finding a recipe. The dot is a powerful smart speaker that's small in size and allows users to use voice commands to control their home. Users can buy multiple Dots and sync them together for harmonious audio around a home.

Any of these great products will indeed enhance a person's life, especially with routines. They also are the start of an ecosystem that can be expanded upon in the future. And while these smart home products are great on their own, they shine when paired with more products within the ecosystem. Give the gift of ultimate convenience this year!

Have any questions on the products above, or smart home products in general? **Contact us** for more information. Our experts are here to help.