

Is Alexa For Seniors - 29 Great Skills For Older Adults

Alexa for seniors? Yes, Alexa IS for seniors! Alexa (also known as Amazon Echo) and similar products like [Google Home](#) can be used to help the elderly, their caregivers and younger seniors just hitting retirement age.

Whether you own the [Echo Dot](#), [Echo Tower](#), [Echo Show](#) or the [Echo Plus](#) – they can all help you to make your home safer – no matter what age you are.

In this article we're going to go over some of the best ways of how an Alexa device can help seniors to make their lives easier and safer. We'll go over each attribute, how to use it and how to set it up.

The tasks that Alexa devices can perform are called “skills” and as of this writing there are more than 100,000 skills available!

These skills and so much more can give seniors and their caregivers some sense of independence and safety. Below is a list of all the ways that Alexa can help seniors and other family members as well.

I also want to let you know that some of the skills I'll be mentioning in this article may have some limitations. Unfortunately, the technology is just not quite to the point where everything we ask Alexa to do will work 100% – but it's getting there!

So, before I begin listing all that Alexa can do for seniors – let me give you some initial information you'll need to know to get started.

Is Alexa Good For The Elderly?

Of course the answer is “it depends” because in order to use Alexa you need to know what commands to say and of course how to set it up. For some seniors, this may prove to be difficult.

If your senior loved one has cognitive problems and/or memory problems then it may be more difficult for them to use Alexa.

But I would encourage you try.

Amazon Echo Show is an excellent tool for seniors of all ages.

As we all do what we can during the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of tools like Alexa's Echo Show can help elderly and their families to stay in touch.

It may be that there are only a few skills that are needed (like medication reminders, calendar events, phone calls, etc.) that they would use Alexa for and if that's the case then it may certainly be simple enough for them to use it.

How Can Alexa Help The Visually Impaired?

The Alexa device is a voice activated tool (for the most part – the Echo Show also has a touch screen).

As a result of the fact that you can use your voice to activate it – those who are visually impaired / blind can use it for tasks such as texting, phone calls, listing making, checking their calendar, checking the weather and news, turning devices on and off, calling 911 and much more!

[Check out the 14 different ways that Alexa can help those who have low vision or are completely blind.](#)

Alexa's Skills

Alexa devices come with some built in features but you can also add some additional features as well. Alexa calls these features "skills".

To see the list of skills available do the following:

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on "Skills & Games"
- You can then choose a skill from the Discover or Categories section or you can tap on the magnifying glass icon on the top right of your screen to search for a specific skill you may have read about.

Alexa's Routines

One of my favorite additions that Alexa has done recently is the ability to set up what they call "routines".

Essentially, it's a way to set up a series of skills that you want to hear Alexa do.

Recently, we received an email from a reader with the following question:

I recently bought an echo device. I want Alexa to tell me what the day/date is every morning at 7 a.m. I have tried many ways to set a reminder but it does not work. Any suggestions? Thank you.

My response was that what she was wanting to do was not a “reminder” but a “routine” (I know, it's confusing).

So, the way to set this up is...

- Open the Alexa App
- Tap on the hamburger menu (also says More)
- Choose Routines
- Click the Plus sign to create a routine
- Click the Plus sign to Enter the routine name (give it whatever name you want)
- Click Next (should be on the top right corner of the screen)
- Click the Plus sign for When this happens
- Choose Schedule
- Choose At Time
- Repeat (should be every day if you want)
- At Time – select the time of day (7 am) then click OK
- Click Next (should be on the top right corner of the screen)
- Click the Plus sign for Add Action
- Choose Date and Time
- Click on Time – you should see a screen that says Alexa will tell you the current time
- Click Next
- Click on Choose Device (if you have more than one device)
- Click on Save (should be on the top right of your screen)

It seems like a lot of steps but it only takes 2 or 3 minutes to set it up.

Adding Contacts To The Alexa App

There are several skills listed below that are specifically helpful for older adults but they require that Alexa has access to your list of contacts (your address book!).

So, here are the steps on how to put that list of contacts on your Alexa app.

- Open your Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the Communicate Icon at the bottom
- On the top right you will see an Icon of 2 people – click on that
- Tap on the Plus sign by the Add New to add your contact

29 Of The Best Alexa Skills For Seniors

Below is the ever growing list of some of what I believe are the best Alexa skills that can make life for older adults easier and safer.

1. Check The Weather

I personally use my Alexa to check the weather a few times a day. It's so much easier than fiddling with my phone to get information on my local weather, or the weather anywhere else in the world!

How To Check The Weather Using Alexa

After opening the dialogue by saying the word "Alexa" you can say any of the following:

- what's the weather outside?
- what's the humidity today?
- is it supposed to rain today?
- will it be raining tonight at 6 pm?
- when does the sun rise tomorrow?
- when does the sun set today?
- what is the UV index today? (or tomorrow?)
- what will the weather be this weekend?
- what's the weather in (name your city)

How To Set Up Alexa For Weather Updates

There's no additional setting on the Alexa app that has to be done for regular weather updates. You can add the skill Big Sky for more in depth weather reports. To access the Big Sky skill you would simply ask questions like, "Alexa, ask Big Sky for the weather report."

You can go more in-depth by asking Alexa to ask Big Sky for the weather report during specific hours of the day or future dates, humidity level, UV index, etc.

2. Get News Updates

Alexa calls this Flash Briefing but you don't have to repeat that phrase. I always just say "Alexa, what's in the news today?" and it begins with the Flash Briefing report.

How To Check The News Using Alexa

After opening the dialogue by saying the word "Alexa" you can say any of the following:

- what's in the news today?
- what's the traffic like right now?
- what's the news from CNBC (or CNN or any other local news station)

How To Set Up Alexa For Your News

- Open your Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on "Settings"
- Then scroll a bit and tap on "News"
- You can then choose from the news stations that are listed. Choose one station and it will be your primary news station.

3. Alert A Buddy That You Need Help

One of the best features Alexa offers for seniors is the ability to set up someone as your "buddy" so that in case you need help you can ask Alexa to contact them immediately. This can alert several people that you assign to the Ask My Buddy program.

How To Use The Buddy Skill

To alert the buddy that you have set up – you say “Alexa, ask my buddy to send help.”

How To Set Up Your Buddy On Alexa

- The first thing to do is to go to askmybuddy.net and register. It's free if you have fewer than 5 contacts and use 10 or fewer notifications in a 30 day period. From there, there are very minimal monthly fees.
- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on “Skills & Games”
- Tap on the magnifying glass icon in the top right and type in “buddy”
- Choose the Ask My Buddy skills
- Follow the instructions to register and set it up

The paid version of Ask My Buddy will allow you to add 5 more contacts to your list and also to call 911 for emergencies as well.

4. Call 911

Amazon had a product called Echo Connect (which it no longer sells) that was used to connect Alexa to your phone line allows you to call 911 through Alexa. The best way to call 911 now with Alexa is to use the paid version of the Ask My Buddy skill which I mentioned above.

But I also want to mention that for medical emergencies or other types of emergencies seniors can use [Alexa as a medical alert device](#) (of course only while you are in your house).

If you still want to use this method you can try purchasing an Echo Connect on EBay.

Note: this only works in the USA, Mexico and Canada

How To Set Up Echo Connect For Alexa

- Purchase the Echo Connect device (you can try Ebay)
- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the Communication icon at the bottom of the screen
- Follow the instructions to get started on setting up contacts and verifying your phone information

- Place the Echo Connect device in a place where it's close to a phone jack, your Wi-Fi router and a power outlet
- Plug the Echo Connect into the power outlet
- Connect the Echo Connect to the phone jack (or your Wi-Fi router if you're using a digital phone service)
- Complete setting up the device in the Alexa App on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- Tap on Add Device or Alexa Devices
- Then follow the instructions to add the Echo Connect device

5. Make Phone Calls

To make phone calls to friends, family or anyone you desire you need to add a contact list to Alexa.

How To Set Up Contact List

- If you have your contacts listed in your phone, the Alexa app should pick up that list and integrate it into Alexa – but to add more contacts...
- Open your Alexa app
- Click on Communicate icon at the bottom of the screen
- Click on the Call button at the top
- Then choose the person you want to call

How To Use Alexa To Call Someone

- To call someone on your contact list simply say “Alexa, call (name of the person)”

[You can follow these steps to call a business.](#)

6. Video Phone Calls

The best Amazon Echo Show for seniors that we recommend is [this 2nd generation model](#) which has a screen size of 10.1 inches. The larger the screen size the easier it will be for many seniors to use it for video chats and more.

With the Echo Show – you can make video phone calls to another Echo Show or to anyone who has the Alexa app on their phone. This is a great way for caregivers who live away from their elderly parents to “check in” on mom and dad.

How To Use Echo Show To Make Phone Calls

- To make a call you simply say “Alexa, call “name of the person you want to call”
- As long as their name is in your list of contacts – Alexa will make the call

How To Set Up Phone Calls For Echo Show

- First, make sure your Echo Show is a minimum of 8 inches away from any wall or window
- You can only make calls to people who are listed in your contact list on your phone so make sure you have everyone in your phone
- This feature is automatically available on all Alexa / Amazon Echo devices

If you are a Facebook user and want to know the details on the Facebook portal vs Echo Show for elderly users – [click here](#).

7. Show And Tell (On The Echo Show)

A new skill launched in September 2019 is the Show And Tell that is used on the Echo Show. It gives anyone who is blind or visually impaired the opportunity to find out what they are holding simply by showing the product to the camera on the Echo Show.

This currently works only for objects / products that have written text on them like a can of soup or a box of instant rice, etc.

There’s nothing to set up – you simply hold a product to the camera and say “Alexa, what am I holding?” or “Alexa, what’s in my hand?”

It may ask you to turn the object or to hold it closer and once it reads what the object is then it will beep a few times and tell you what you are holding. It’s not 100% as of yet, but I have to say it’s pretty darn close!

[For more about echo show for elderly parents – read here](#).

8. Find Your Cell Phone

It happens to all of us, we put down our cell phone and then forget where it is. I've used my Alexa for this too many times!

How To Use Alexa To Find Your Phone

There's nothing really to set up for this feature. You simply say "Alexa, find my phone" and it will call your phone so that it will ring. You simply follow the sound of the ring!

Of course – hopefully the phone is within your hearing and you didn't leave it at the restaurant!

9. Night Light For Those Nighttime Bathroom Trips

Bet you didn't know Alexa has a night light feature?

Yep, it's another skill that can be enabled for the device. But, I have to say the light is not very bright. I would instead recommend to set up the Smart Home feature in Alexa with a small lamp that can act as a night light.

How To Use The Night Light Skill In Alexa

Once the night light skill has been set up, to turn it on you say "Alexa, open night light." If you have decided to instead use the Smart Home feature for a small lamp, you would then turn it on by saying "Alexa, turn on the light."

How To Set Up The Night Light Skill In Alexa

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on "Skills & Games"
- You can then tap on the magnifying glass icon on the top right of your screen and type in "night light"
- Once you open up that skill simply Enable it to use

10. Smart Home Set Ups

There are multiple devices today that can be connected to Alexa which can all work to make your life a bit easier and possibly safer. Here are some of these devices

- Roomba vacuum cleaner
- Light bulbs in lamps
- Light switches
- Television
- Thermostat
- Door locks
- Garage Door
- Automated window blinds
- Home security system

I am certain that in the following years to come there will be more and more senior related products that can be controlled through Alexa.

Although the challenge for seniors is learning and remembering how to use them, the beauty of these devices is that caregivers can also control them from a distance.

Imagine your mother coming home from the grocery store and she has trouble remembering how to unlock the front door with her smart phone. She can simply text you or call you to do it from your phone!

11. Ask For The Date And Time

It's difficult for me to see the time on the clock if I don't have my glasses on so by simply saying "Alexa, what time is it?" – I can get the current time.

Since I work at home – and I work 7 days a week – I do sometimes forget what day / date it is. Again, simply saying "Alexa, what's today's date?" is a quick way to get the date without having to look up the calendar on my phone or run to a wall calendar in the kitchen.

12. Keep Your Calendar On Alexa

There are so many things that we keep on our calendars. Birthdays, special events, doctor appointments, home maintenance schedules, etc.

Using Alexa to keep these dates on a calendar is extremely easy and can be done via any of the devices. But I will say that using the Echo Show (which displays the calendar) may be easier for older adults.

How To Use The Calendar On Alexa

Getting your calendar read to you is as easy as saying “Alexa, what’s on my calendar?” From there, you can also delete, reschedule or add to your calendar.

You can also invite someone who is in your contact list to an event by saying “Alexa, invite (first and last name) to (name of event) today at 4pm (or whatever date and time).” She may respond with “What’s the name of the event?” – after you give her your answer she will tell you that she has scheduled the event and will be sending an email to that person. She will repeat the email address and ask if that’s okay. (Pretty cool, right?)

How To Set Up Your Calendar On Alexa

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on “Settings”
- Scroll down a bit and tap on “Calendar & Email”
- Tap on “Add A Calendar” – you will have the option to add your calendar from Google, Microsoft, Apple or Microsoft Exchange
- Follow the instructions to personalize what you would like Alexa to do with your calendar

13. Reminders And Notifications

Another great feature for anyone (but especially for seniors) is setting up Alexa to notify and remind you of events on your calendar or just daily events such as medication reminders.

This feature works well for adults who are dealing with some cognitive decline issues such as mild dementia.

How To Use Alexa For Reminders And Notifications

There are 2 ways that you can use Alexa to remind you of events and/or tasks.

1. You can set them up on your calendar and then choose the option in the Alexa app to have those calendar events automatically read out to you at the time of the event
2. You can set up Reminders on your Alexa device
3. You can set up Reminders through the Alexa app on your phone

How To Set Up Reminders And Notifications On Alexa

- When you set up your calendar you can choose the option to have it give you notifications automatically. See #12 on this page on how to set up your calendar on Alexa.
- OR you simply set up Reminders directly on your Alexa device by saying something like “Alexa, remind me to take my heart medicine at 3 pm every day.”
- OR you can set this skill up from the Alexa app on your phone
 - Open the Alexa app on your phone
 - Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
 - In the dropdown box tap on “Reminders & Alarms”
 - You’ll then see the option to choose from setting up an Alarm, a Reminder and/or Timers
 - Tap on Reminders
 - You’ll then have the option to Add Reminder
 - Once you tap on the plus sign to add your reminder follow the prompts for choosing your time, etc.
- You can also ask “Alexa, what are my reminders?” to get a list of the ones that you have already set up.

14. One Device For Multiple Timers

Most cooks will tell you that they need multiple timers in the kitchen. One for the roast in the oven, one for the broccoli on the stove, another for the potatoes in the toaster oven.

Well, instead of having multiple timers or setting up a timer on each appliance, you can just use Alexa to set each timer.

The beauty of this is that you can name each timer – and – there’s no set up. All Alexa devices are automatically equipped with this skill.

To use it simply say “Alexa, set a roast timer for 30 minutes.” and she will respond letting you know it’s set up. You can then continue and say, “Alexa, set a broccoli timer for 10 minutes.”

You can continue doing this with multiple timers! Pretty cool, right?

Once each timer is done Alexa will alert you and name the timer that is completed, that way you know which timer is which.

I will also add that if you do this with an Echo Show device (vs. other Alexa devices) the screen will show you how much time you have left on each timer.

15. Create An Intercom System

This is a great feature, especially if you are living with someone who may be hard of hearing, or if you live in a multi-level home, etc.

How To Use Alexa As An Intercom System

- You will need several Alexa devices throughout the house.
- When you set each one up – you will be prompted to give them a name. Normally, people name them the location they are in. So, Kitchen, Bedroom, Porch, etc.
- If you want to contact just one Alexa device (let’s say your husband is in the garage) just say “Alexa, drop in on the garage.”
- When the light on Alexa turns green – then you know you are connected. You can begin speaking to your husband in the garage and he can respond.
- When you have finished the conversation simply say “Alexa, hang up.”
- If you want to contact all the Alexa devices in your home (if you aren’t sure where your husband is!) then simply say “Alexa, announce (your message).”
- The Alexa devices in your home will ring and then the recorded message will be heard.

How To Set Up Alexa As An Intercom System

There are no specific instructions to set up this Intercom feature, it is automatically set up in each Alexa device.

16. Drop In Skill

This skill is used through the Amazon Echo Show device. The drop in skill does exactly what it sounds like. It literally allows someone with an Amazon Echo Show device to “drop in” on another person with an Echo device – visually.

Think of it as turning on a video camera into the other person’s room.

Of course, the person being monitored has to give his/her Echo Show device permission to allow a specific person to “drop in” on them. It’s a great tool for adult children caregivers who need to visually monitor a senior loved one.

How To Use The Drop In Skill

- Simply say “Alexa, drop in on (name of your contact)”

How To Set Up The Drop In Skill

Just follow these instructions below to set up this skill.

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on “Skills & Games”
- Tap on the magnifying glass on the top right of the screen
- Type in “calling and messaging” to search for this skill
- Tap on the Enable Skill button
- You will be asked to agree to their terms of service and to allow this program to access your contact list
- You then need to tap on the Communication Icon at the bottom of the Alexa app on your phone
- You then need to confirm your name, enable access to your contact list that is on your phone, verify your phone number via a text and allow Alexa to use your microphone and camera (if you haven’t already done that)
- Now tap on the profile icon at the top right of your Alexa app on your phone
- Your name should pop up with “My Profile & Settings” below it. Tap on your name.

- Enable the Allow Drop In option
- Now you are set up to receive Drop Ins. To drop in on other Alexa devices, then they need to allow permissions just as you did for your.

17. Start Your Car From Your Kitchen

If you live in a very cold climate or a very hot one, and if you have a remote start feature in your car then you can set it up so that you simply ask Alexa to start your car!

Right now this does not work for every single car make, but I know it works for certain Chevrolet models and certain Ford models.

That way it will be toasty warm or nice and cool when you get into it! (Talk about luxury!)

How To Use Alexa To Start Your Car

- Simply say “Alexa, tell (model of car) to start my car.” So an example would be “Alexa, tell Ford to start my car.”

How To Set Up Alexa To Start Your Car

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on “Skills & Games”
- Tap on the magnifying glass icon in the top right and type in “mychevrolet” or “myford”
- Choose the make of your car and follow the instructions

18. Music, Video And Audio Books

Alexa is excellent for entertaining.

If you have the Echo Show then you can take advantage of all the videos and shows available with your Amazon Prime membership. In addition to video, you can also listen to music and audio books, all available from Amazon.

And yes, you can also listen to radio shows.

If you own the Echo Dot or the Echo Tower you can enjoy the music, radio and audio books! I have to admit, this entertainment feature is what I use my Alexa for the most and I love it!

How To Use Alexa For Entertainment

For the entertainment skills that I am mentioning below, you do need to be an [Amazon Prime member](#) (a paid membership program). But note that along with this membership you do get a good amount of free music, video and books.

To listen to music:

- Simply say “Alexa, play my music.” You can also ask for specific bands or singers, specific genres of music or radio stations.
- If you have an account set up with Amazon Music Unlimited (you do pay monthly for this service) then you’ll be able to listen to just about any piece of music created (at least it seems that way!)
- If you have an Amazon Prime account then you’ll automatically be able to access Prime Music which is the free version of streaming music from Amazon. You can still get a lot of songs (2 million or so) but it’s just not as extensive as the unlimited program.

To watch videos:

- To watch videos you need the [Amazon Echo Show product](#) (it’s the device with the screen). This one that I’m linking to has the 10 inch screen which I find easier to use than the smaller screen ones but just so you know – there are Echo Show products that have smaller screens.
- Simply say “Alexa, play “name of movie”. It will show you a list of movies on Amazon, some are free and some you can purchase. You can also say, “Alexa, show me horror movies.” or “Alexa, show me movies with Katherine Hepburn in them.”. The idea is you can ask for a genre or movies with a certain actor in them. Pretty cool!

To listen to books:

- Amazon owns and operates the [Audible program](#) which is a monthly for pay program of audio books.

- Amazon also owns and sells [Kindle products](#) and the [Kindle Unlimited](#) program. There are free books on the Audible and Kindle program but for the most part you do have to pay to belong to one or both of these to listen to the books in their libraries. [Here's a link to a good comparison of these two audio book programs.](#)
- Simply say “Alexa, play (name of book)” or “Alexa, play my book.” This last command will re-open the last book you were listening to.
- If you do not have an Audible account you can still listen to a new free Audible book each month. Simply say “Alexa, what’s free from Audible?”

How To Set Up Alexa For Entertainment

There’s no special set up for this great feature, it comes already set up when you purchase your Alexa product – so enjoy!

19. Order From A Restaurant

Yep – you can use your Alexa to order from a restaurant. In Alexa’s “Skills” you can find Grubhub, Wingstop, Pizza Hut, Denny’s, Domino’s, Starbucks and more.

How To Use Alexa To Order A Meal

- If you’ve used Alexa to order from a specific restaurant before you can simply say “Alexa, ask Pizza Hut (or the name of the restaurant) to order my favorite.”
- If this is the first time you are ordering then simply say “Alexa, open Pizza Hut (or the name of the restaurant)” You will then be presented with a series of questions on what you may want to order.

How To Set Up Alexa To Order Meals

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on “Skills & Games”
- Tap on “Categories” at the top of the screen
- Scroll down and tap on Food & Drink

- Scroll down to use the skill for the specific restaurant

20. Calling Local Businesses

You can use your Alexa device to call businesses – as long as you know the name of the business. It's very easy to do for anyone.

- To initiate simply say “Alexa, what's the number for ‘company name’”
- Alexa will give you the number or if there are multiple locations it will ask you which location
- Alexa will then ask if you want to call that number.

But note that there is a [scam alert](#) using this skill.

The [scam works](#) by paying online search engines to promote business entries, which then feature prominently when a search is conducted. “Scammers are creating fake customer service numbers,” the Better Business Bureau [warns](#), “and bumping them to the top of search results, often by paying for ads. When Siri, Alexa, or another device does a voice search, the algorithm may accidentally pick a scam number.”

[Forbes.com](#)

Basically, you could end up calling a fake phone number and instead of speaking to the actual company, you are speaking to a scammer who then tries to get information from you, or sell you something, etc.

21. The Burglar Deterrent Skill

Okay – so this is pretty cool! I would recommend this for anyone who wants a layer of security for their home. So, the burglar deterrent lets you set up your Alexa to broadcast sounds as if someone is home. You can choose from sounds of a kitchen, a bathroom, a living room and even a guard dog.

Note: The burglar deterrent skill will continue working until you say “Alexa – stop.”

How To Use Alexa As A Burglar Deterrent

To initiate the burglar deterrent simply say any of the following:

- “Alexa, open burglar deterrent”
- “Alexa, ask burglar deterrent to protect the living room” (or any other room)
- “Alexa tell burglar deterrent to sound like the kitchen” (or any other room)
- “Alexa, tell burglar deterrent to sound like guard dog”

How To Set Up Alexa As A Burglar Deterrent

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on “Skills & Games”
- Tap on the magnifying glass on the top right of the screen
- Type in “burglar deterrent” to search for the skill
- Tap on the first skill in the search results
- Tap on the Enable Skill button

22. Calling An Uber Or Lyft Ride

This is an excellent skill that Amazon Echo provides. For older adults who cannot drive, both Uber and Lyft have been an amazing ride sharing service that can make life so much easier.

For those of you who aren’t sure about the safety of this service – read our article on [Is Uber Safe For Seniors?](#)

But if you are already a convert – then here is how you can use your Alexa to call in a ride.

How To Use Alexa To Call Uber Or Lyft

- It’s truly as easy as saying “Alexa, ask Uber (or Lyft) to request a ride.”
- If it’s the first time you’re doing this – you’ll be asked to state your default pick up address (and then for future requests – Alexa will know what address to provide to the Uber or Lyft driver)
- This skill automatically sends you an Uber X type of car so if you are looking for the larger car then you would say “Alexa, ask Uber to order an Uber Black.”

- You can also get updates by saying “Alexa, ask Uber where’s my ride?”
- To cancel you simply say “Alexa, ask Uber to cancel my ride.”

How To Set Up Alexa To Call Uber Or Lyft

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on the hamburger menu in the top left corner (the 3 short horizontal lines)
- In the dropdown box tap on “Skills & Games”
- Tap on “Categories”
- Scroll down and tap on Travel & Transportation
- Choose either Lyft or Uber
- Click on the Enable button
- Provide your Uber or Lyft account information

23. Alexa Guard

Okay, so this is really cool! You can use Alexa to alert you if it detects the sound of an alarm (like a fire alarm or burglar alarm) or even the sound of breaking glass (if someone tried to break into your home through a glass pane or window). Pretty amazing, right?

How To Use Alexa Guard

You can activate Alexa Guard two ways.

- Open the Alexa app on your phone and click on Devices on the bottom right corner and click on the Home button in the Guard option that you see listed.
- OR – simply say “Alexa, I’m leaving.” and it will turn it on

How To Set Up Alexa Guard

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on “Devices” located on the bottom right of your screen
- You’ll see the “Guard” option there with a button to learn more to set it up
- If you have smoke and carbon monoxide detectors that are Alexa enabled – you can “add” these devices to your Guard.

- If you do not have these products then simply press “Later”
- You will also want to “Add” the option for Alexa to alert you of breaking glass
- You can also “Add” the option to set up your home lighting so that it turns on when you are away
- If you have the [Ring security system](#) set up in your home you can also “Add” that as well
- Press “confirm” when you are completed

24. Answers To Simple Medical Questions By The NHS

If you live in England, you are familiar with the country’s NHS (National Health Service) system.

Well, Amazon Echo is now partnering with the NHS to answer medical questions like...

- “What are the symptoms of chickenpox?”
- “How do I treat a migraine?”

There is some controversy about this due to privacy concerns, etc. You can read about the article from [Express.co.uk](https://www.express.co.uk) [here](#) for more information.

25. LifePod® – Voice Activated Caregiving Service

LifePod® is a new service that can greatly enhance a senior’s life. It does require an additional fee but it may be something that you and your family need to help your senior loved ones be as safe as possible.

It does a lot of things that other Alexa skills do such as medication reminders, calendar notifications, news, etc. The big difference that I noticed is that if the senior person says something like “I have a headache” the LifePod® system alerts the caregiver via text that something is wrong.

For more details on the LifePod® service, [click here](#).

Now, truthfully – an elderly person could use [Alexa’s Buddy skill](#) but it’s not as interactive as LifePod® seems to be.

By the way – [LifePod® won Best of Show in Patient-Focused Software at the Bio-IT World Conference & Expo!](#)

If you're interested in more information or want to pre-order (sale price if you pre-order) then check out the [Lifepod.com website](http://Lifepod.com).

26. Can't Hear Your Television? Alexa To The Rescue

My late husband was beginning to lose his hearing before he passed away and this was beginning to affect how loud we had to turn the television volume up for him to hear what the actors in the movie or show were saying. I got to the point where I was wearing ear plugs just to watch TV!

These days – you can simply put an Alexa device like the small echo dot close to where you sit to watch the tube and it can be used as your very own personal speaker transmitting the sounds from the TV closer to your ears! So cool!

How To Use Alexa As A Speaker

- Once you've set up your Alexa device as a speaker for your television set you are done.

How To Set Up Alexa As A Speaker

- Your TV must be Bluetooth enabled (if you have an older television set it may not be)
- Place your Echo Dot (or other Alexa device) next to your TV and simply say "Alexa, connect."
- Alexa will then begin scanning for devices to connect to.
- With your TV remote – navigate to your Bluetooth settings on your TV set to find the Alexa device that is trying to connect.
- With your TV remote – navigate to your sound settings and change the output to your Alexa device.
- These are the general setting instructions – it may be different for each brand and model of TV that you have so if these do not work please check online for instructions for your specific TV set model.

27. Forget The Remote – Use Alexa To Control Your Television

So yes you CAN control the television with your Alexa device. You can turn it on, turn it off, change channels and ask for specific shows or even name an actor to get a list of movies they are in that you can watch.

Now, it seems that every brand of television has a slightly different method of setting up Alexa to work with it so I urge you to check online for how to set up Alexa for your specific brand of television.

Having said that – there is the [Fire TV Stick with Alexa Voice Remote](#). This product (after it's been set up) can be used (with voice command) to change channels and to access specific shows, movies, etc.

How To Use Alexa To Turn On Your Television

If you are still using cable, Alexa will NOT turn that on. It works with the Fire TV Stick so that means that Alexa turns on your television set and then it turns on the Fire TV Stick.

You simply say “Alexa, turn on Fire TV.” or “Alexa, turn on the television.”

You can even say “Alexa, turn on Netflix on Fire TV.”

How To Set Up Fire TV Stick With Alexa

- Open the Alexa app on your phone
- Tap on “Settings”
- Scroll down to TV & Video and tap on that
- Tap on the plus sign to the right of Fire TV
- Tap “Link your Alexa Device”
- Follow the on screen instructions

I am still discovering all the things that I can do with Fire TV and pretty soon, I'll be switching from Cable to Youtube TV so I'll be able to watch anything via an Alexa command.

28. Alexa Hunches

By activating the “Hunches” feature in Alexa you are setting her up to alert you when a connected device is not doing what it's supposed to be doing.

So, if your living room light is supposed to turn on at 7 pm but does not – you'll be alerted.

If you normally turn down your thermostat at 10 pm but you do not – the Hunches feature will do it for you.

[You can read more about the benefits of Alexa Hunches for seniors here.](#)

How To Turn On / Turn Off Alexa Hunches

The steps to turn the Hunches feature on or off are pretty simple.

- Open your Alexa app on your smart phone.
- Click on “More” on the bottom right hand side of your screen.
- Click on “Settings”
- Scroll down and click on Hunches
- Click on “Settings”
- Under “Suggestions” choose to either turn Hunches on or off

29. Share A Shopping List

My late husband and I used to share a shopping list on our smartphones and it worked out great. If I knew that we needed milk or apples I would put that on the list. If my husband happened to stop at the grocery store on the way home, he could just pull up the list and get what was on it.

This way, if he called to ask if we needed anything and I wasn't available, he could still get what we needed!

So, here's how to set up a shopping list on Alexa and then how to share it.

How To Set Up A Shopping List

- Open your Alexa app on your smartphone.
- Tap on the 3 horizontal lines at the bottom right corner.
- Tap Lists & Notes
- Create list.
- Enter 'name of your list' and confirm.
- OR
- You can go to your Alexa device and say “Alexa, create a shopping list.”
- To add items to your list simply open the list on your smartphone and add your item OR simply say “Alexa, add apples (as an example) to my shopping list.”
- To remove items simply open the list on your smartphone and check the box next to the item OR simply say “Alexa, remove apples (as an example) from my shopping list.”

How To Share A Shopping List

- Open the list on your smartphone and click on Share on the top right corner.
- Tap on “Invite others to add to your list”
- Your list of contacts will open up so just choose the person(s) you wish to add to your shopping list.

This is a great tool for caregivers who shop for their senior loved ones!

Go ahead and [check out the Alexa Skills](#) on Amazon.com to see what's been added recently.