



An Extended Guide · No. 1891

Humanoid Home Robots — A Reality Check Before You Preorder

An honest look before
you put money down

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Before you put money down on a home robot

You've seen the videos — a human-shaped robot folding laundry, carrying groceries, tidying the kitchen. They're dazzling, and some companies are now taking deposits. This guide is the calm, honest second opinion to read before you part with a dollar.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. In 30+ years of helping folks with technology, I've learned to tell the difference between what's been announced and what actually works in a real home. With humanoid robots, that gap is wide right now — and knowing it can save you a lot of money and disappointment.

I'm not here to pour cold water on something exciting. Home robots that help with chores may well be part of the future. But a preorder today is a promise, not a product, and you deserve the plain facts before you treat it as anything more.

★ Tempted by a preorder? Call me first

If you're weighing a deposit on a home robot and want an honest read, call or text me at (330) 200-8042. I sell none of these and earn no commission — it's just straight talk before you spend.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, you'll approach any home-robot preorder with clear eyes. Facts here are as of 2026 — check current status.

- ❑ As of 2026, no general-purpose humanoid robot has truly shipped into ordinary homes as a finished, autonomous helper.
- ❑ 1X's NEO is the clearest consumer offering — preorders opened in late October 2025, around \$20,000 to buy or about \$499 a month, deliveries promised by the end of 2026.
- ❑ A big caveat: NEO relies in part on scheduled remote human operators to do many tasks — a real person can see through and control it.
- ❑ Tesla Optimus and Figure are not orderable for the home — they're in demos and industrial pilots.
- ❑ An announcement is not a shipped product; a promise is not a track record.
- ❑ If tempted, ask what it does by itself versus by remote operator, what happens to your deposit if timelines slip, and whether you can wait for real-home reviews.

! The honest bottom line

For an ordinary home today, the sensible move is almost always to wait — let others be first, let independent reviews come in from real homes, and let the technology and the prices settle before you commit thousands of dollars.

Announced is not the same as shipped

The single most useful idea in this whole guide is the difference between a robot that's been announced and one you can actually buy and use at home. Hold onto this.

A slick demo video shows a robot doing one task, often in a controlled setting, sometimes with a person helping off-camera. A preorder page shows a price and a promised date. Neither is the same as a finished machine arriving at an ordinary home and reliably doing chores on its own.

The technology world is full of 'coming soon' that arrives late, arrives different, or doesn't arrive at all. With humanoid robots, the promises are running well ahead of what's actually in people's homes. That isn't cynicism — it's just where things honestly stand in 2026.

✓ Watch the verb tenses

'Can do,' 'will do,' and 'is expected to' are promises. 'Does, today, in homes like yours' is a product. When you read about a home robot, notice which one you're actually being shown.

Where things honestly stand in 2026

Let me give you the straight state of play, so you're not relying on a headline or an ad to judge this.

As of 2026, no general-purpose humanoid robot has truly shipped into ordinary homes as a finished, autonomous helper. We are still before the mass market — the stage of preorders, pilots, and promises, not the stage of a proven machine you buy and trust like a dishwasher.

That doesn't mean nothing is happening. Real money and real engineering are going into these robots, and one company has opened consumer preorders. But 'you can put down a deposit' and 'it works in homes today' are two very different claims, and only the first is true right now.

! These facts are as of 2026

This field is moving fast, and today's honest picture may look different in a year. Treat everything here as the situation in 2026, and always check the current status before you make a decision.

The clearest example: 1X's NEO

Of all the humanoid robots you've heard about, one stands out as the clearest consumer home offering: the NEO, from a company called 1X. Here are the facts.

1X opened preorders for NEO in late October 2025. The price is roughly \$20,000 to buy outright, or about \$499 a month as a subscription, with a small refundable deposit to reserve one. Deliveries are promised by the end of 2026.

Notice that word again: promised. There isn't yet a long track record of real homes living with NEO day after day. A reservation today is a bet on a delivery date and a capability list that haven't been proven in ordinary homes. That's worth sitting with before you treat the deposit as a sure thing.

✓ Refundable is not risk-free

A refundable deposit sounds safe, but your money is tied up, dates can slip, and the terms can change. 'Refundable' answers one question — read the fine print for all the others before you decide it's harmless.

The part the ads don't dwell on: remote operators

Here's the most important thing to understand about NEO, and it changes how you should think about the whole idea. I'll say it plainly.

NEO relies in part on scheduled remote human operators — 1X calls it 'Expert Mode' — to do many of the tasks it can't yet handle on its own. In plain terms: at times, a real person somewhere else can see through the robot's eyes and control it to get a chore done.

That's not a scandal — the company is open about it, and it's how the robot manages tasks that are still too hard for it to do alone. But it means a brand-new home robot is, for a good share of what it does, a person operating a machine in your house from somewhere else. You should know that before, not after.

! A real person can see inside your home

Remote operation means a stranger, on a schedule, may be able to see and control a camera-equipped robot moving through your home. That is a genuine privacy concern, and it's the single biggest thing to weigh before you put money down.

Autonomous versus by remote operator

Because of that remote-operator detail, the most important question about any home robot is: how much does it really do by itself?

A robot that does a chore autonomously has figured it out on its own, every time, with no person at the controls. A robot that does it by remote operator is being driven by a human you can't see. Both might finish the laundry — but they are completely different products, with completely different privacy and reliability stories.

When a company shows you what its robot can do, press on this: was that autonomous, or was a person helping? A demo that quietly leans on a remote operator tells you far less about the finished, self-sufficient robot you're imagining in your home.

✓ This is the question that cuts through the hype

'What does it do entirely on its own, with nobody at the controls?' Ask it about any home robot, and a lot of the marketing shine falls away to reveal what you'd actually be buying.

What about Tesla Optimus and Figure?

Two other names come up constantly in these conversations: Tesla's Optimus and a company called Figure. Here's where they actually stand.

Neither Tesla Optimus nor Figure is publicly orderable for your home. They appear in demonstrations and in industrial or business pilots — factories and warehouses, not living rooms. There have been plenty of announcements and promises of 'by the end of 2026,' but no consumer home orders you can actually place.

So if you read an exciting story about Optimus or Figure, enjoy it as a glimpse of where things may be heading — not as something you can buy and set loose in your kitchen. For the home, as of 2026, they're not on the menu.

✓ Industrial pilots are not home products

A robot working in a controlled factory, supervised by trained staff, is a world away from one living safely and usefully in an ordinary home. Don't let a factory video stand in for a home product that doesn't exist yet.

The questions to ask before any deposit

If you're genuinely tempted to reserve a home robot, don't do it on a feeling. Get clear answers to these first.

- **What does it do entirely autonomously, versus by a remote operator?** This is the question that matters most.
- **What happens to my deposit if the timeline slips?** Dates on new technology slip often — know your rights before, not after.
- **Who can see and control it remotely, and when?** Understand the privacy of remote operation in plain terms.
- **Can I wait for independent reviews from real homes?** Almost always, yes — and almost always, you should.
- **What is it actually proven to do, today, in homes like mine?** Not in a demo, not 'soon' — today.

★ Bring me the preorder page

If you're looking at a deposit and want help reading the fine print and the promises, send it my way. Sorting hype from substance is exactly what I'm here for — and I've nothing to sell you either way. Call (330) 200-8042.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

People come to home robots from different places. Which of these sounds more like you shapes what I'd honestly advise.

The early-adopter enthusiast

If you love being first, have money you're truly comfortable risking, and enjoy being part of something new, a preorder might suit you — with open eyes.

- Go in knowing it's a bet on a promise, not a proven product.
- Make peace with the remote-operator privacy trade before you commit.
- Only risk money you can comfortably have tied up or lose.
- Expect slipped dates, early quirks, and a long road to polish.

The practical, wait-and-see buyer

If you want a tool that works, reliably, for a fair price — the way most of us buy appliances — then today is almost certainly too early, and that's perfectly fine.

- Let others be the testers while the technology matures.
- Wait for independent reviews from ordinary homes, not demos.
- Let the price settle — early technology is almost always dearest.
- Spend today's money on robots that genuinely work, like a vacuum.

★ Not sure which you are?

Tell me honestly why a home robot appeals to you and what you'd want it to do, and I'll give you my straight opinion on whether now is your moment or whether waiting serves you better. Call (330) 200-8042.

Taking the privacy question seriously

Of all the concerns with a humanoid home robot, privacy is the one I'd weigh most heavily. Let's be clear-eyed about it.

A robot that walks through your home has cameras and sensors by necessity — it has to see to move. When part of its operation is a remote human driver, those cameras become a window a stranger can look through, on a schedule, from somewhere you can't see. That's a different thing from a robot vacuum's obstacle camera.

Think about where this robot would go in your home — bedrooms, bathrooms, the places you're least dressed and least guarded — and ask whether you're comfortable with the possibility of a remote operator seeing any of it. For many people, honestly answered, that's a dealbreaker today.

! Privacy you can't verify is privacy you don't have

Promises about how remote access is limited and protected are only as good as the company keeping them, and you can't easily check from your living room. Weigh the worst case, not just the brochure.

Taking the deposit question seriously

The money side deserves the same clear eyes as the privacy side. A deposit on an unshipped product carries real risks worth naming.

Your deposit ties up money, sometimes for a long time, on a delivery date that may well slip — late dates are the norm, not the exception, for brand-new technology. Even a refundable deposit can come with conditions, and the price or the capabilities you were promised can change before the robot ever arrives.

There's also the company risk. New ventures in a young field don't all survive. If a company stumbles after taking your deposit, getting that money back can become complicated. None of this means never — it means go in knowing exactly what you're risking.

✓ Only risk what you can afford to wait on

Treat a home-robot deposit like money you might not see for a long while, or at all. If tying it up that way would pinch, that alone is a good reason to wait.

The quiet strength of waiting

Waiting isn't missing out — with brand-new technology, it's usually the smart, even the brave, choice. Here's why it serves you.

Let the early adopters be the testers. Within a year or two of a product shipping, independent reviewers and real owners tell you what it actually does, what breaks, and whether it's worth the money — information no preorder page will ever give you. That knowledge is free, and it's worth a great deal.

Prices fall, too. Early technology is almost always at its most expensive and its least polished. The patient buyer typically gets a better, cheaper, more reliable machine — and skips the frustration of the rough first version. In a fast-moving field, time is on the waiter's side.

✓ First is rarely best, and never cheapest

The person who waits for the second or third version of almost any technology gets more for less and avoids the early headaches. With home robots, that patience is likely to pay off handsomely.

The home robots that actually work today

If what you really want is a robot that helps around the house today, good news — several already do, just not in human shape.

A robot vacuum keeps your floors tidy day after day. A robot mower can handle the lawn. There are robots for pools and even for windows. None of them look like a person or fold your laundry, but every one of them is a proven, shipping product that does a real job reliably — which is exactly what a humanoid can't yet promise.

If the dream is 'a robot that helps me around the home,' you can start living that dream now with the right single-purpose machine, and let the human-shaped ones prove themselves on someone else's dime. We have guides on each of these.

★ Let's find the helper that works now

Tell me the chore you most wish a robot would take off your hands, and I'll point you to a machine that actually does it today — no preorder, no promises. Call (330) 200-8042.

How to read the hype without getting burned

You'll keep seeing jaw-dropping robot videos. Here's how to enjoy them without being swept into a decision you'll regret.

- **Ask if a person was helping.** A smooth demo may lean on a remote operator or off-camera help you aren't shown.
- **Watch for cuts and single takes.** A polished clip can hide many failed attempts and careful staging.
- **Separate the date from the deed.** 'By end of 2026' is a hope, not a track record.
- **Look for ordinary homes.** Real kitchens and real messes, not a spotless demo set, tell you what's real.
- **Find independent reviews.** The company's own video is an ad; a neutral reviewer in a real home is evidence.

! Excitement is the salesperson's best tool

The more amazed a video makes you feel, the more carefully you should read the fine print underneath it. Let the wonder settle before you reach for your wallet.

Giving the technology a fair shake

I've been cautious in this guide, and on purpose — but let me be fair to what's genuinely promising here, too.

The progress is real. Robots that can move, see, and handle objects in a messy human home are enormously hard to build, and the fact that any company is taking consumer preorders is a milestone. The remote-operator approach, for all its privacy worries, is an honest way to deliver help while the robot keeps learning to do more on its own.

So this isn't 'never.' It's 'not yet, and not blindly.' A home robot that earns a place in ordinary houses may well arrive — and when it does, with proven reliability, honest privacy, and a fair price, it'll be worth revisiting. Today, the honest advice is patience, not dismissal.

✓ **Skeptical today, open tomorrow**

Being careful now doesn't mean closing the door. Keep an eye on the field, watch for real-home reviews, and let a proven product — when one arrives — make its own case.

If a loved one is tempted

Sometimes the person eyeing a deposit is a parent or an older relative who's seen an ad and hopes a robot could help them live independently. That deserves a gentle, honest word.

The hope is real and worthy — a robot that helps someone stay in their own home longer is a beautiful idea. But that very hope is what makes an unshipped, unproven product risky for them: thousands of dollars tied up, a camera a stranger might see through, and a machine that can't yet reliably do what the ad implied.

If independence is the goal, there are proven helpers today — a robot vacuum, voice control to run the home hands-free, a medical-alert system, simple smart-home touches. These deliver real help now, for a fraction of the cost and none of the privacy gamble of a preorder.

★ Worried about a parent's preorder?

If someone you love is about to put money down on a home robot, I'm glad to talk it through with them kindly and honestly — and to suggest helpers that work today. Call (330) 200-8042.

A simple checklist before you commit

If you're still considering a home-robot deposit, run honestly through this list first. Any 'no' is a reason to wait.

- ☐ I understand this is a promise and a preorder, not a proven product.
- ☐ I know what it does on its own versus by a remote operator.
- ☐ I'm genuinely comfortable with a remote person possibly seeing inside my home.
- ☐ I've read what happens to my deposit if the timeline slips.
- ☐ I can comfortably afford to have this money tied up — or lost.
- ☐ I've accepted that waiting for real-home reviews would cost me nothing important.

! If you hesitated on any of these, wait

A clear-eyed 'yes' to all of these is rare today, and that's telling you something. There is no prize for being first, and no penalty for waiting until the answers are easy.

Setting honest expectations

Let me leave you with the plainest version of the truth, so a shiny ad can't talk you out of it later.

A humanoid home robot you can rely on, that does your chores by itself, with privacy you can trust, at a price that makes sense — that does not exist for ordinary homes as of 2026. What exists is an exciting, early, partly remote-operated first attempt, available by deposit, promised for the future.

That may change, perhaps soon. But a decision made today has to be made on today's facts, not tomorrow's promises. On today's facts, for almost everyone, the wise and unglamorous choice is to wait — and there's real strength in that.

✓ Check the current status before deciding

This field moves fast, so whatever you've read here, confirm the current status before you act. Facts in this guide are as of 2026 and are sure to keep changing.

Questions to ask a home-robot seller

Whether you're reading a preorder page or talking to me, these questions get you past the marketing to what you'd really be buying.

Q: What does it do completely on its own, with nobody at the controls?

The single most important question. If the impressive tasks lean on a remote operator, you're buying something very different from a truly autonomous robot.

Q: When and how can a remote person see or control it?

Get this in plain terms. A camera-equipped robot a stranger can drive through your home is a real privacy matter, not a footnote.

Q: What happens to my deposit if delivery slips?

Dates on new technology slip often. Know whether and how you get your money back before you hand it over, not after.

Q: Can I see independent reviews from real homes?

If the honest answer is 'not yet,' that is itself your answer — it means it's early, and waiting costs you nothing important.

✓ There's no silly question

If a seller dodges these or makes you feel foolish for asking, walk away. A product that can't survive plain questions isn't ready for your home or your money.

Common Questions

The questions I hear most from folks dazzled by home-robot videos, answered plainly. Facts are as of 2026 — check current status.

Q: Can I actually buy a humanoid robot for my home right now?

As of 2026, not as a finished, autonomous helper. One company, 1X, is taking preorders for its NEO — around \$20,000 to buy or about \$499 a month, with deliveries promised by the end of 2026 — but that's a reservation on a promise, not a proven product in homes today.

Q: What's the catch with the 1X NEO?

The big one is that NEO relies in part on scheduled remote human operators ('Expert Mode') for many tasks it can't do on its own — meaning a real person can see through and control the robot. That's a genuine privacy concern to weigh heavily before any deposit.

Q: What about Tesla's Optimus or Figure's robots?

Neither is orderable for the home. They show up in demonstrations and industrial or business pilots — factories, not living rooms. Lots of promises of 'by end of 2026,' but no consumer home orders you can place.

Q: Should I put down a deposit?

For almost everyone today, no — or at least not without clear eyes. Ask what it does autonomously versus by remote operator, what happens to your deposit if dates slip, and whether you can simply wait for real-home reviews. Usually, waiting is the wise move.

Q: Is there a home robot that actually helps today?

Yes — just not human-shaped. A robot vacuum, a robot mower, pool and window robots, and voice control to run the home hands-free are all proven and shipping now. If you want real help today, that's where to look.

★ Tempted, but not sure?

This is exactly the kind of decision I love to help with — honestly, with nothing to sell you. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll separate the hype from what's real before you spend a dollar.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made deciding about a humanoid home robot feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. I'll help you choose the right machine, get it set up and mapped, connect it to your Wi-Fi and your phone, and show you how to run it. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site — app settings, schedules, a quick question — I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. For anything that calls for a ladder, wiring, or digging, I'll help you line up a trustworthy local pro rather than risk it.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

Announced vs Actually Shipped

Where humanoid home robots really stand as of 2026

	Robot	Can you buy it for home?
1X NEO	Preorder only;	promised 2026
Tesla Optimus	No; demos and	pilots only
Figure	No; industrial	pilots only
Any as finished	None shipped	to homes yet

A preorder is a promise, not a proven product. Check current status.

The 1X NEO, by the Facts

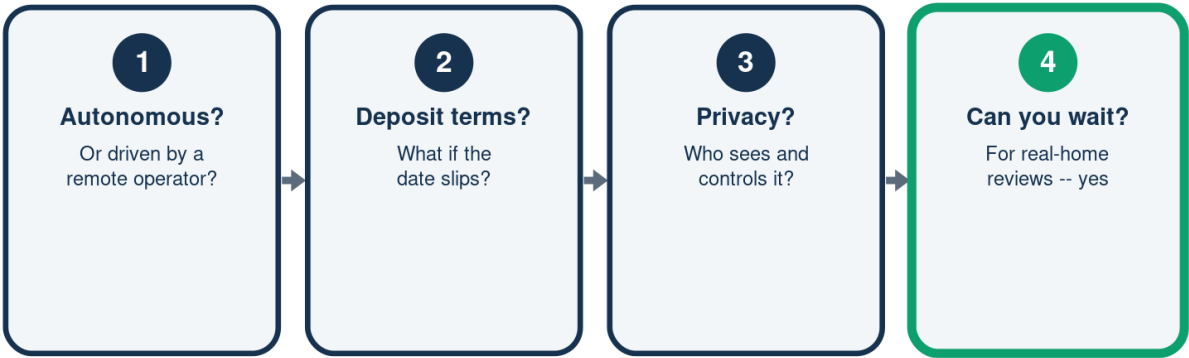
The clearest consumer offering -- with a big caveat

	Detail	As of 2026
Preorders	Opened late	Oct 2025
Price	~\$20,000 or	~\$499/month
Delivery	Promised by	end of 2026
Big caveat	Remote human	operators

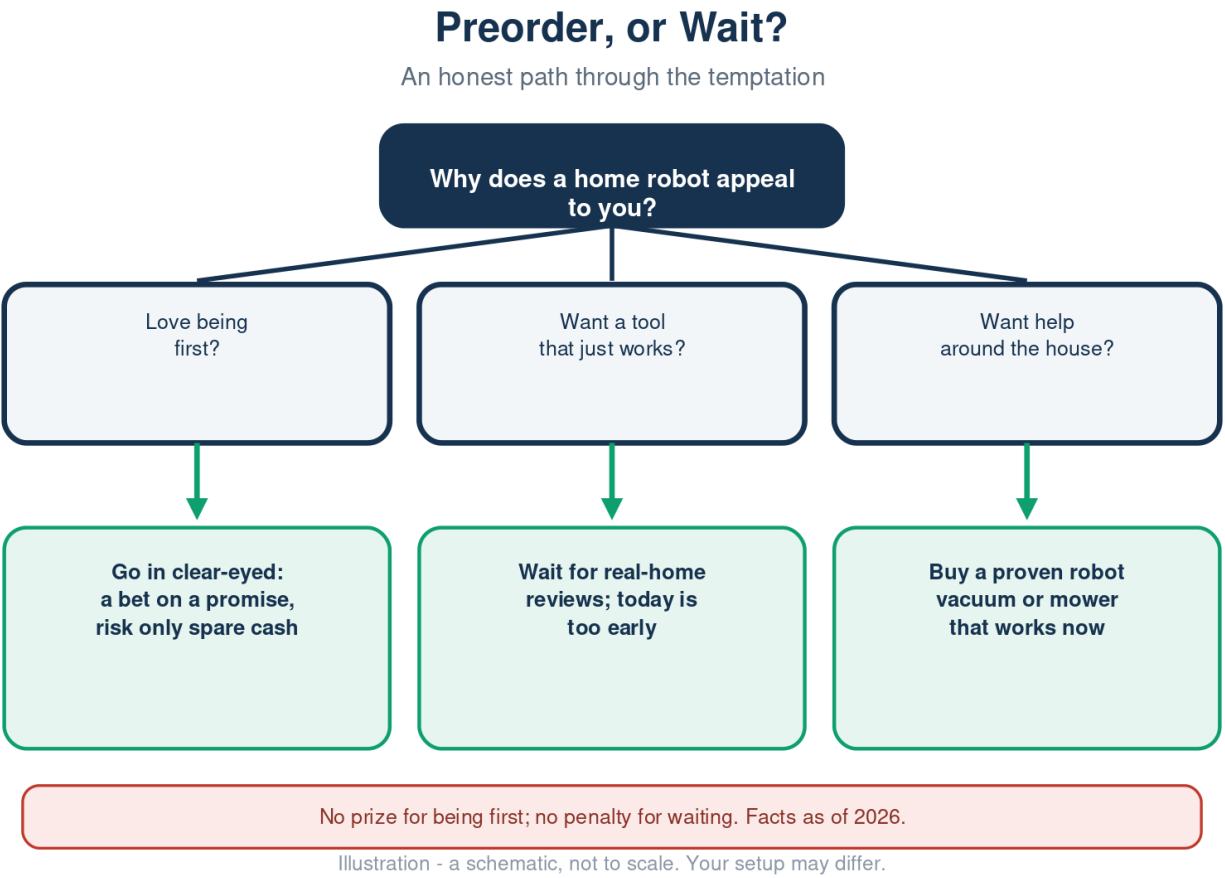
Expert Mode means a real person can see and control it.

Before You Put Money Down

Four questions that cut through the hype



Any shaky answer is a reason to wait.





Need a Real Person?

You do not have to remember all of it.
You just have to remember you can call.
Friendly, in-home tech help -- I come to you.

BILL'S PROMISE

If you are not 100% happy with a visit, I will
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no fine print. That is how I would want to be treated.

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— Bill

Prefer help without a visit?

Bill can screen-share and fix many things remotely — a flat \$49, free for Support Plan members.



A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

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