



An Extended Guide · No. 2038

# Scooters & Power Chairs at Home — Doorways, Ramps & a Charging Spot

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Measuring doorways, portable ramps,  
and a safe place to park and charge

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**! Read this first — lithium batteries deserve respect**

E-bikes, scooters, and powered chairs run on big lithium-ion batteries. Treated well they are safe; abused or damaged they can overheat and catch fire fast. Charge only with the charger that came with your device, on a hard surface like concrete or tile — never on a bed, couch, or carpet — and not right in a doorway or stairwell that is your way out in a hurry. Don't leave a battery charging unattended or overnight, and unplug it once it's full. Stop using any battery that is swollen, very hot, hissing, leaking, or giving off a strange smell, and keep it away from anything that burns. If a battery is smoking or on fire, get everyone out and call 911 — these fires are hard to put out. A big part of setting up at home is choosing a safe charging spot — hard surface, clear of what burns, not blocking an exit — so the safe-charging habits here run right through this guide.

## Let's make your home work with your device

A scooter or power chair gives back your freedom — but only if it fits through your doorways, gets in and out of the house, and has a safe place to park and charge. A little measuring and planning makes your home and your device work together beautifully. This guide shows you how.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. Helping folks set up their homes so a device fits and charges safely is practical, satisfying work, and most of it is simpler than it looks. I'll walk you through it step by step.

The goal is a home where your device moves where you need it, enters and leaves without a struggle, and charges safely in a spot that's easy to use. Let's set that up.

**★ Setting up your home for a device?**

Measuring doorways, planning a ramp, picking a charging spot — that's exactly the kind of help I'm glad to give on a visit. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

## The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, your home and your device will get along.

- ❑ Measure your doorways' clear width and compare to your device's width, with room to spare.
- ❑ Check turning space in tight rooms like bathrooms and halls.
- ❑ Plan how the device gets in and out of the house — a threshold or a step may need a ramp.
- ❑ Choose a safe charging spot: hard surface, clear of what burns, not blocking an exit.
- ❑ Clear a parking place where the device is out of the way but easy to reach.
- ❑ Small changes — a threshold ramp, moved furniture — often make it all work.

### ✓ The idea to hold onto

Measure first, then plan the path — into the house, through the doorways, to a safe charging spot. A few measurements and small tweaks turn a tricky home into an easy one.

## Measuring your doorways

The first and most important measurement is your doorways' clear width — it decides whether the device can get through at all.

Measure the clear opening, not the door frame: open the door fully and measure the narrowest point of the actual gap you can pass through, which is often a bit less than the frame because the open door and its hardware stick in. Do this at every doorway the device must use — front door, bedroom, bathroom — and write each down. Then compare to your device's width, from its manual or the maker's listing, leaving comfortable room to spare, since you won't thread it through to the millimeter.

A doorway that's too narrow isn't always a dead end — there are often fixes, from swing-clear hinges that let the door open fully out of the way to, in some cases, widening the opening. But you have to know the numbers first.

### ✓ Measure the clear opening, with the door open

The number that matters is the actual gap with the door fully open, not the frame width. The open door and its hinges eat into the opening, so measure the real clearance — and leave room to spare.

## Checking turning space

Getting through a doorway is one thing; turning around in a small room is another. Tight spaces need checking too.

Think about the rooms where you'll need to turn the device — a bathroom, a small kitchen, the end of a hallway. A device needs room to turn its circle, and a scooter (especially a longer four-wheel one) needs more than a power chair. If a room is tight, you may need to plan your approach (backing in, say), rearrange furniture, or favor a device that turns more tightly, as our scooter-versus-chair guide discusses.

The bathroom is often the tightest test, and the most important room to get right. Measure the clear floor space and picture the device turning and positioning where you need it. Better to find a problem now than in daily use.

### ✓ The bathroom is the toughest test

If any room will be a squeeze, it's usually the bathroom. Check the clear floor space and the turning there carefully — it's the room where fitting the device matters most.

## Getting the device in and out of the house

Before worrying about inside, make sure the device can get into and out of the house in the first place.

Look at every way in and out you'll use: Are there steps? A raised threshold at the door? A slope up to the porch? A scooter or power chair can't climb steps, and even a single raised threshold can stop it. The fixes range from a small threshold ramp for a low lip, to a longer portable or permanent ramp for steps, to a different, step-free entrance you hadn't considered.

Map the easiest route in and out, and note what stands in the way. Often the best entrance for a device isn't the front door — a garage, a patio, or a side door with fewer steps may be far easier to ramp. The next pages cover ramps in detail.

### **! Even a single step or threshold can stop a device**

These devices can't manage steps, and even a raised door threshold can block them. Check every entrance for steps and lips, and plan a ramp or a step-free route before the device arrives.

## Threshold ramps for small lips and steps

For the small obstacles — a raised door threshold, a single low step — a threshold ramp is often the simple answer.

A threshold ramp is a small, often portable wedge that bridges a low lip or a single low step, letting the device roll smoothly over it. They come in various sizes for different heights, sit in place without installation for many doorways, and can be moved if needed. For the common problem of a raised threshold at an otherwise level doorway, one of these can solve it in minutes.

Match the ramp's height to your lip or step, and make sure it's wide and sturdy enough for your device and rated for its weight. A ramp that's too steep or too flimsy is unsafe, so pick one suited to the actual obstacle and device.

### ✓ Match the ramp to the height of the lip

Threshold ramps come sized for different heights — measure your lip or step and choose one that matches, wide and sturdy enough for your device. The right size rolls smoothly; the wrong one is a trip or tip hazard.

## Ramps for steps and porches

For more than a small lip — a flight of porch steps, a real rise — you need a longer ramp, and the slope matters a great deal.

A longer ramp bridges steps or a raised entrance, and the crucial thing is that it isn't too steep. A ramp that rises too sharply is hard and unsafe for a device, so the general principle is a gentle slope — which means a longer ramp for a higher rise. Portable ramps (that fold or come in sections) suit a modest rise and can be stored away; permanent ramps suit a bigger rise or daily use. There are accepted guidelines for ramp slope — a supplier or contractor can help you get it right.

Also consider width (room for the device plus a margin), a non-slip surface, edge guards so a wheel can't run off, and, for a longer ramp, handrails and a level landing at the top by the door. Safety here is worth doing properly.

### **! Too steep is dangerous — longer is safer**

The single biggest ramp mistake is too steep a slope for the rise. A gentle, longer ramp is safe; a short, steep one risks the device tipping or running away. Get the slope right, with a pro's help for anything beyond a small rise.

## Setting up a safe charging spot

Your device needs to charge somewhere, and choosing that spot well is both a safety and a convenience decision.

Pick a spot that's safe to charge in — a hard surface like tile or concrete, clear of anything that burns, not blocking the doorway or path you'd use to get out of the house, and ideally where you'll notice if something's wrong (not a far closet). All the fire-safety habits from our battery-safety and charging guides apply. A working smoke alarm nearby is a smart addition.

Make it convenient too: ideally where you naturally park the device, with the charger kept right there so charging is effortless and you never forget. A good charging spot is safe, handy, and part of your routine.

### **! Safe surface, clear exit, nearby alarm**

Charge on a hard surface, away from anything flammable, never blocking your way out, with a smoke alarm nearby. A safe charging spot is the single most important part of setting up your device at home.

## A parking place that's out of the way but handy

The device needs somewhere to live when you're not on it — a spot that's convenient yet doesn't clutter the home or block paths.

Choose a parking spot where the device is easy to get on and off, doesn't block doorways or walking paths (for you and anyone else in the home), and ideally is where you'll charge it too. Near the entrance you use most often is handy, so you can roll in, park, and charge in one spot. Keep the path to and from it clear of rugs, cords, and clutter that could trip you or catch a wheel.

A little planning here keeps the device from becoming an obstacle in its own right. The best parking spot is one you barely think about because it just works — out of the way, easy to reach, and safe to charge.

### ✓ Park where you charge, near where you enter

The easiest setup is a parking-and-charging spot right by the door you use most, so rolling in, parking, and plugging in is one smooth routine. Keep the path to it clear.

## Two kinds of riders, two sets of needs

What your home needs depends on its layout. Two pictures help you focus your planning.

### If your home is roomy and mostly level

Wide doorways, open rooms, and few steps. Your setup is mostly about a good charging spot and a small threshold fix or two.

- Measure doorways to confirm the comfortable fit you expect.
- Add a threshold ramp for any raised door lip.
- Set up a safe, handy charging and parking spot.
- Keep the main paths clear of rugs and clutter.

### If your home is tight or has steps

Narrow doorways, small rooms, or steps at the entrances. Your setup needs more planning — and maybe a device that turns tightly.

- Measure every doorway and tight turn carefully.
- Plan a ramp — threshold, portable, or permanent — for steps.
- Consider the step-free entrance that's easiest to ramp.
- A tighter-turning power chair may fit where a scooter won't.

#### ★ Not sure what your home needs?

Tell me about your doorways, steps, and rooms, or let me come measure, and I'll help you plan the setup. Call (330) 200-8042.

## Clearing the paths through your home

Beyond doorways, the routes the device travels need to be clear and safe. A quick tidy prevents daily frustration.

Walk the routes the device will take and look for trouble: throw rugs that a wheel can rumple or that you could trip on, electrical cords crossing a path, furniture that pinches a route too narrow, and clutter at floor level. Removing loose rugs, rerouting cords, and nudging furniture a few inches often opens a path beautifully, without any big changes.

This isn't just about the device fitting — it's about safety for everyone in the home, including you on foot. A clear, uncluttered path is kinder to both the device and the people.

### ✓ Loose rugs and cords are the usual culprits

The commonest path problems are throw rugs and trailing cords. Removing or securing those two usually clears the way for the device and makes the home safer underfoot at the same time.

## Flooring and surfaces

What's underfoot affects how easily the device moves and how safe it is. A thought about flooring pays off.

Hard, smooth floors — wood, tile, vinyl — are easiest for a device to roll across. Thick or plush carpet is harder going and uses more battery, and a loose rug can bunch up or slide. Transitions between floor types, or between rooms, can have small lips a device catches on, which a little transition strip or threshold ramp can smooth.

You don't need to re-floor your home, but being aware of the harder surfaces and the transitions helps you plan routes and spot where a small fix would help. The device will naturally favor the smoother paths.

### ✓ Smooth floors are easiest; mind the transitions

Hard, smooth floors roll best and sip less battery. Watch the little lips where one floor meets another — a transition strip or small ramp smooths the catch points.

## Getting the entrance right

The entrance you use most deserves special attention, since the device crosses it every trip.

For your main entrance, aim for a smooth, safe crossing: a ramp if there's a rise, a level landing at the top big enough to position the device and work the door, and a threshold the device rolls over easily. Think about the door itself too — can you manage it from the device, or would an automatic opener or a different door arrangement help? Shelter from rain at the entrance is a nice bonus for both you and the device.

Getting the main entrance truly easy is worth real effort, because every outing depends on it. A smooth, safe, weather-protected entrance turns coming and going from a hurdle into a non-event.

### ★ I'll help you plan the entrance

The entrance ties together the ramp, the landing, and the door. I'm glad to help you plan a smooth, safe crossing and line up a contractor for any building work. Call (330) 200-8042.

## Small changes that make a big difference

You often don't need major renovations — a handful of small, affordable changes can transform how a device works at home.

- **Threshold ramps** for raised door lips — quick, often no installation.
- **Swing-clear hinges** that let a door open fully out of the opening, gaining an inch or two of width.
- **Removing or securing rugs** and rerouting cords for clear, safe paths.
- **Rearranging furniture** a few inches to widen a route or a turning space.
- **A charging station set up** where you park, charger kept to hand.
- **Better lighting** along the routes so you see clearly as you move.

### ✓ Start with the cheap, easy fixes

Before considering any building work, try the small fixes — a threshold ramp, swing-clear hinges, cleared paths, moved furniture. Surprisingly often, those alone make your home work with the device.

## When bigger changes are worth it

Sometimes the small fixes aren't enough, and a larger change is the right call. Here's how to think about it.

If a doorway is simply too narrow, an entrance has unavoidable steps, or a bathroom can't be made to work, a larger modification — widening a doorway, building a permanent ramp, adapting a bathroom — may be worthwhile, especially for a device you'll depend on for years. These are jobs for a contractor experienced in accessibility, who can do them safely and to any applicable code.

Weigh the cost against how long and how much you'll rely on the device. For a lasting need, a well-done modification that makes your home truly work can be money well spent on your independence. An occupational therapist or an accessibility specialist can advise what's worth doing.

### ★ I'll help you plan and line up a pro

For bigger changes I'm not the one swinging the hammer, but I'm glad to help you figure out what's needed and line up a trustworthy accessibility contractor. Call (330) 200-8042.

## Making charging effortless

The easier you make charging, the more reliably it happens — and the more your device is always ready.

Set up the charger permanently at your parking spot so there's no fetching it each time; just roll up and plug in. Keep the outlet accessible and not shared with a tangle of other things. If remembering is a worry, tie charging to a daily habit or set a reminder, as our charging guide suggests. The whole aim is that charging is so easy it becomes automatic.

Just keep the convenience from undercutting the safety: the easy spot still has to be a safe spot — hard surface, clear of flammables, not blocking an exit. Convenient and safe together is the target.

### ✓ A permanent charger at the parking spot

Keeping the charger set up right where you park means charging is effortless and never forgotten. Just make sure that handy spot is also a safe one.

## Everyday safety with a device at home

A few habits keep daily life with the device safe for you and everyone in the home.

- Keep paths clear of rugs, cords, and clutter that catch a wheel or a foot.
- Go slow indoors, especially around corners, doorways, and other people.
- Use the parking brake when stopped, and turn the device off when parked.
- Charge in the safe spot, with a smoke alarm nearby, never blocking an exit.
- Light the routes well so you can see as you move around.
- Have a plan for getting out safely in an emergency, device or not.

### **! Think about getting out in an emergency**

Plan how you'd leave the home safely in a fire or emergency, whether or not the device is handy. Keep exits clear and never charge across them, and make sure help can reach you. It's a sobering thought, but an important one.

## Storing the device well

Where and how the device lives between uses affects its life and your convenience.

Keep it somewhere dry, at a reasonable temperature, and out of the weather — not a freezing or baking garage if you can help it, especially for the battery's sake (our winter-care guide explains). Park it where it's stable and won't be knocked, with the battery charged and the charger to hand. If you'll store it unused for a long stretch, follow the battery storage advice in our charging guide.

Good storage is really just the parking-and-charging spot done thoughtfully: dry, safe, stable, convenient, and kind to the battery. Get that right and the device is always ready and well cared for.

### ✓ Dry, stable, and kind to the battery

The ideal home for the device is dry, out of extreme heat and cold, stable, and where it charges safely. That's good for the machine, the battery, and your peace of mind.

## A home that works with you

Pull it together and you've got a home where your device is a help, not a hassle.

When the doorways fit, the entrances are ramped, the paths are clear, and the device parks and charges safely in an easy spot, daily life flows. You roll in and out without a struggle, move freely room to room, and never fuss over charging. The home and the device work as a team, and your independence is the richer for it.

Most of what it takes is measuring, planning, and a handful of small changes — well within reach. And for the bigger jobs, the right help is available. A home set up well is a quiet, daily gift to yourself.

### ★ Let me help you set it all up

From measuring doorways to planning ramps to a safe charging spot, setting up your home for your device is just the kind of practical help I love to give. Call or text (330) 200-8042.

## Getting the right help

You don't have to figure all this out alone — several kinds of help are available, each for its part.

An occupational therapist can assess your home and needs expertly and recommend changes. A mobility-equipment supplier can match the device to your home and often advise on ramps and setup. An accessibility contractor handles the building work — widening doorways, permanent ramps, bathroom changes — safely and to code. And I'm glad to help with the measuring, planning, charging setup, and lining up the right pro for each job.

Knowing who does what keeps you from feeling overwhelmed. Each specialist handles their piece, and together they make your home work. You just have to start the conversation.

### ★ I'll help you coordinate it

I can't do licensed building work, but I'm glad to help you measure, plan, set up the charging and parking, and line up the therapist, supplier, or contractor you need. Call (330) 200-8042.

## Common Questions

The questions I hear most about using a scooter or power chair at home, answered plainly.

### **Q: How do I know if my device will fit through my doorways?**

Measure the clear opening of each doorway with the door fully open (it's often less than the frame), and compare to your device's width from its manual, leaving room to spare. If a doorway's too narrow, swing-clear hinges or widening may help.

### **Q: What if there are steps at my door?**

A device can't climb steps, so you'll need a ramp — a small threshold ramp for a low lip, or a longer portable or permanent ramp for steps, with a gentle (not steep) slope. Sometimes a different, step-free entrance is easiest to ramp.

### **Q: Where should I charge it at home?**

A safe spot: a hard surface, clear of anything flammable, not blocking the doorway or path you'd use to get out, ideally where you park it and with a smoke alarm nearby. Set the charger up there permanently so charging is effortless.

### **Q: Do I need to renovate my whole home?**

Usually not. Small fixes — a threshold ramp, swing-clear hinges, cleared paths, moved furniture, a charging station — often do the job. Bigger changes like widening a doorway are worth it only when the small fixes aren't enough.

#### **★ Want help setting up your home?**

Measuring, planning ramps, picking a safe charging spot, clearing paths — that's exactly what I'm here for. Call or text me at (330) 200-8042.

## 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 setting up your home for your device 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.

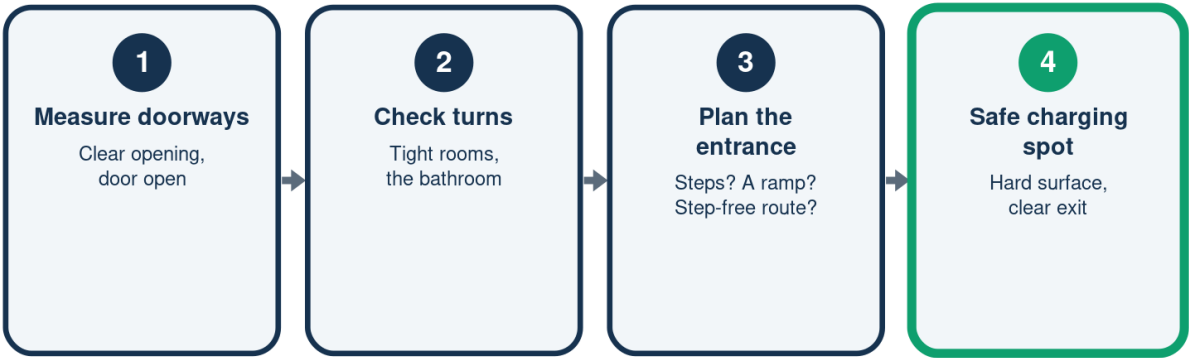
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I'm a tech helper, not a licensed contractor or an occupational therapist — for building work or a home assessment I'll help you line up the right pro, and I'll gladly handle the measuring, planning, and charging setup with you.

### ★ 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

## Setting Up at Home

Measure, then plan the path



A few measurements and small tweaks make a tricky home easy.

## Ramps for Different Rises

Match the ramp to the obstacle

|                          | The obstacle      | The fix            |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Raised door lip</b>   | A threshold ramp  | Often no install   |
| <b>A single low step</b> | A small ramp,     | right height       |
| <b>Porch steps</b>       | A longer ramp,    | gentle slope       |
| <b>Daily, big rise</b>   | A permanent ramp, | handrails, landing |

Too steep is dangerous -- longer is safer. Get a pro for big rises.

## A Safe, Handy Charging Spot

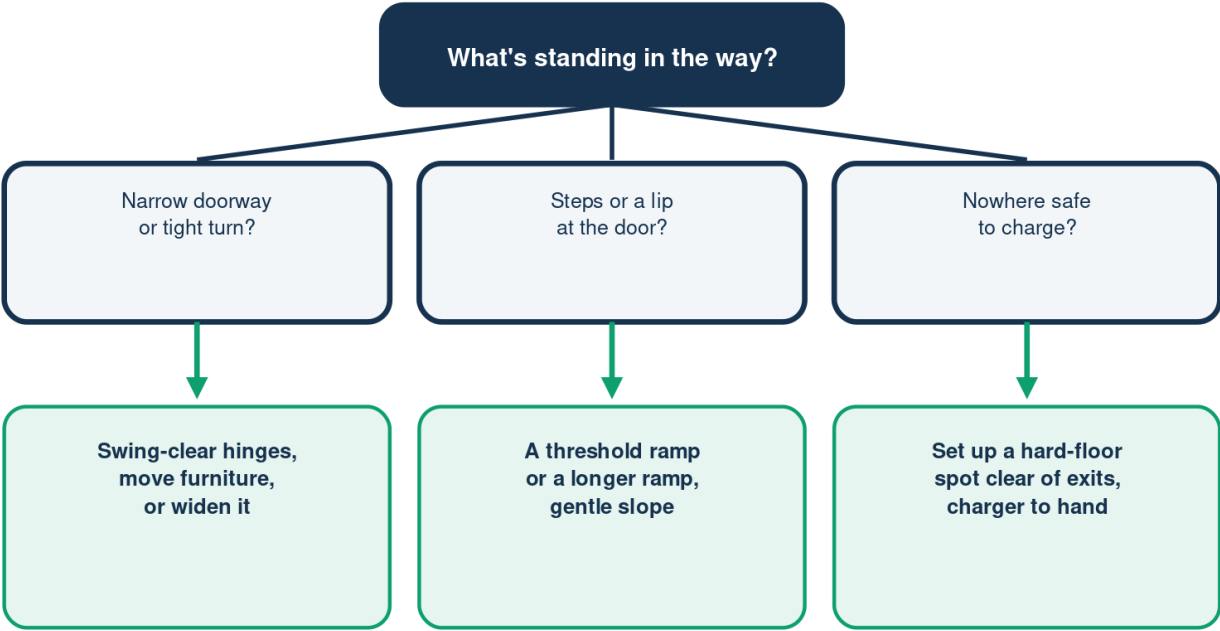
Convenient and safe together

|             | Do                      | Don't           |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Surface     | Hard -- tile, concrete  | Carpet, soft    |
| Nearby      | Clear of flammables     | Next to clutter |
| Exit        | Never block the way out | In a doorway    |
| Convenience | Where you park          | A far closet    |

Keep the charger set up at the parking spot -- with a smoke alarm near.

# Will My Home Work for It?

Most homes do, with a little planning



Start with the cheap, easy fixes before any building work.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.



## 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

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### 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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