



# Energy saving smart home devices

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I'm PCMag's managing editor for consumer electronics, overseeing an experienced team of analysts covering smart home, home entertainment, wearables, fitness and health tech, and various other product categories. I have been with PCMag for more than 10 years, and in that time have written more than 6,000 articles and reviews for the site. I previously served as an analyst focused on smart home and wearable devices, and before that I was a reporter covering consumer tech news. I'm also a yoga instructor, and have been actively teaching group and private classes for nearly a decade.

I'm PCMag's senior analyst covering smart home and wearable devices. I've been writing about tech professionally for nearly a decade and have been obsessing about it for much longer than that. Prior to joining PCMag, I made educational videos for an electronics store called Abt Electronics in Illinois, and before that I spent eight years covering the smart home market for CNET.

Another piece of technology you might want on your front door is a smart lock. Arguably the most important part of a truly connected home, these devices offer both security and convenience, letting you come and go as you please, and monitor who is entering and leaving your home while you're away. Our current favorite is the Ultraloq U-Bolt Pro Wi-Fi, a dependable and versatile smart lock that lets you lock and unlock your door with your voice and fingerprint, as well as via keypad, mobile app, or traditional key.

For the highest level of protection, consider a professionally monitored smart home security system. One of our top picks, ADT Command, is a hefty investment, but it offers virtually everything you need for maximum protection. Compared with Vivint, another Editors' Choice winner, ADT is a bit pricier but offers superior customer service.

For a more affordable alternative, do-it-yourself smart home security systems are ideal for homeowners who want to save money by monitoring their homes themselves. The SimpliSafe Home Security System, our favorite DIY option, lets you secure and monitor your home from afar without spending a bundle or signing a long-term contract.

When it comes to living room technology, televisions and soundbars are the obvious stars of the show. But many other gadgets aim to elevate the ambience, convenience, and security of your main living space.

For starters, a smart speaker is a must for the living room. Beyond playing music, our favorite models serve as a sort of central command center, letting you control pretty much any other connected home gadget by voice. The first step in choosing one is deciding which voice assistance platform is the right fit for your home: Alexa, Google Assistant, or Siri. All three support most major smart home device brands.

If Alexa is your voice assistant of choice, we suggest the Echo Studio, which offers truly impressive audio

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quality for its price, or the fourth-generation Amazon Echo as a more affordable alternative. Google Assistant fans can go with the Nest Audio. And if you prefer Siri, you can get a HomePod or a HomePod mini. If you go this route, just make sure any other smart home devices you buy are compatible with Apple HomeKit or Matter. Meanwhile, the Sonos Era 300 and 100 support Alexa, but not Google Assistant or Siri.

One of the easiest and most affordable ways to upgrade your living room is to swap out your standard incandescent bulbs for smart light bulbs that support app and voice control. After upgrading, you won't ever have to get up off the couch to flip the light switch again. Beyond offering greater convenience than traditional bulbs, smart lights use less energy and last longer, so they can save you money in the long run.

The AiDot Linkind Wi-Fi Matter Smart Light Bulb features built-in Wi-Fi and works with Matter, so you can easily connect it to your smart home platform of choice, whether that's Alexa, Google, HomeKit, or SmartThings. It displays 16 million colors and a range of white tones, and offers custom and music-themed effects to help you set the mood for movie night.

With so many smart gadgets in your living room, it's a good idea to invest in a Wi-Fi-connected indoor home security camera. One of our favorites, the Eufy S220 Indoor Cam, delivers vivid high-resolution video and is packed with features typically found on pricier models, including local and cloud storage, automatic motion tracking, and support for all the major voice assistance platforms.

Finally, if you have a cat or dog, your smart living room wouldn't be complete without a pet camera that lets you monitor and interact with your fur babies 24/7, from wherever you are. The Furbo 360 Dog Camera is as functional as it is fun, offering barking notifications and a remote treat-tossing feature you—and your pooch—will love. To make your feline roommates happy, go with the Furbo 360 Cat Camera, which is basically the same as the dog version, but tailors the sound effects and notifications to felines while adding a dangly feather toy to the top.

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