



An Extended Guide · No. 1216

Bill's Home Tech vs. Geek Squad vs. HelloTech

An honest side-by-side for choosing
tech help for a parent

Tech Made Simple — Service Made Personal

BillsHomeTech.com · (330) 200-8042 · Atwater, Ohio

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A Note From Bill

When folks ask me why they should use Bill instead of Geek Squad or HelloTech, I get it. Those brands have name recognition and a 24/7 phone number, and that matters when you are worried about a parent. So here is an honest comparison, laid out plainly, so you can decide what fits your situation. I am not going to bash anyone. I will tell you what each option does well and where I do things differently. No jargon. No judgment. No hard sell.

What's in this guide

- The three main kinds of tech help, and who shows up for each
- Pricing, plainly, and the fees people get surprised by
- Subscriptions and memberships, and when you actually need one
- In-home versus in-store, local versus national
- Insurance, confidentiality, and reaching a real person
- How to choose the one that fits your family, with no pressure from me

★ Why I even wrote this

I built Bill's Home Tech because my own mom, Joanne, could not get what she needed from the big options, and her kids were quietly doing the work. I am her primary caregiver, so I know what that call feels like. If you are the adult child who keeps getting the can-you-come-look-at-the-Wi-Fi call, this guide is for you. Reach me at (330) 200-8042.

The 60-Second Version

Short on time? Here is the whole story in a handful of checkmarks. All three can fix your tech. The honest difference is who shows up, and how well they know your setup.

- ❑ Bill is a solo local pro in Atwater; Geek Squad is Best Buy; HelloTech is a national dispatch network
- ❑ With me it is the same face every visit; the big services send whoever is free that day
- ❑ My price is a flat \$99 after a free 1-hour consult; the others quote tiers or bill by the hour
- ❑ I include a 30-day come-back-free check-in; that is usually pay-per-visit elsewhere
- ❑ No subscription is required with me; memberships are optional here and pushed harder there
- ❑ If a national service already works for you, keep using it; this is a fair comparison, not a knock

✓ Read it with your own situation in mind

There is no single right answer here. A parent two towns over from a Best Buy, who wants the same familiar person each time, weighs this differently than someone who just wants a 24/7 phone line. Pick the fit, not the biggest name.

The Three Options, Side By Side

Most tech help for a parent falls into three camps. Knowing what each one is makes the rest of this guide easy to follow.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — a solo local operator based in Atwater, serving Portage County only. Same person every visit, in-home, unhurried.
- **Geek Squad** — the tech-support arm of Best Buy. Big-box backed, corporate, regional. Help in the store or in your home, from a rotating pool of techs.
- **HelloTech** — a national gig-dispatch platform. You book online and whoever is available in your area comes to the door.

All three can set up a TV, fix Wi-Fi, or clean up a slow laptop. None of them is a scam or a bad choice. They are just built differently, and that shows up most in who walks through the door.

✓ One honest frame

Think of it as one familiar face who learns your home, versus a national service that sends whoever is free. Both can do the work. The question is which one fits how your family likes to be helped.

Who Actually Shows Up At The Door

This is the real difference, and it is the one people feel the most. With a local pro it is the same person, who remembers your home. National services send whoever is available.

Option	Who comes
Bill's Home Tech	Bill, every time. Same face every visit.
Geek Squad	Whoever Best Buy assigns from the regional pool.
HelloTech	Whoever the app dispatches that day.

A rotating tech is not a bad tech. But every new visit starts from scratch, re-explaining your router, your printer, and how your mom likes things. When the same person keeps coming back, that groundwork is already done.

★ **What continuity buys you**

When I come back a second or third time, I already know your Wi-Fi layout, your devices, and what confused you last time. For a parent, that familiarity is half the comfort. It is the main reason I stayed a one-person shop instead of hiring a crew.

Pricing, Plainly

Price is where surprises hide, so let me lay all three out as plainly as I can. Here is how each one charges.

Option	How it charges
Bill's Home Tech	Flat \$99 after a free 1-hour consult. No surprises.
Geek Squad	Tiered service quotes; in-home rates run higher than store rates.
HelloTech	Hourly, varies by tech, with service fees on top.

With me the number is the number: a free 1-hour consultation, then \$99 flat only if we agree to go ahead. The national services can be very reasonable too, but the final total depends on the tier you pick or the hours it runs, plus any fees added on.

! Ask what the final total will be, out loud

The fee that stings is the one nobody mentioned up front. Before any tech starts, ask plainly: what is the all-in total, and what would make it go up? Hourly rates, trip or service fees, and in-home premiums can stack on top of the sticker price. A clear answer before work begins protects you no matter who you hire.

Subscriptions And Memberships

Do you have to sign up for a monthly or yearly plan to get help? The honest answer differs by option.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — no subscription required. There is an optional \$39 Monthly Support Plan if you want unlimited help, but you never have to join to book a visit.
- **Geek Squad** — a Total Tech Support membership (around \$200 a year) is often pushed to unlock the full discounts.
- **HelloTech** — no subscription is required to book a job.

Memberships are not a trick. If you call for help often, a plan can genuinely save money. The thing to watch is signing up for a recurring charge to solve a one-time problem.

! Say no to the plan you do not need yet

If a friendly upsell pushes you toward a yearly membership just to fix one thing today, it is fine to say no and pay for the single visit. You can always join later if the help pays for itself. Never feel cornered into a subscription at the door.

In-Home, In-Store, Or At The Door

Where the help happens matters, especially for a parent who should not be unplugging a TV and hauling it into a store.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — in-home is all I do. I come to you and set it up where it actually lives.
- **Geek Squad** — you can bring a device into the Best Buy store, or book their in-home tier for a visit.
- **HelloTech** — a gig tech comes to the door for the booked job.

In-store service can be perfect for a phone or a laptop you can carry. But so much of what trips up a parent, the Wi-Fi in the back bedroom, the TV that will not find the cable box, only makes sense in the home where it lives.

✓ Match the visit to the problem

A cracked phone screen travels fine to a counter. A whole-house Wi-Fi dead spot does not. If the trouble is about how the house is wired and laid out, in-home wins every time, whoever you call.

Local Versus National

How close is the help, really? This shapes how fast someone can get to a parent, and how well they know the area.

Option	Where they are
Bill's Home Tech	Based in Atwater. Portage County only.
Geek Squad	Nearest store is in Streetsboro (Best Buy).
HelloTech	National platform, no local office.

A national platform means broad coverage and a 24/7 line, which is a real strength if you are far from any store. Being local means I know the towns, the drive, and our Ohio storm season that knocks out power and internet every so often.

★ **Portage County is my whole map**

I serve Atwater, Kent, Ravenna, Streetsboro, and the towns around them, and nowhere else. Staying small and local is on purpose. It is how I keep visits personal and get to a parent quickly when the Wi-Fi goes down after a storm.

The Follow-Up After The Visit

What happens after the tech leaves is easy to overlook, and it is where a lot of frustration lives. Here is how each option handles the days after.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — a 30-day follow-up is included. I check in 30 days later at no charge, and every visit is 30-day come-back-free.
- **Geek Squad** — follow-up is generally pay-per-visit unless you are on a membership.
- **HelloTech** — a built-in follow-up is not standard.

The reason this matters: a setup that works the day it is installed sometimes hiccups a week later, and a parent may not mention it. A built-in check-in catches the small thing before it becomes a big, worried phone call to you.

✓ Ask about the come-back policy

Whoever you hire, ask what happens if the fix does not hold. Is a return visit free within some window, or is it a fresh charge? Knowing the answer up front saves a surprise later.

Explanations You Can Actually Follow

Getting the tech fixed is only half the job. The other half is leaving a parent understanding what changed, so they are not afraid to touch it.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — always in plain English. If I use a word, I define it. No jargon left on the table.
- **Geek Squad** — clarity varies by which tech you get.
- **HelloTech** — clarity varies by which tech you get.

This is not a knock on any individual tech. A rotating pool simply means the person explaining it might be a patient teacher one visit and a rush job the next. When it is the same person every time, the plain-English habit gets to become a promise.

★ No question is too small

I would rather you stop me five times to ask what a word means than nod along and stay stuck. Being talked down to is what makes people avoid getting help at all. That is the opposite of what I am here for.

The Caregiver's Point Of View

This one is personal, and it is the piece a big service cannot really match. I am not just a tech. I am also a caregiver.

I am the primary caregiver for my mom, Joanne, who is 89. I know what it is to worry from a distance, to translate tech for a parent, and to be the kid who quietly handles the passwords and the printer. That is the exact experience I built Bill's Home Tech around.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — a caregiver who has lived it, and sets things up the way a worried adult child would want.
- **Geek Squad** — a corporate service; the perspective is the company's, not a caregiver's.
- **HelloTech** — a gig worker with no consistent context on your family.

★ If this sounds familiar

If you are the one who keeps getting the can-you-come-over-and-look call, I would be honored to help carry some of that. That is not a sales line. It is the reason this little company exists.

What Stays Private

When you let someone into a parent's home, you are trusting them with more than the Wi-Fi password. Here is how each option treats what they see.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — what is in your home stays in your home. No notes shared, no upsell pipeline.
- **Geek Squad** — governed by Best Buy's corporate privacy policy.
- **HelloTech** — privacy is up to the individual gig worker.

A corporate privacy policy is a real protection, and worth reading. The difference with a solo local pro is simpler: there is no marketing machine behind me collecting notes about your home to sell you more later. It is just me, and it stays between us.

✓ It is fair to ask

Whoever comes, it is perfectly reasonable to ask what they do with any information about your home and accounts. A trustworthy helper will answer plainly and never make you feel odd for asking.

Insurance And Peace Of Mind

Nobody plans for a ladder to slip or a TV to take a tumble, but insurance is what stands between a mishap and a bill. This is a fair thing to check for anyone you let in.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — a fully insured LLC with \$1 million general liability and \$1 million errors & omissions coverage.
- **Geek Squad** — backed by Best Buy's corporate coverage.
- **HelloTech** — coverage varies per worker.

A large company carries its own corporate insurance, which is a real reassurance. With a gig platform, the coverage can depend on the individual worker, so it is worth asking. With me, you get named, fully insured coverage in writing.

! Ask before the ladder comes out

For any in-home tech work, especially anything up high or near wiring, ask whether the person is insured before they start. If the answer is vague, that is your cue to slow down. And for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, a licensed pro is the right call, always.

Booking And Reaching A Real Person

When something is wrong, how easily can you reach a human who can actually help? The path is different for each.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — book direct by text, call, or web form. I answer, or Sophie, my AI helper, takes a message so nothing gets lost.
- **Geek Squad** — book through the Best Buy website or the phone system.
- **HelloTech** — scheduling is handled through the app.

A big service with 24/7 phone coverage has an answer for the middle-of-the-night worry, which is worth something. The trade is that you often go through a menu or an app to get there. With me you are texting or calling one person: (330) 200-8042.

✓ Sophie is not a runaround

If you reach my AI helper Sophie instead of me, she is just taking a message so I can call you back, not sending you in circles. You are never handed off to a stranger who does not know your home.

Canceling Or Rescheduling A Visit

Life happens. A parent has a doctor's appointment, or the day just gets away. How forgiving is each option when plans change?

- **Bill's Home Tech** — just text me. No fee, no policy to read.
- **Geek Squad** — handled per Best Buy's published service-cancellation policy.
- **HelloTech** — handled per the platform's terms.

A published policy is not a bad thing; it means the rules are the same for everyone and written down. With a solo local pro it is just flexible, because it is one person and a text message, not a system.

★ No awkwardness on my end

If you need to move a visit, a quick text does it. I would rather reschedule than have you rush a parent or feel boxed in by a fee. That is how I would want to be treated myself.

The Free Guide Library

Sometimes you do not need a visit at all, just a plain-English walkthrough you can read at the kitchen table. This is one place a local shop can genuinely out-do the big brands.

- **Bill's Home Tech** — a large library of free printable guides at billshometech.com/guides, written for real people, no ads.
- **Geek Squad** — a general online knowledge base.
- **HelloTech** — no comparable guide library.

My guides are the ones adult kids forward to a parent and to a sibling. If you found this comparison helpful, there are plenty more on scams, Wi-Fi, phones, and helping a parent from a distance, all free to print and share.

✓ Hand a guide to a parent

A printed guide sits by the router or the TV and answers the same question three times without anyone feeling embarrassed. That is why I keep writing them, and why they stay free.

When A Remote Fix Will Do

Not every problem needs someone at the door. If it is not a hardware job, I can often help without a drive at all.

- A secure screen-share I run remotely, up to two hours, for \$49
- You watch the whole time on your own screen, and you can end it whenever you like
- It is included free for \$39-a-month Support Plan members
- If it turns out I do need to come out, the \$49 counts toward the \$99 visit

This is handy for a setting buried in a menu, a confusing pop-up, or walking a parent through a program. The big services can do remote help too; the part I care about is that you see everything I am doing and stay in control.

! Only ever screen-share with someone you called

Real remote help only starts because you reached out first. If someone phones or emails claiming your computer has a problem and asks to connect, hang up. That is a classic scam, and no honest tech, mine included, works that way.

Watch For Scammers Using These Names

Here is an honest caution that is fair to everyone: crooks love to borrow trusted brand names, and Geek Squad is one of the most impersonated of all. This is about the scammers, not the company.

- Fake renewal or invoice emails claim you owe for a Geek Squad or antivirus subscription, then give a number to call to cancel
- The number reaches a scammer who tries to get remote access or a refund runaround
- Real companies do not demand a Social Security number to sort out a subscription
- Watch for misspelled links and a sender address that is somebody's personal email

! Do not call the number in the scary email

If an email or text about a renewal makes you anxious and urgent, that urgency is the scam. Do not call its number or click its link. Look up the company yourself, or call me and we will check it together. There is no shame if you already clicked; we can lock things back down.

For more on this, see my guides on the Microsoft, Apple, and Geek Squad tech-support scam, on phishing at the kitchen table, and on the AI voice-cloning grandparent scam.

How To Choose What Fits You

There is no wrong answer here, only the one that fits your family. Here is the honest way I would think it through.

- Want the same familiar person, in-home, who learns your setup? A local pro fits best.
- Live far from any store and want a 24/7 phone line for the worried moments? A national service earns its keep.
- Have a device you can carry and just need a quick counter fix? An in-store option may be simplest.
- Call for help constantly? Compare a membership's yearly cost against paying per visit.

If Geek Squad or HelloTech has worked well for you, keep using them. I mean that. I am not trying to win you over by tearing anyone down. I am just laying out the honest trade-offs so you can pick with clear eyes.

✓ Trust your own read of the parent

You know your mom or dad better than any brochure. If they light up for a familiar face and freeze at a phone menu, let that guide you as much as the price.

Hand This To A Parent Or Sibling

This guide is built to be shared. Adult kids forward these to their parents, and to the sibling who has been carrying the tech load alone.

- Print it and leave it by the router or the TV for easy reference
- Email or text it to a sibling so everyone is on the same page
- Bring it along when you talk with a parent about getting some help

If you decide the local option is the right fit, here is exactly what it looks like: a free 1-hour consultation, then \$99 flat only if we agree to proceed, with a 30-day come-back-free check-in and no subscription required.

★ I would be honored to help

If you are the adult kid who keeps getting the Wi-Fi call, hand some of it to me. Call or text (330) 200-8042, or book at billshometech.com/book. I serve Portage County, Monday through Saturday, and I answer my own phone.

Everyday Cheat Sheet

The quick answers, all in one place. Keep this page handy.

If you want...	Here is the honest pick
The same familiar face every time	A local pro like Bill's Home Tech
A 24/7 national phone line	Geek Squad or HelloTech
A quick counter fix for a carried device	An in-store option like Best Buy
A flat, no-surprise price	Bill's Home Tech: \$99 after a free consult
No required subscription	Bill's Home Tech, or HelloTech per job
A 30-day come-back-free follow-up	Bill's Home Tech, included
To avoid a renewal-email scam	Never call the number in the email; look it up yourself
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

Plain-English Word List

The words that get thrown around when you shop for tech help, in plain terms.

Q: Flat rate

One set price for the visit, agreed before work starts, so the total does not creep up.

Q: Hourly plus service fee

A price that adds up by the hour, with extra fees layered on top of the base charge.

Q: Membership or support plan

A recurring monthly or yearly charge that unlocks discounts or extra help.

Q: In-home versus in-store

Whether the tech comes to your house, or you bring the device to a store counter.

Q: Gig dispatch

A platform that sends whichever independent worker is available in your area that day.

Q: General liability insurance

Coverage that pays if a worker accidentally damages your property while on the job.

Q: Errors and omissions

Coverage for mistakes in the professional work itself, not just physical damage.

Q: Screen-share

Letting a tech see and control your screen remotely while you watch, to fix a software problem.

Q: Come-back-free

A promise that if the fix does not hold within a set window, the return visit costs nothing.

A Picture to Follow Along

Three Ways to Get Help

The same local pro, or a national service.



Bill (local)

All three can fix your tech; they differ in who shows up.

Illustration - offerings change; this is a fair side-by-side, not a knock.

A Second Look

The Real Difference

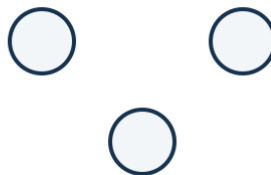
One familiar face, or a new tech each time.

With a local pro



the same face,
who knows your setup

With a national service



a different tech
each time you call

The real difference is whether the same person keeps coming back

A local pro learns your setup; big services send whoever is free.

Illustration - if a national service works for you, keep using it.



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
make it right — or refund it. No awkwardness,
no fine print. That is how I would want to be treated.

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Bill@BillsHomeTech.com · Mon–Sat 9:00 AM – 7:30 PM

— 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.

— *Bill*



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