



6 Affordable Smart Home Gadgets That Can Make Your Life Easier

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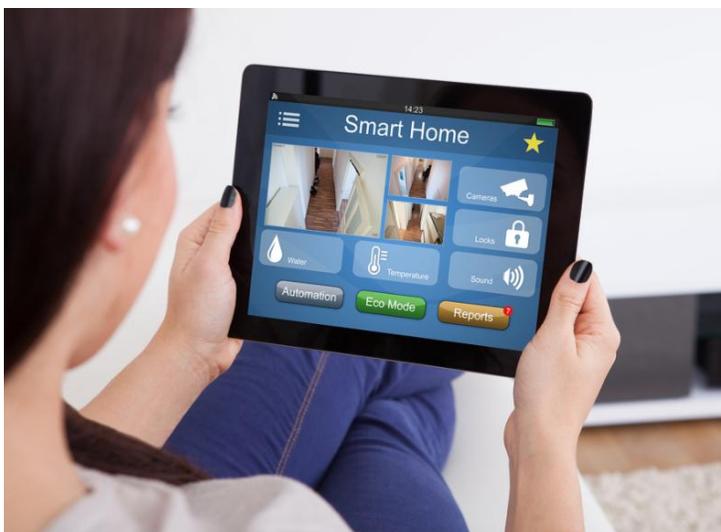
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As technology and gadgets continue to become a central part of our everyday lives, it's no surprise that new innovations for the home are coming on the market almost daily. Many of these devices are designed to make life a little easier for the consumer, but they are sometimes out of reach due to their price tags.

Michael Menninger, *Mintlife* blogger, reveals 6 affordable home gadgets that can simplify your life *without* busting your budget.

1. Smarter Coffee (\$239)

Coffee machines have had timers for years, but this one lets you use your smartphone to adjust the strength, flavor and amount you'd like made. This machine even cleans itself. At close to \$250, Smarter Coffee isn't exactly *cheap*, but since the average American spends more than \$1,000 at coffee shops each year, it's still more cost-efficient than hitting Starbucks every day.

2. Belkin WeMo (\$49)

This smart outlet adapter gives you the power to remotely control which of your plugged-in devices receive electricity. The Wi-Fi-enabled WeMo works with just about any product that plugs into a standard outlet, so you can turn on fans, turn off lights and control your home with just a few taps on your smartphone. The mobile app even allows you to monitor how much electricity each appliance is using, which could help lower your electricity bill.

3. Nest Learning Thermostat (\$249)

Not only does this thermostat let you control your heating and air conditioning from wherever you are, but using your smartphone's GPS, it also knows when you're home and when you're not, as well as what house temperatures you

like based on your habits. The thermostat can also pay for itself by letting you know when a small temperature adjustment can help lower your electric bill.

4. Ring Doorbell (\$199)

This ultra-modern doorbell lets you use your smartphone to monitor what's happening just outside your house. The real-time video shows you who's at your doorstep, and even lets you talk to whomever is out there, which gives the impression that you're home.

5. Amazon Echo (\$179)

Also known as "Alexa," this smart speaker can save you time (and provide hours of entertainment) answering your questions and obeying your commands. Alexa can also save you money by helping you find Amazon's best deals.

6. Google Home (\$129)

Google's answer to Amazon's Alexa, this recently-released smart speaker works in much the same way as Alexa, helping you manage your entertainment, life, schedule and home with just your voice.

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