



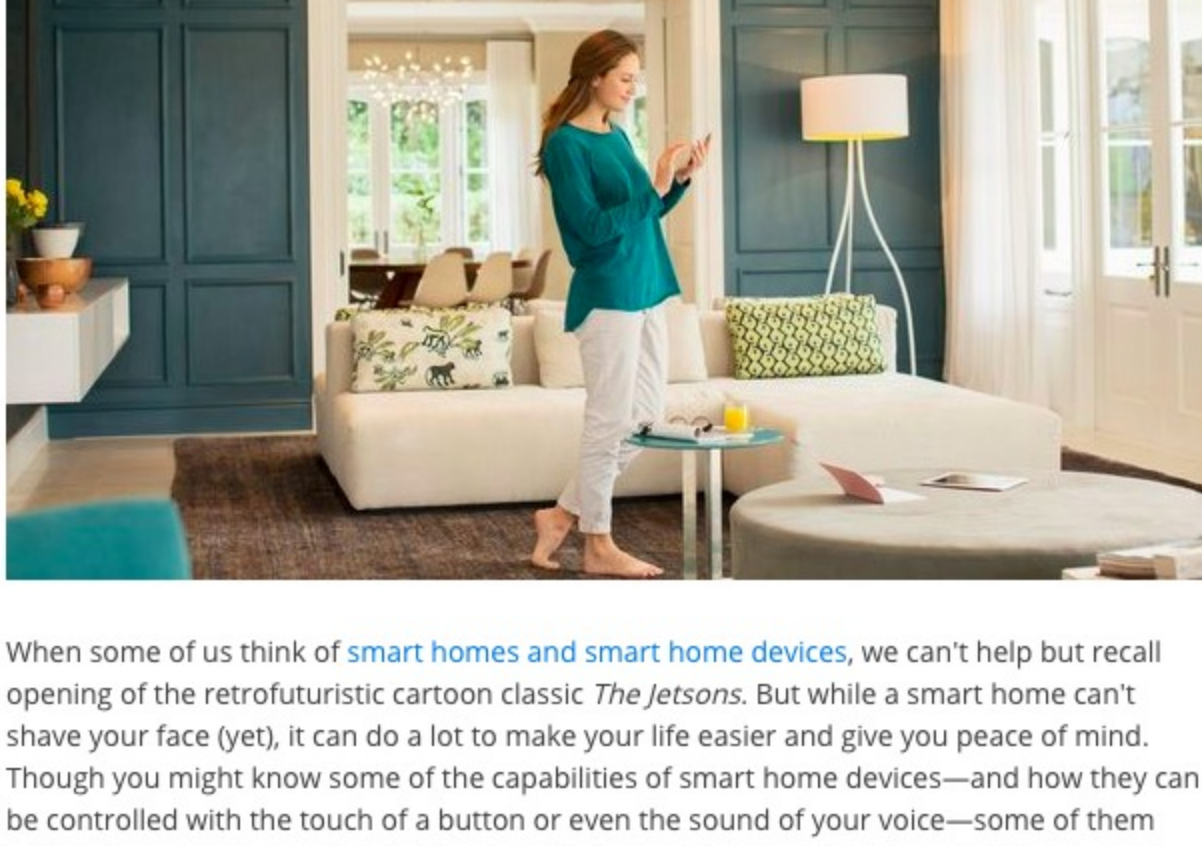
## GROUPON GUIDE

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## Smart Home Devices: A Beginner's Guide

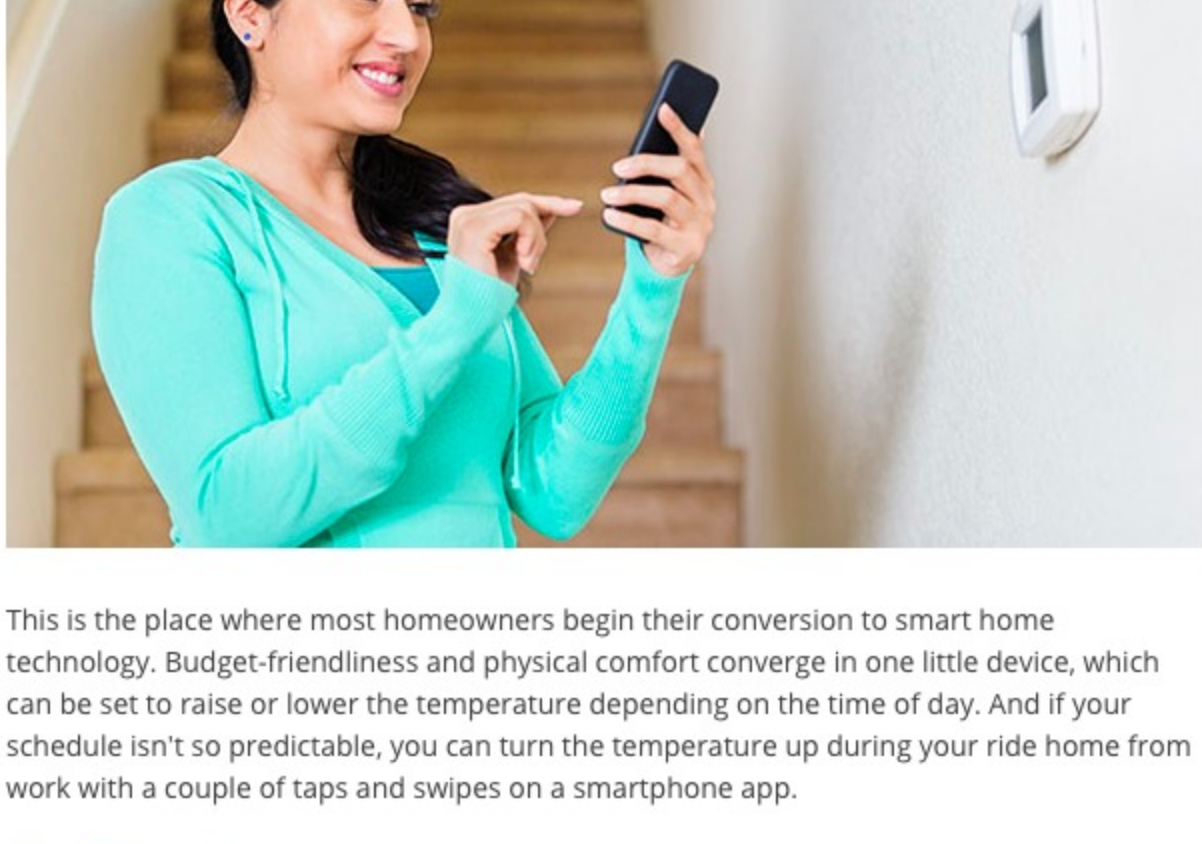
BY: Aimee Algas Alker | Mar 28, 2017



When some of us think of [smart homes](#) and [smart home devices](#), we can't help but recall opening of the retrofuturistic cartoon classic *The Jetsons*. But while a smart home can't shave your face (yet), it can do a lot to make your life easier and give you peace of mind. Though you might know some of the capabilities of smart home devices—and how they can be controlled with the touch of a button or even the sound of your voice—some of them might surprise you. Here's a quick list of what a smart home system can do for you—and how to make it happen. Hint: It's easier than you might think!

### Smart Thermostats

Make Your Home More Comfortable



This is the place where most homeowners begin their conversion to smart home technology. Budget-friendliness and physical comfort converge in one little device, which can be set to raise or lower the temperature depending on the time of day. And if your schedule isn't so predictable, you can turn the temperature up during your ride home from work with a couple of taps and swipes on a smartphone app.

[Shop all smart thermostats.](#)

### Smart Lighting

Turn Off the Lights, No Clapping Required



If you're just starting out with smart lighting, you can keep it simple. Install a couple of bulbs and a dimmer switch in the living room, and when you're ready to dim the lights, you won't have to get up from your spot on the couch. You'll just have to use the app to create the perfect brightness—or dimness—for the room.

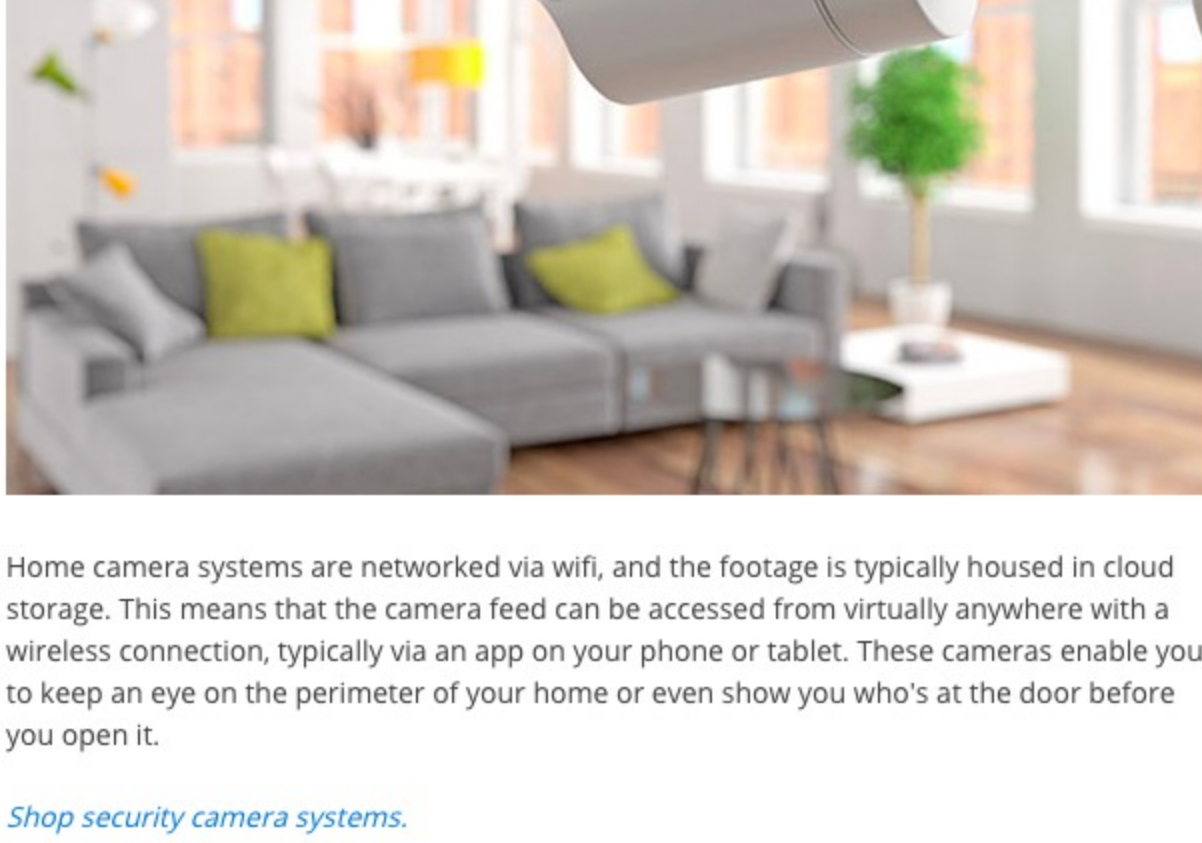
As your lighting system grows, you can install smart bulbs or even smart lamps in every room of the house, so you can turn the living room light off from your bedroom or switch off the bedside lamp without clapping your hands.

And if you're like us and leave the house without switching off the bathroom light, you can save yourself from losing energy by switching it off remotely. Lights can even run on a timer that you can set via an app.

[Shop smart lighting.](#)

### Smart Home Security

Keep Your Home Safe



Home camera systems are networked via wifi, and the footage is typically housed in cloud storage. This means that the camera feed can be accessed from virtually anywhere with a wireless connection, typically via an app on your phone or tablet. These cameras enable you to keep an eye on the perimeter of your home or even show you who's at the door before you open it.

[Shop security camera systems.](#)

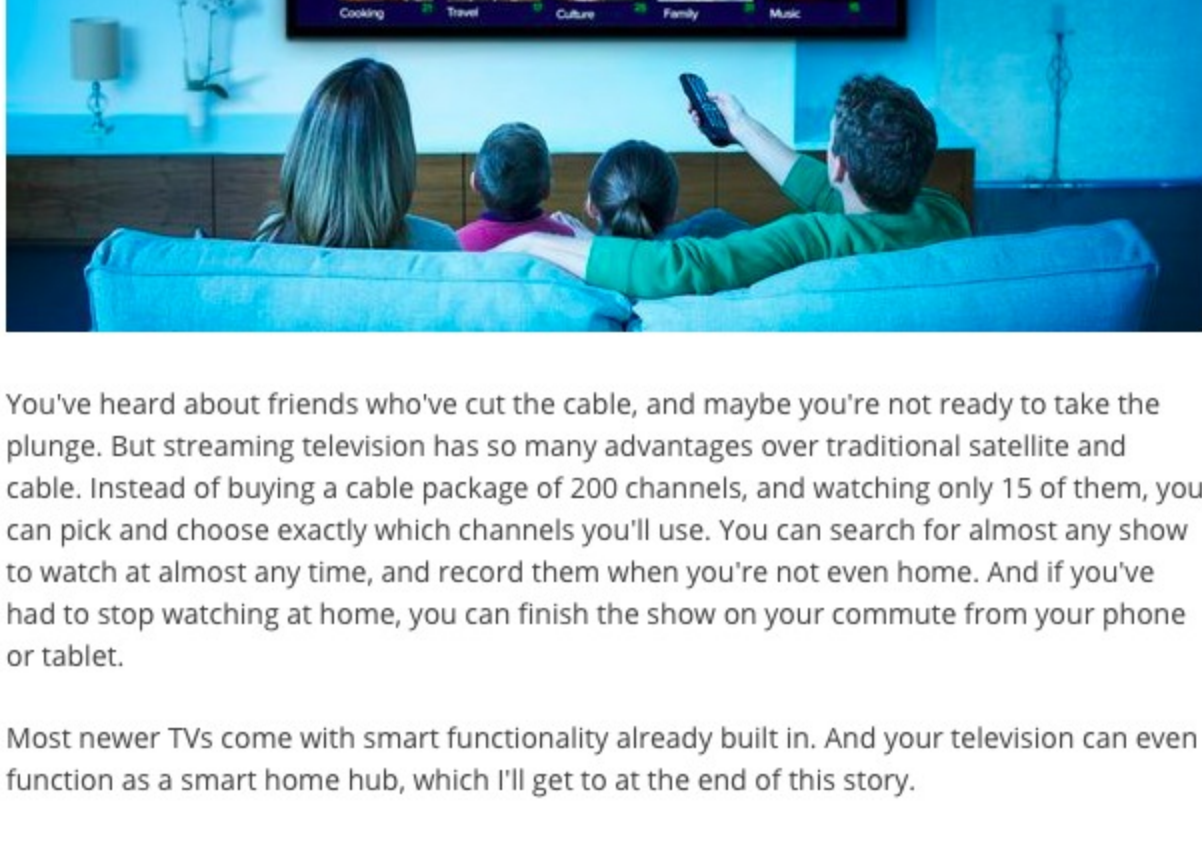
Speaking of doors, if you're like me and constantly misplace your keys, you could slap a smart key tracker on your ring. Then, even if you've left them in the refrigerator (not that I've ever done that), you'll be able to locate them.

Then again, if you go one step further and put smart home locks on your doors, you won't even need your keys. While they're often operated by a keyless fob, they can also be locked and unlocked remotely via an app. So if you can't remember if you locked the back door, you don't have to turn your car around to check. Or if you've asked a friend to check on the dog, you can unlock the door when they arrive on your doorstep and you don't even have to be home.

[Shop smart door locks.](#)

### Smart TVs

Watch What You Want, Wherever You Want



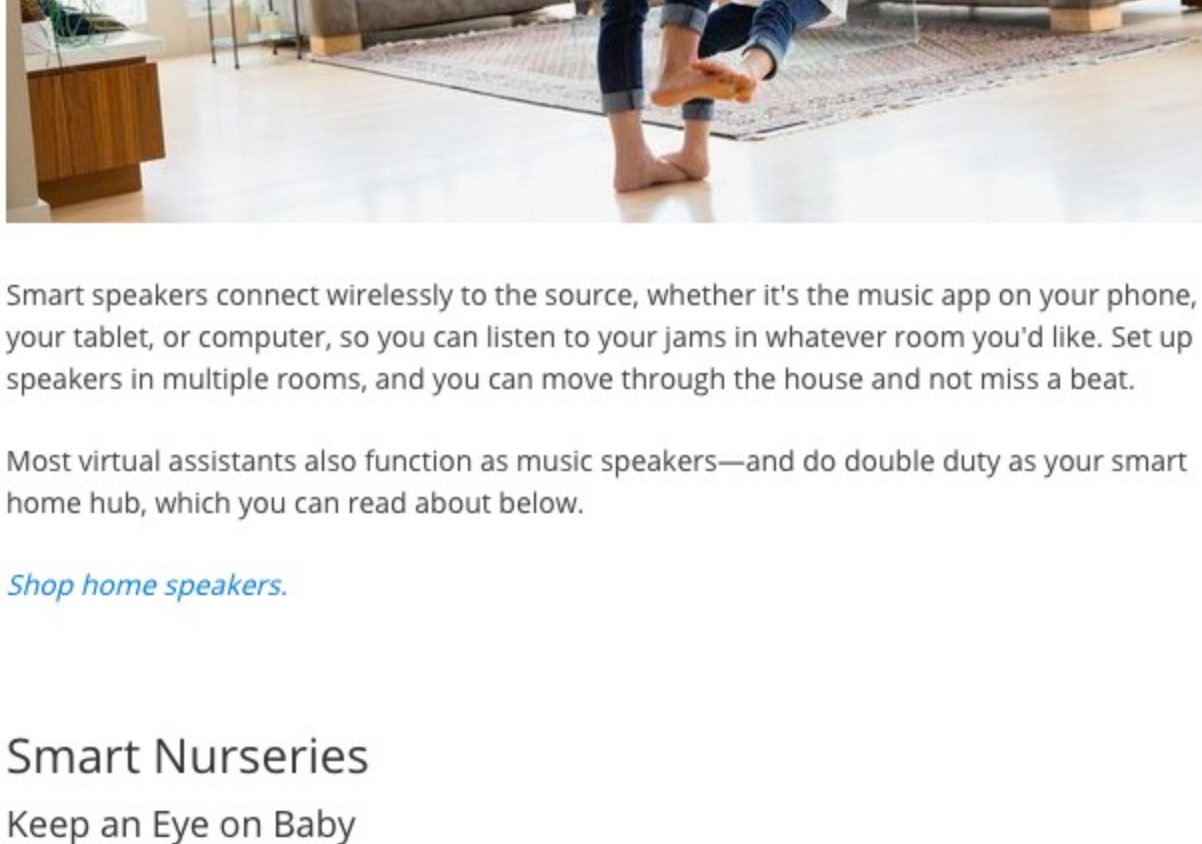
You've heard about friends who've cut the cable, and maybe you're not ready to take the plunge. But streaming television has so many advantages over traditional satellite and cable. Instead of buying a cable package of 200 channels, and watching only 15 of them, you can pick and choose exactly which channels you'll use. You can search for almost any show to watch at almost any time, and record them when you're not even home. And if you've had to stop watching at home, you can finish the show on your commute from your phone or tablet.

Most newer TVs come with smart functionality already built in. And your television can even function as a smart home hub, which I'll get to at the end of this story.

[Shop televisions.](#)

### Smart Music

Let Your Tunes Follow You All Through the House



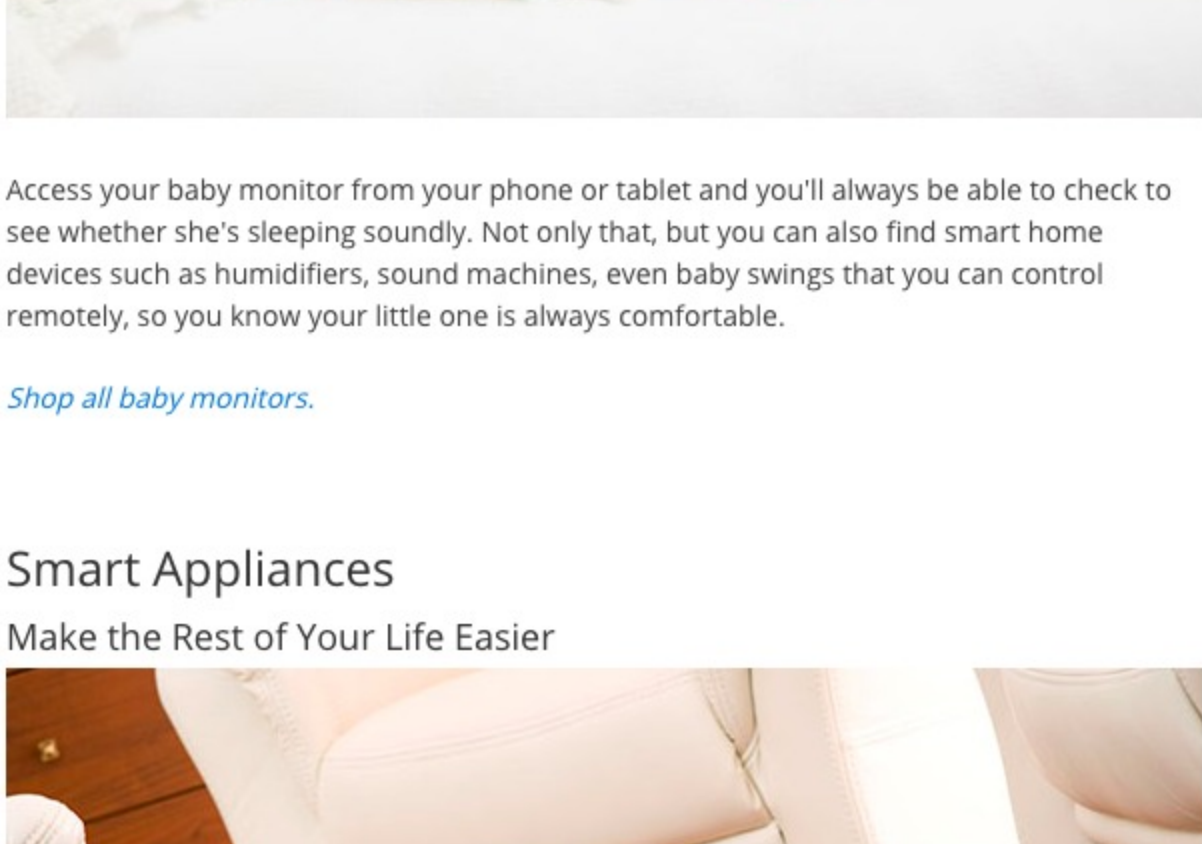
Smart speakers connect wirelessly to the source, whether it's the music app on your phone, your tablet, or computer, so you can listen to your jams in whatever room you'd like. Set up speakers in multiple rooms, and you can move through the house and not miss a beat.

Most virtual assistants also function as music speakers—and do double duty as your smart home hub, which you can read about below.

[Shop home speakers.](#)

### Smart Nurseries

Keep an Eye on Baby

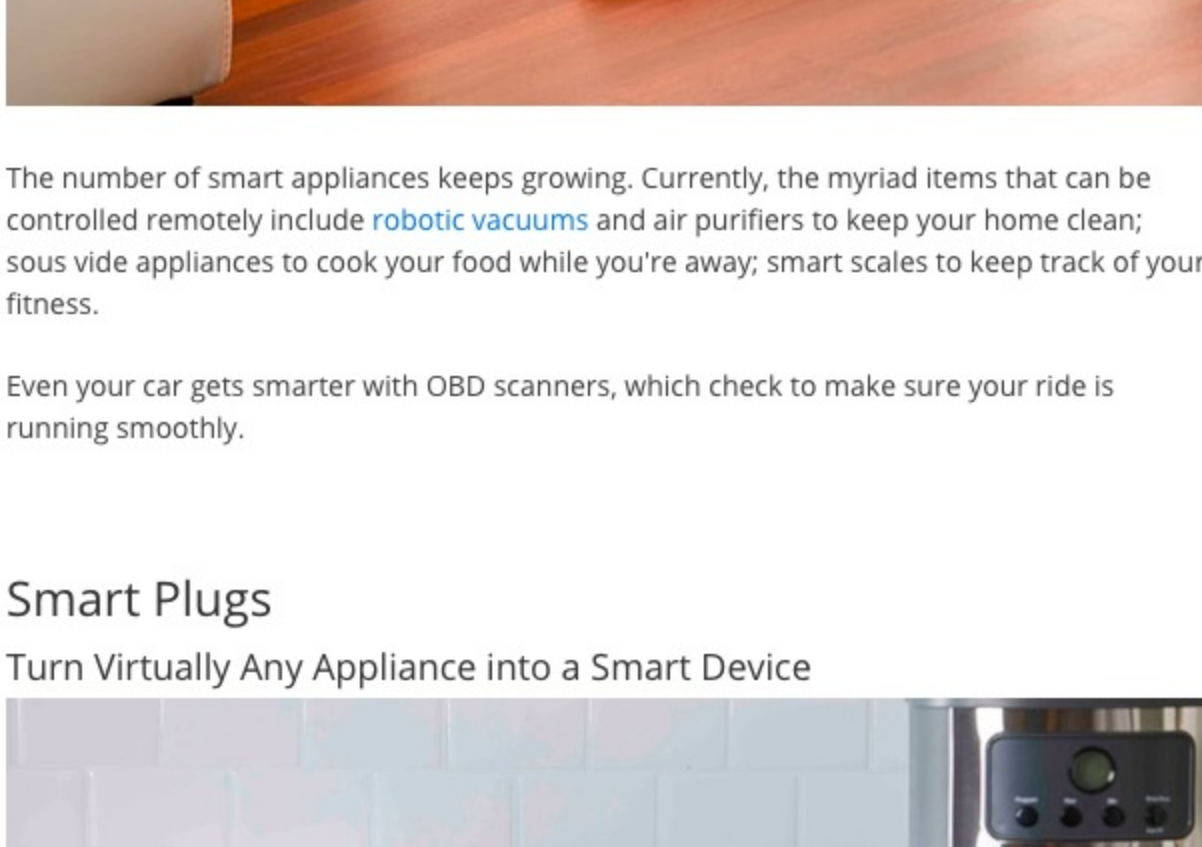


Access your baby monitor from your phone or tablet and you'll always be able to check to see whether she's sleeping soundly. Not only that, but you can also find smart home devices such as humidifiers, sound machines, even baby swings that you can control remotely, so your kiddo's little one is always comfortable.

[Shop all baby monitors.](#)

### Smart Appliances

Make the Rest of Your Life Easier

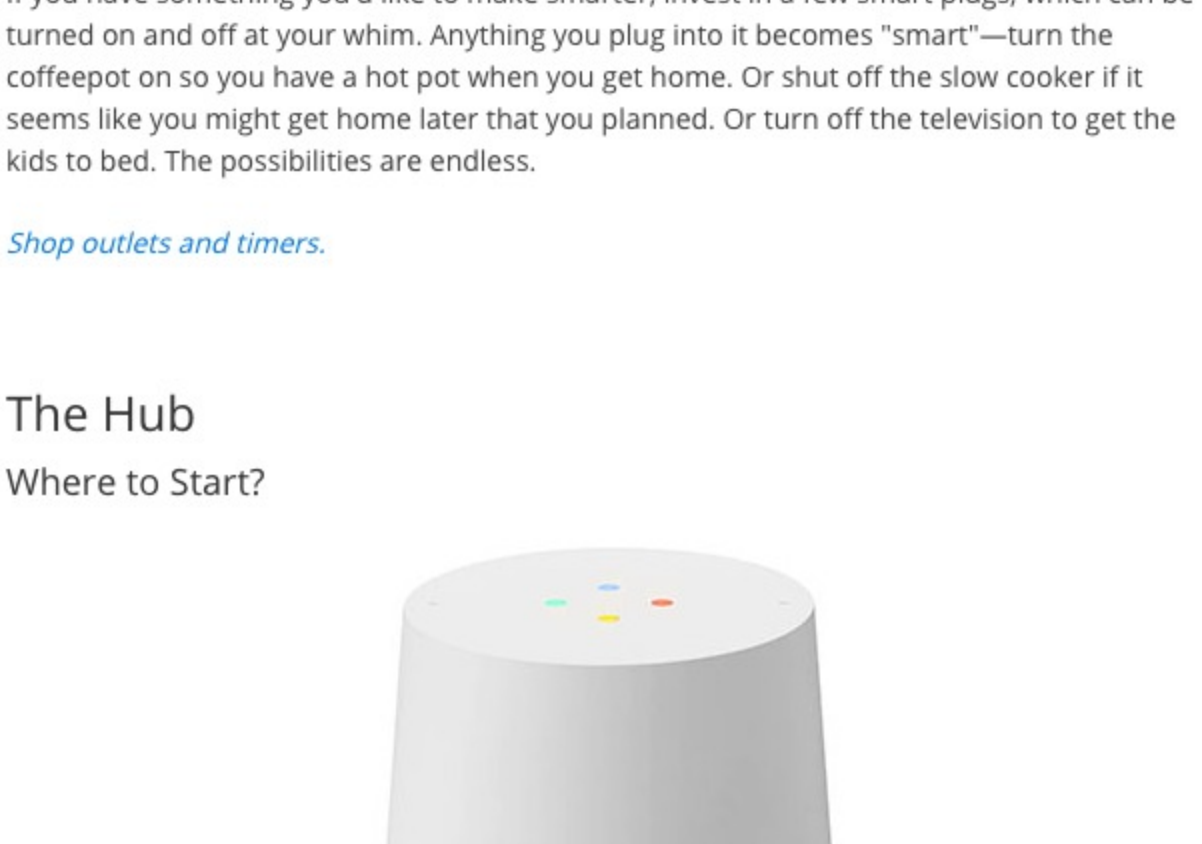


The number of smart appliances keeps growing. Currently, the myriad items that can be controlled remotely include robotic vacuums and air purifiers to keep your home clean; sous vide appliances to cook your food while you're away; smart scales to keep track of your fitness.

Even your car gets smarter with OBD scanners, which check to make sure your ride is running smoothly.

### Smart Plugs

Turn Virtually Any Appliance into a Smart Device

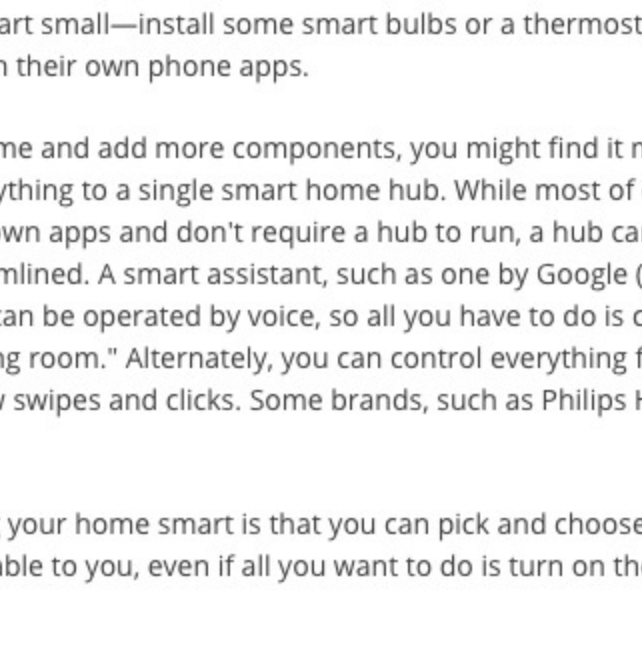


If you have something you'd like to make smarter, invest in a few smart plugs, which can be turned on and off at your whim. Anything you plug into it becomes "smart"—turn the coffeepot on so you have a hot pot when you get home. Or shut off the slow cooker if it seems like you might get home later than you planned. Or turn off the television to get the kids to bed. The possibilities are endless.

[Shop outlets and timers.](#)

### The Hub

Where to Start?



If you're just starting out, start small—install some smart bulbs or a thermostat. Most of these can be controlled with their own phone apps.

As you build your smart home and add more components, you might find it more convenient to connect everything to a single smart home hub. While most of our smart home products have their own apps and don't require a hub to run, a hub can make operating them more streamlined. A smart assistant, such as one by Google (pictured above) or Amazon's Alexa, can be operated by voice, so all you have to do is call out: "Alexa, turn on the lights in the living room." Alternately, you can control everything from your phone or a tablet with a few swipes and clicks. Some brands, such as Philips Hue, run on their own branded hub.

The best part about making your home smart is that you can pick and choose whichever components are most valuable to you, even if all you want to do is turn on the TV.

**Ready to make your home smarter?**

[SHOP OUR ENTIRE SMART HOME COLLECTION.](#)

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**Groupon's Smartest Buys: 16 Tech Finds Inspired by the Consumer Electronics Show 2018**

Each year, our buyers attend the Consumer Electronics Show (CES)—whose straightforward name belies the exciting finds and upcoming trends waiting to be discovered, and this year was no exception.

**6 of The Best TV Mounts**

As TVs have gotten slimmer, lighter, and decidedly less cube-shaped, the ways we display them in our home have multiplied.

### Smart Home Deals

**Philips Hue White and Color Ambiance ...**

Online Deal

★★★★☆ (40)

~~\$89.99~~ **\$43.99**

51% OFF

**iView WiFi Multi-Color Smart LED Light ...**

Online Deal

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