BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Alexa+ (Amazon's AI Assistant)

What changed, what it costs, which Echo devices get it,
and how to keep your privacy — in plain English

A plain-English guide for seniors and families

Take your time — you can't break it

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For Alexa+ in the U.S. on Echo, Fire TV, the Alexa app & Alexa.com · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your Alexa+ manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace — there is no test, and you can't fall behind. Amazon has been moving its Echo speakers and screens from the original Alexa to a new, smarter version called **Alexa+**. This guide explains what actually changed, what it costs, whether your Echo can use it, the everyday things it's good for, and the privacy settings worth a few minutes of your time. Every feature comes with what it does *for you* and slow, step-by-step directions. If a screen on yours looks a little different, the idea is still the same.

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PART 1

Getting to Know Alexa+

What Alexa+ is, how it differs from the Alexa you know, what it costs, and whether your Echo can use it. Start here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If you have an Amazon Echo in the kitchen or an Echo Show on the nightstand, you may have noticed Alexa acting a little differently lately — a new voice, a new look on the screen, or a message inviting you to "upgrade to Alexa+." Maybe a family member told you it's "the AI Alexa now." Or maybe you got an email about it and weren't sure whether it was real. Whichever brought you here, this guide is for **you**.

I'm Bill. Helping folks feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it sitting next to you at the kitchen table: patiently, in plain English, with no tech talk. When I use a new word, I'll stop and explain it right then.

You truly can't break it by talking to it

Alexa+ is a conversation. You can't wear it out, offend it or break it by asking the "wrong" way. If it misunderstands you, just say it again in different words. If you change your mind about the new version, there's a way back to the original Alexa, which I'll show you in Chapter 7.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What Alexa+ can do for you

Alexa+ understands everyday speech much better than the old Alexa. You can ask a question the way you'd ask a friend, follow up without starting over, and hand it small chores — a reminder, a grocery list, a dinner idea, a summary of a long letter — so there's less to keep in your head.

What this guide covers

- What changed between the original Alexa and **Alexa+**, and what stayed the same.
- What it costs — with and without **Amazon Prime** — as of November 2026.
- Which **Echo** speakers and screens get Alexa+, and which older ones don't.
- Turning it on, setting up your household, and switching back if you'd rather.
- Everyday help: reminders, calendars, lists, music, recipes, lights and documents.
- Booking a table, a ride or tickets through Amazon's partner services.
- Privacy: what's recorded, how to delete it, the microphone button and the camera cover.
- Spotting fake "Alexa+ upgrade" emails, calls and setup websites.

If you're new to Echo devices altogether, our Amazon Alexa & Echo guide covers the basics of setting one up. If you have an Echo with a screen, our Echo Show guide goes deeper on the screen itself. And our AI Assistants for Everyday Life guide compares Alexa+ with other AI helpers.

And I'm only a phone call away

This guide will carry you a long way on your own. But if you ever get stuck — say, Alexa+ won't turn on, or you're not sure whether a message about it is genuine — call me at **(330) 200-8042**. No question is too small.

So pour a cup of coffee, and let's get to know the new Alexa together.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Alexa+ Is — and What Changed

Alexa+ (say it "Alexa Plus") is Amazon's new version of the Alexa voice assistant. It uses the same kind of technology as the AI chat tools you may have heard of, called **generative AI**: a computer system that has learned from enormous amounts of writing, so it can understand ordinary sentences and answer in ordinary sentences. You still wake it up the same way — by saying "Alexa" — and it still lives on the same Echo devices.

The original Alexa and Alexa+, side by side

	Original Alexa	Alexa+
How you talk to it	Short, set phrases worked best ("Alexa, set a timer for ten minutes").	Speak naturally, the way you'd talk to a person. Longer, looser requests are fine.
Follow-up questions	Each request mostly stood on its own.	Remembers what you were just talking about, so you can say "and what about Saturday?"
Getting things done	Timers, music, weather, lists, smart home, skills.	All of that, plus booking, summarizing documents, planning and more, often in one request.
Where you can use it	Echo devices and the Alexa app.	Echo devices, the Alexa app, Alexa.com in a web browser, and compatible Fire TV devices.
Cost	Free with any Echo.	Included with Prime; otherwise a paid subscription (Chapter 3).

What stayed the same

- The wake word is still **"Alexa."** The light on your Echo still shows when it's listening.
- Your **timers, alarms, reminders, lists** and **smart home devices** carry over.
- The **Alexa app** on your phone is still where you change settings.
- The **microphone off button** still cuts the microphones, and Echo Show screens still have a camera cover.

What "remembers" means here

Alexa+ is built to be more personal. It can remember the context of a conversation, and you can ask it to remember things you tell it — a family birthday, a favorite food, a dietary need — so it can use them later. That's handy, but it also means it's worth knowing what's saved and how to clear it. Part 7 of this guide covers that in plain terms.

GOOD TO KNOW

A new voice is normal

Alexa+ comes with a refreshed voice and personality. If you'd rather hear the voice you're used to, you can say **"Alexa, go back to your original voice."** Amazon says voice changes apply to the one device you're talking to, so you may need to say it on each Echo.

HEADS UP

Smarter isn't the same as always right

Like every AI assistant, Alexa+ can sometimes give an answer that sounds confident but is wrong. For anything that matters — medicine, money, legal questions — treat it as a helpful starting point and confirm with a person you trust. Chapter 10 explains how to catch mistakes.

CHAPTER 3

What Alexa+ Costs

This is the question I hear most, so here is the straight answer, as of November 2026, for the United States. The short version: if you already pay for Amazon Prime, Alexa+ costs you nothing extra.

The prices

Your situation	What it costs
You have Amazon Prime	Alexa+ is included at no extra cost — unlimited, on all your Alexa devices, in the Alexa app and at Alexa.com, for everyone in your household.
You don't have Prime	The full Alexa+ is a subscription of **$19.99 a month**.
Just trying it out	Anyone can use a free, limited text-chat version of Alexa+ at **Alexa.com** and in the Alexa app. Amazon limits how much you can use it. It does **not** run on Echo devices.
On a Fire TV	Since August 2026, compatible Fire TV devices in the U.S. get Alexa+ at no extra cost, with or without Prime (Chapter 21).

Prime itself has its own monthly or yearly fee, and it includes shipping, Prime Video and other benefits as well as Alexa+. If you were thinking of paying $19.99 a month for Alexa+ alone, compare that with the current Prime price on amazon.com first — Prime often works out cheaper.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this means for you

If you're a Prime member, there's no bill to worry about — you can enjoy Alexa+ on every Echo in the house without signing up for anything new. If you're not, you can try the free chat version first and decide whether it's worth paying for.

How to check whether you have Prime

1. On a computer or phone, go to **amazon.com** and sign in.
2. Open **Account & Lists** (at the top), then choose **Memberships & Subscriptions**.
3. If you see **Prime** listed with a renewal date, you're a member and Alexa+ is included.
4. If you see an **Alexa+** subscription listed separately *and* you have Prime, you may be paying twice. Call Amazon through the Help page on amazon.com, or call me and we'll sort it out together.

HEADS UP

Don't pay $19.99 by accident

Prime members never need the separate $19.99 subscription. If a screen, an email or a phone caller offers you Alexa+ for a monthly fee and you already have Prime, stop and check first. And no real Amazon offer will ask you to pay with gift cards (Chapter 27).

Outside the U.S.

Amazon has also launched Alexa+ in some other countries, including Canada and Japan, with their own prices and partner services. This guide describes the U.S. version.

CHAPTER 4

Which Echo Devices Get Alexa+

Most Echo speakers and Echo Show screens made in the last several years can run Alexa+. A handful of the very oldest models can't, and they simply keep the original Alexa. Nothing stops working on them.

Older Echo devices that stay on the original Alexa

Amazon lists these older devices as staying on the original Alexa:

- **Echo (1st Generation)** — the tall cylinder from 2015–2016.
- **Echo Dot (1st Generation)**.
- **Echo Plus (1st Generation)**.
- **Echo Show (1st Generation)** and **Echo Show (2nd Generation)**.
- **Echo Spot (1st Generation)** — the small round-screen alarm clock from 2017.
- **Amazon Tap** — the portable speaker.

One Amazon help page also lists the **Echo (2nd Generation)**, the first-generation **Echo Buds**, very old Fire TV devices (Fire OS 5) and Fire tablets running Fire OS 7 or earlier. If you have one of these, expect the original Alexa.

How to find out which Echo you have

1. Open the **Alexa** app on your phone.
2. Tap **Devices**, then find your Echo in the list and tap it.
3. Tap the gear-shaped **Settings** icon if you see one, then scroll down to **About**.
4. Look for the device type and generation, for example "Echo Dot (4th Gen)."

> TIP
>
> **The sticker trick**
>
> If the app is confusing, turn the Echo over. Many have the model printed on the bottom. Write it down on the Cheat-Sheet in Chapter 29 so you have it when you call for help.

Echo devices built for Alexa+

In September 2025 and again in October 2026, Amazon introduced new Echo devices designed around Alexa+. Prices below are Amazon's U.S. launch prices; sales come and go.

Device	What it is	Launch price
Echo Dot Max (2025)	A bigger-sounding Echo Dot.	$99.99
Echo Studio (2025)	Amazon's premium-sound smart speaker.	$219.99
Echo Show 8 (2025)	8.7-inch screen with a camera for video calls.	$179.99
Echo Show 11 (2025)	11-inch screen with a camera.	$219.99
Echo Dot (2026)	New Echo Dot with a built-in smart home hub and eero Wi-Fi extender.	$99.99
Echo Studio with Home Camera (2026)	Echo Studio with a camera so Alexa can respond to what it sees.	$249.99
Echo Show 16 (2026)	16-inch screen with Fire TV built in.	$499.99 ($569.99 with glare-reducing Nanomatte)
Echo Time (2026)	A smart alarm clock with Alexa+.	—
Alexa Photo Frame (2026)	A 10-inch touch-screen photo frame with Alexa built in.	—

FROM BILL

Do you need a new Echo?

Usually, no. If your Echo is on the "stays original" list above and you'd like Alexa+, a new one makes sense. Otherwise, the Echo you already own can very likely run Alexa+. Before buying one as a gift, call me and I'll tell you honestly whether it's worth it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Other brands, too

Alexa+ isn't only on Amazon's own devices. Amazon has brought it to some other companies' products with Alexa built in, such as certain Bose speakers. Whether a particular non-Amazon speaker gets it is up to that maker.

PART 2

Getting Alexa+ and Getting Started

Turning Alexa+ on, introducing the household, switching back if you'd rather, and the two places besides your Echo where Alexa+ lives: the Alexa app and Alexa.com.

CHAPTER 5

Turning On Alexa+

Many people never have to do anything: a new Echo built for Alexa+ comes with it ready, and Amazon has been switching on Alexa+ for Prime members' existing Echo devices. If yours hasn't changed yet, or you're not sure, here's how to get it.

Three ways to start

1. **Ask your Echo.** Say **"Alexa, upgrade to Alexa+."** If you're a Prime member, Alexa walks you through the rest out loud.
2. **Use a web browser.** On a computer or tablet, go to **Alexa.com** and sign in with your Amazon account.
3. **Sign up or start a trial.** If you don't have Prime, Amazon points you to **amazon.com/alexaplus**, where you can join Prime (with a free 30-day trial if you're eligible) or subscribe to Alexa+ on its own.

GOOD TO KNOW

Only the account owner can start it

Amazon says only the Amazon account that registered the Echo can start the Alexa+ setup. If the Echo is registered to your son's or daughter's account, ask them to start it, or call me and we'll work out whose account it's on.

Finishing setup

The first time Alexa+ starts, it offers to set up profiles for the people in your home (Chapter 6). If you skip that part, you can come back to it any time:

- Say **"Alexa, help me get started."**
- On an Echo Show, tap the **Finish setup** card on the screen.
- Or open the **Alexa** app on your phone, which shows the same option.

How to tell whether you have Alexa+

- On an **Echo Show**, Alexa+ adds a small **Menu** icon on the screen that opens Settings and your apps. With the original Alexa, you swipe down from the top edge instead.
- You'll likely notice a new voice and more conversational answers.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Once Alexa+ is on, everything else in this guide works the same on every compatible Echo in your home — you set it up once, and the whole household can use it.

SCAM ALERT

Upgrading never needs a stranger

You turn on Alexa+ by talking to your own Echo or by signing in at Alexa.com. No one needs to call you, connect to your computer, or take a payment over the phone to "activate" it. If someone offers, it's a scam. Hang up and see Chapter 27.

CHAPTER 6

Setting Up Your Household: Profiles and Voice ID

Alexa+ works best when it knows who's talking. That way, "What's on my calendar?" shows *your* calendar, "Play my music" plays *your* favorites, and purchases can be limited to the grown-ups. This is done with **profiles** and **voice ID**.

Two words worth knowing

Term	What it means
Profile	A named person in your home, linked to your Amazon account, with their own calendar, music and preferences.
Voice ID	A sample of a person's voice that lets Alexa tell who's speaking. It's created by saying a few phrases out loud.
Visual ID	On Echo Show devices with a camera, a way for Alexa to recognize a face. Optional.

Teaching Alexa your voice

1. Stand near your Echo and say **"Alexa, learn my voice."**
2. Alexa asks you to repeat a few short phrases. Speak in your normal voice.
3. When it's done, try **"Alexa, who am I?"** to check that it recognizes you.

You can also do it in the **Alexa** app: tap **More**, then **Settings**, then look for **Your Profile & Family** (labels vary a little between app versions), choose your profile and follow the voice ID prompts. A family member can choose their own profile or **I'm someone else** to make a new one.

On an Echo Show

Echo Show devices can enroll both voice ID and visual ID. Amazon's directions: open **Settings** (on Alexa+, tap the **Menu** icon first), then **Accounts & Profiles**, and follow the prompts. Visual ID needs the camera cover open to work.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

When Alexa+ knows your voice, a shared kitchen Echo becomes personal for each person: the right reminders, the right calendar, the right music — without anyone having to say their name each time.

GOOD TO KNOW

Voice ID and recordings go together

Voice ID relies on Amazon keeping voice recordings. If you choose the privacy setting that doesn't save recordings (Chapter 25), Amazon deletes any voice IDs. It's a trade-off: more privacy, less personalization. Either choice is reasonable.

Children's voices

A child's voice ID is set up through **Amazon Kids** in the Alexa app. When an enrolled child is recognized, Amazon says the Echo switches to the kid-friendly **Alexa+ Kids** experience. See Chapter 26 for more on grandchildren and guests.

CHAPTER 7

Switching Back to the Original Alexa

Some people try Alexa+ and decide they liked the old Alexa better — it was quieter, simpler, or they simply knew it. That's perfectly fine. You can turn Alexa+ off on your Echo devices.

Turn off Alexa+ by voice

1. Stand near your Echo and say **"Alexa, end Alexa+."**
2. Listen to what Alexa says and answer its question to confirm.
3. Your Echo goes back to the original Alexa.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **You may hear a different phrase**
>
> Amazon's help page uses "Alexa, end Alexa+." Amazon's emails and news reports have also mentioned "Alexa, exit Alexa+." If one doesn't work, try the other, or ask in plain words: "Alexa, I want to go back to the original Alexa."

What happens when you switch back

- **One person can opt out without affecting others.** Amazon says a household member can turn off Alexa+ for themselves without changing the main account holder's access.
- **Follow Up Mode comes on.** When Alexa+ ends on a device, Amazon says it returns to the original Alexa with **Follow Up Mode** turned on. That lets you ask another question without saying "Alexa" again. If you'd rather it didn't keep listening for a moment after answering, say **"Alexa, turn off Follow Up Mode."**
- **The free chat at Alexa.com and in the app stays.** Amazon says that free, limited version can't be turned off — but nothing happens with it unless you type to it.
- **If you're a Prime member** and turn off Alexa+ through **alexaplus.com**, Amazon says access ends right away.

If you're paying the $19.99 subscription

Turning Alexa+ off on a speaker isn't the same as canceling a paid subscription. If you subscribed without Prime and want to stop paying, cancel it in your Amazon account under **Memberships & Subscriptions**, or follow Amazon's "Cancel Your Alexa+ Subscription" help page. Check that the subscription shows as canceled before you close the page.

TIP

Give it a week first

If the new voice or chattiness bothers you, try two small changes before you switch back: say "Alexa, go back to your original voice," and ask it to keep answers short ("Alexa, please keep your answers brief"). Many people find that's all they needed.

HEADS UP

Some old Echos never switch

If your Echo is one of the older models in Chapter 4, it stays on the original Alexa no matter what. There's nothing to turn off.

CHAPTER 8

The Alexa App and Alexa.com

Your Echo is the main way most people use Alexa+, but there are two other places it lives. Both share the same memory and conversations, so you can start something in the kitchen and finish it on your phone or computer.

The Alexa app on your phone

The free **Amazon Alexa** app (from the App Store on an iPhone or Google Play on an Android phone) is where you change settings, add smart home devices, and manage privacy. With Alexa+, Amazon redesigned the app around a chat box: you can type or speak to Alexa right in the app, attach a photo or file, and see your recent conversations.

- **Devices** — your Echos, lights, plugs and other smart home gear.
- **More** — the menu for **Settings**, **Routines**, **Alexa Privacy** and more. When this guide says "tap More," this is where to look.
- The chat — type a question or request the same way you'd say it out loud.

Alexa.com in a web browser

Alexa.com is Alexa+ on a computer or tablet. It looks like a chat window, with your smart home controls right beside the conversation. Amazon says you can switch between chatting and things like your calendar, shopping lists and shared files without losing your place.

1. Open your web browser and type **alexa.com** in the address bar. (Type it yourself — don't click an ad or a search result; see Chapter 27.)
2. Sign in with your Amazon email and password.
3. Type your question in the box at the bottom and press Enter.
4. To see earlier conversations, choose **Recent Chats** in the left-hand menu. Conversations you had with your Echo or in the app appear here too.
5. Select any conversation to reopen it and carry on where you left off.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A computer screen and keyboard are much easier for long questions, planning a trip, or reading a detailed answer. Amazon says you can also copy a single answer or download a whole conversation from Alexa.com — handy for printing a recipe or a list of instructions.

GOOD TO KNOW

Free chat versus full Alexa+

Without Prime or a subscription, Alexa.com and the app offer a limited free chat. With Prime or a subscription, you get the full Alexa+ there and on your Echo devices.

TIP

Bookmark it

Once you've typed alexa.com yourself and signed in, save it as a bookmark or favorite in your browser. Then you'll always land on the real site with one click.

PART 3

Talking with Alexa+

How to have a real back-and-forth conversation, what kinds of questions it handles well, and how to catch the times it gets something wrong.

CHAPTER 9

Talking Naturally: Follow-Ups and Conversation

The biggest change with Alexa+ is that you no longer have to learn "Alexa language." You can speak the way you'd talk to a helpful neighbor — and keep the conversation going.

Then and now

What you want	The old way	With Alexa+
Weather for an outing	"Alexa, what's the weather tomorrow?" then a new request for Saturday.	"Alexa, I'm thinking of gardening this weekend — which day looks better?"
A reminder	"Alexa, remind me at 3 p.m. to call Dr. Lee."	"Alexa, remind me this afternoon to call Dr. Lee's office about my refill — around three."
A follow-up	Start over with "Alexa" and the full question.	"And what time do they close?" — it knows who "they" are.

Tips for good conversations

- **Give the whole picture.** "Alexa, my granddaughter is visiting Sunday and she's vegetarian — what's an easy lunch?" works better than "Alexa, lunch ideas."
- **Correct it like a person.** "No, I meant the Kent library, not the Ravenna one."
- **Ask it to slow down or say it again.** "Alexa, can you repeat that more slowly?"
- **Ask for less.** "Just the short answer, please."
- **Stop it any time.** Say "Alexa, stop."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You don't have to remember exact commands. If you can say what you want in your own words, Alexa+ can usually work it out — which makes it easier for everyone in the house, including anyone who found the old Alexa frustrating.

Do I have to keep saying "Alexa"?

Alexa+ is designed for back-and-forth conversation, so it may wait briefly for your reply after it answers. Watch the light on your Echo: while it's lit, Alexa is still listening for your follow-up. When the light goes out, say "Alexa" again to start a new request. On the original Alexa, the same idea is a setting called **Follow Up Mode**.

TIP

Ending a conversation politely

If Alexa is waiting for an answer you don't want to give, just say "Alexa, stop," or "That's all, thanks." The light goes out and it stops listening.

Your conversations are saved as chats

Alexa+ keeps a history of your conversations so you can pick them back up later in the Alexa app or at Alexa.com (Chapter 8). On an Echo Show, Amazon says chat history shows on the screen by default; you can turn that display off in the device's settings or in the app. To delete chats, see Chapter 25.

CHAPTER 10

When Alexa+ Gets It Wrong

Here's the honest truth that applies to every AI assistant, not just Alexa+: it is very good at sounding right, and usually is right — but not always. Knowing that is the single most useful thing in this guide.

Why mistakes happen

Generative AI builds its answers by predicting what words should come next, based on what it has learned. Most of the time that produces a good answer. Sometimes it fills a gap with something that *sounds* plausible but isn't true — a wrong store hour, a mixed-up date, a made-up detail. People in the industry call this a "hallucination." It isn't lying; it simply doesn't know it's wrong.

Where to double-check

Topic	Confirm it here
Medicine and health	Dosages, drug interactions, symptoms. Ask your doctor or pharmacist.
Money	Account balances, tax rules, whether a payment is due. Check the statement or call the bank using the number on your card.
Legal and benefits	Medicare, Social Security, wills. Use the official agency or your attorney.
Business hours and phone numbers	Call the business or check its own website.
Anything you'll act on	If it would cost money or cause trouble if wrong, confirm it once.

STAY SAFE

In an emergency, call 911 yourself

Don't rely on any voice assistant in an emergency. Amazon says Alexa can't call 911 by default. Keep a phone within reach, and if you'd like a voice-activated way to get help, ask me about the options.

Simple ways to catch a mistake

1. Ask **"Where did you get that?"** or **"How sure are you?"** A careful answer often admits uncertainty.
2. Ask the same question a different way and see if the answer matches.

3. For anything important, look it up on the official website or call.
4. If an answer is clearly wrong, tell it: "That's not right." It will usually try again.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Used with a little healthy skepticism, Alexa+ saves you time on everyday questions while you stay in charge of the ones that matter. That's the right balance.

HEADS UP

It can mishear, too

Sometimes the problem isn't the answer but the question. If Alexa+ responds to something you didn't say, check what it heard: in the Alexa app's voice history (Chapter 25) you can see the words it picked up.

CHAPTER 11

Everyday Questions, Explanations and Writing Help

Beyond timers and weather, Alexa+ can explain things, help you think something through, and help you put words together. These are some of the most satisfying ways to use it.

Things to try

- **Explain something:** "Alexa, explain in simple terms what a Medicare Advantage plan is." (Then confirm the details with Medicare — see Chapter 10.)
- **Settle a question:** "Alexa, what year did the Cuyahoga River catch fire?"
- **Plan a day:** "Alexa, I have a dentist appointment at ten in Kent. What else could I do nearby afterwards?"
- **Word help:** "Alexa, what's another word for 'grateful'?"
- **Write a note:** "Alexa, help me write a short thank-you note to my neighbor for shoveling my driveway."
- **Trivia and fun:** "Alexa, give me a quiz about 1960s music."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

It's like having a patient, well-read helper on call. You can ask the "silly" question you didn't want to ask anyone else, as many times as you like.

Getting a longer answer somewhere you can read it

Long answers are easier to read than to hear. If you'd like to see an answer written out:

1. Open the **Alexa** app on your phone or go to **alexa.com** on a computer.
2. Open your recent chats. The conversation you just had out loud should be there.
3. Read it at your own pace, or copy the answer into an email or document.

TIP

Make the voice easier to follow

If Alexa talks too fast, say "Alexa, speak slower." If you'd rather have shorter replies, say so — it can adjust.

GOOD TO KNOW

Comparing AI helpers

Alexa+ is one of several AI assistants. Our AI Assistants for Everyday Life guide explains how it compares with others, such as the ones built into phones, if you're deciding which to rely on.

PART 4

Everyday Help Around the House

Reminders, calendars, lists, music, recipes and paperwork — the small daily jobs Alexa+ can take off your mind.

CHAPTER 12

Reminders, Timers and Alarms

These are the everyday workhorses, and they work just as before — only now you can say them more loosely, and change them by simply talking.

Reminders

- "Alexa, remind me to take my evening pills at eight every night."
- "Alexa, remind me Thursday morning that the trash goes out."
- "Alexa, remind me to call Susan when I get home from church on Sunday — around noon."
- "Alexa, what reminders do I have tomorrow?"
- "Alexa, move my pill reminder to 8:30." or "Alexa, cancel the trash reminder."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Fewer sticky notes, fewer "Did I already…?" moments. A spoken reminder at the right time is one of the most useful things an Echo does, especially for medicines and appointments.

Timers and alarms

- "Alexa, set a timer for twenty minutes for the potatoes." Naming a timer helps when you have several.
- "Alexa, how much time is left on the potato timer?"
- "Alexa, wake me up at 6:30 on weekdays."
- "Alexa, stop" ends a ringing alarm or timer.

Seeing and changing them in the app

1. Open the **Alexa** app.
2. Tap **More**, then look for **Reminders** or **Alarms & Timers**.
3. Tap an item to change the time, repeat it, or delete it.

TIP

Make medicine reminders repeat

When you set a medication reminder, include "every day" or "every night." Otherwise you may get a one-time reminder that doesn't come back tomorrow. Check it once in the app to be sure.

HEADS UP

Reminders need power and Wi-Fi

If the Echo is unplugged or the internet is down, a reminder may not sound. For anything critical — like a medication that must not be missed — keep a second reminder on your phone or a pill organizer with an alarm.

CHAPTER 13

Calendars and Family Schedules

Alexa+ can read and add to your calendar, and with several family members' calendars connected, it can answer questions about everyone's week.

Connecting a calendar

Alexa works with common calendars such as Google, Microsoft Outlook and Apple iCloud. You link them once in the Alexa app:

1. Open the **Alexa** app and tap **More**, then **Settings**.
2. Look for **Calendar** (it may be under a heading like **Calendar & Email**).
3. Choose your calendar service and sign in when asked.
4. Pick which calendars Alexa can see, and which one new events should go into.

GOOD TO KNOW

Can't find the calendar setting?

Amazon moves menu items around from time to time. If you don't see Calendar where described, just ask: "Alexa, connect my calendar," or type that into the chat in the app.

Things to ask

- "Alexa, what's on my calendar this week?"
- "Alexa, add lunch with Margaret on Friday at noon."
- "Alexa, when is my next doctor's appointment?"
- "Alexa, do I have anything on Saturday morning?"

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

On busy weeks, you can check the plan out loud while you're getting dressed. On an Echo Show, the calendar can also show on the screen as a daily, weekly or monthly view.

Family calendars

With Alexa+, you can connect several family members' calendars and ask questions such as "What does everyone have going on this weekend?" Each person links their own calendar. On the new Echo Show 16, Amazon has added a **Family Organizer** view for the whole household.

TIP

Privacy among family

Anyone who can talk to your Echo can ask what's on a linked calendar. If you keep private appointments, consider setting up voice ID (Chapter 6) or keeping those on a calendar you don't link.

CHAPTER 14

Shopping Lists and To-Do Lists

Alexa keeps running lists you add to by speaking — no pen, no hunting for the notepad. The lists show up in the Alexa app, so they're on your phone at the store.

Using your lists

- "Alexa, add milk, eggs and coffee to my shopping list."
- "Alexa, what's on my shopping list?"
- "Alexa, take bread off the list."
- "Alexa, add 'call the furnace company' to my to-do list."
- "Alexa, make a list called 'Thanksgiving' and add turkey, cranberries and rolls."

Seeing your list at the store

1. Open the **Alexa** app on your phone.
2. Tap **More**, then **Lists** (or **Lists & Notes**).
3. Tap your shopping list. Tap an item to check it off as it goes in the cart.

On a computer, you can also see your lists at **alexa.com**, where Amazon puts lists alongside your chat.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Add things the moment you notice you're running out, from anywhere in the house. Two people can add to the same list, so nothing gets forgotten between you.

HEADS UP

A list isn't an order

Adding something to your shopping list doesn't buy it. Buying by voice is a separate step, and you can protect it with a code (Chapter 23). If Alexa ever asks "Would you like to order it?", you can simply say "No."

TIP

Turn a recipe into a list

Found a recipe with Alexa+? Ask, "Alexa, add the ingredients to my shopping list." Then review the list in the app and take off what you already have.

CHAPTER 15

Music, Radio, Audiobooks and Podcasts

Music is where many people fall in love with their Echo. Alexa+ makes it easier because you can describe what you want instead of naming an exact song.

Ways to ask

- "Alexa, play some quiet piano music for reading."
- "Alexa, play that song from the 1950s about a blue moon."
- "Alexa, play big band music in the kitchen."
- "Alexa, play WKSU" — or the name of your favorite radio station.
- "Alexa, what song is this?" and "Alexa, turn it down a little."
- "Alexa, read my book" for Audible or Kindle books that support read-aloud.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You don't have to remember titles. Describe the mood, the decade, or a half-remembered line, and Alexa+ does the searching.

Which music services?

Prime members get Amazon Music included with Prime. Other services — such as Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora and iHeartRadio — can be linked in the Alexa app (tap **More**, then **Settings**, then **Music & Podcasts**). Some services need their own paid subscription for full on-demand play; that's separate from Alexa+.

TIP

Set a favorite service

If Alexa keeps playing from the wrong service, set your default in the same Music & Podcasts screen. Then "Alexa, play Frank Sinatra" uses the one you prefer.

Music in more than one room

If you have Echo devices in several rooms, you can group them so music follows you through the house. In the Alexa app, tap **Devices**, then **+**, then **Combine Speakers** and **Multi-Room Music**, and follow the steps.

HEADS UP

Children and explicit lyrics

If grandchildren use your Echo, you can turn on an explicit-language filter for music in the Alexa app's Music settings. Chapter 26 has more on kids.

CHAPTER 16

Recipes and Help in the Kitchen

The kitchen is a natural place for Alexa+. Your hands are busy, and it can answer questions, keep timers and suggest meals while you cook.

Ideas to try

- "Alexa, what can I make with chicken, rice and broccoli?"
- "Alexa, I need a dinner that's low in salt and takes thirty minutes."
- "Alexa, how many teaspoons are in a tablespoon?"
- "Alexa, what can I use instead of buttermilk?"
- "Alexa, I'm cooking for six instead of four — how much more flour?"
- "Alexa, how long do I roast a five-pound chicken?"

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

No more flour on the phone screen. Ask, measure, ask again — and keep several named timers going for the different dishes.

On an Echo Show

With a screen, Alexa+ can show recipes step by step. Amazon has said it's adding more personalized recipe features over time, and the new Echo Show 16 adds a cooking library and meal planning. Say "Alexa, show me a recipe for beef stew" and follow along on the screen, saying "next step" when you're ready.

TIP

Tell it about your diet once

If you have dietary needs — low sodium, diabetic-friendly, no nuts — mention them when you ask. You can also ask Alexa+ to remember: "Alexa, remember that I'm cooking low-sodium."

STAY SAFE

Food safety still needs a thermometer

Cooking times from any assistant are a guide. For poultry, pork and leftovers, use a food thermometer and the USDA's safe temperatures rather than relying on a spoken answer alone.

CHAPTER 17

Sending Documents, Photos and Emails to Alexa+

This is one of the most useful new tricks. You can give Alexa+ a document, a photo or an email and ask questions about it: "What's the due date on this bill?" "Summarize this letter from the insurance company." "When is the school concert?"

Three ways to share a file

Way	How
By email	Send the file, photo or webpage link to **alexa@alexa.com**. You can forward an email you received the same way.
In the Alexa app	Open the chat, tap the attachment icon, choose a file or take a photo, and send it.
At Alexa.com	Use the upload option beside the chat box to add an image, document, PDF or text file.

Step by step: snap a photo of a letter

1. Open the **Alexa** app and go to the chat.
2. Tap the **attachment** icon (it often looks like a paper clip or a plus sign).
3. Choose **take a photo**, hold the phone over the letter, and take the picture.
4. Type or say your question: "What is this letter asking me to do, and by when?"
5. Read the answer, and ask follow-up questions if you need to.

What it accepts

- Files and emails under **25 MB**.
- Pictures: **JPEG, PNG, HEIC, HEIF** (the usual phone photo formats).
- Documents: **PDF, DOCX** (Word), **RTF** and **TXT**.
- Not accepted: videos and password-protected documents.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Long, confusing letters — from insurers, utilities, the school — become a plain-English summary in seconds. You still decide what to do; Alexa+ just helps you understand it.

HEADS UP

Think before you share

Anything you send goes to Amazon to be read by Alexa+. Don't send documents with your full Social Security number, bank account numbers or passwords. Cover those parts before taking the photo, or ask a family member for help instead.

TIP

Kindle Scribe owners

On a Kindle Scribe, you can use **Send to Alexa** from the Share menu for PDFs, Word documents and notebooks. It needs Alexa+ through Prime or a subscription.

PART 5

Smart Home and Other Screens

Lights, plugs and thermostats by voice, Routines that do several things at once, and Alexa+ on the Echo Show screen, the TV and Ring cameras.

CHAPTER 18

Controlling Lights, Plugs and Thermostats

If you have smart lights, smart plugs, a smart thermostat or other connected gadgets, Alexa+ makes them easier to control because you don't need the exact name of each one.

Ways to ask

- "Alexa, turn on the living room lamp."
- "Alexa, it's too dark in here." — Alexa+ can work out which lights you mean in the room you're in.
- "Alexa, set the heat to 70." or "Alexa, it's chilly — warm it up a couple of degrees."
- "Alexa, turn off all the lights downstairs."
- "Alexa, is the front door locked?" (with a compatible smart lock)

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

No getting up in the dark to find a switch, no squinting at a thermostat. For anyone with stiff joints or unsteady balance, controlling lights by voice is a real safety improvement.

Adding a new smart device

1. Plug in or install the new device and follow its own instructions to get it on Wi-Fi if needed.
2. Open the **Alexa** app and tap **Devices**.
3. Tap **+** (the plus sign), then **Add Device**.
4. Choose the kind of device (for example **Light** or **Plug**), then the brand, and follow the steps.
5. Give it a simple, clear name like "Bedroom Lamp," and put it in the right room group.

TIP

Name things the way you talk

Names like "Bedroom Lamp" and "Porch Light" work much better than "Smart Plug 2." You can rename any device in the Alexa app by tapping it and then the gear icon.

On an Echo Show

With Alexa+, an Echo Show has a smart home dashboard where you can see and tap your devices. Say **"Alexa, open my smart home dashboard."**

GOOD TO KNOW

Where to learn more

Our Smart Lights guide, Smart Plugs & Switches guide and Smart Thermostats guide go deeper on choosing and installing each kind of device. Setting up a smart home is also a service I offer.

CHAPTER 19

Routines: Several Things with One Phrase

A **Routine** is a set of actions Alexa does together, triggered by a phrase you choose, a time of day, or an event. "Alexa, good morning" could turn on the kitchen light, tell you the weather and read your calendar.

Ideas that help

- **Good morning:** lights on, weather, today's calendar, a reminder about morning pills.
- **Good night:** all lights off except a hall night-light, thermostat down, doors checked.
- **Leaving the house:** lights off, thermostat to away, a reminder to take your keys.
- **Sunset:** porch light on automatically.

Making a Routine in the app

1. Open the **Alexa** app, tap **More**, then **Routines**.
2. Tap **+** to start a new Routine and give it a name.
3. Tap **When this happens** and choose what starts it: a voice phrase, a schedule, a device and so on.
4. Tap **Add action** and pick what Alexa should do. Add as many actions as you like.
5. Tap **Save**. Try it out by saying the phrase.

TIP

Ask Alexa+ to help

Not sure where to start? Describe what you want — "Alexa, I'd like the porch light on every evening at sunset" — and Alexa+ can help set it up or tell you exactly what to tap.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

One phrase replaces five chores. Bedtime Routines in particular mean you never walk through a dark house or wonder whether you left a lamp on.

GOOD TO KNOW

Routines on Fire TV

On a Fire TV, Amazon includes Alexa+ free (Chapter 21), but Routines there need Prime or the paid Alexa+ subscription.

CHAPTER 20

Alexa+ on an Echo Show Screen

On an Echo Show, Alexa+ also changes what you see. The home screen adapts to you, settings move to a new spot, and your conversations can appear on the screen. Our Echo Show guide covers the screen in full; here are the Alexa+ differences.

Where things are now

To find	Do this
Settings	Tap the **Menu** icon on the screen, then **Settings**. (On the original Alexa, you swiped down from the top.)
Widgets and home screen	Press and hold the **Menu** icon to arrange widgets.
Your chat history	Swipe down on the Alexa+ home screen to see recent conversations.
Calls and messages	Tap **Menu**, then **Communicate**.

Photos in your own words

With Alexa+, you can ask for pictures from **Amazon Photos** by describing them: "Alexa, show photos from our beach trip." If you turn on people grouping in Amazon Photos and name the faces, you can also say "Alexa, show me photos of Emma."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The screen becomes a family picture album you can search just by asking — a lovely way to share memories when the grandchildren visit.

The camera and the microphone button

- The **camera shutter** slides over the lens. While it's closed, no one can see through the camera.
- The **microphone and camera off** button switches them off electrically. A red light or bar shows they're off, and Alexa can't hear the wake word.
- On the newest Echo Shows, the camera is on by default after setup. Close the shutter if you'd rather it was covered.

TIP

If the screen feels too busy

Alexa+ can show a lot. In **Settings**, look under **Display & Appearance** to choose which kinds of content appear on the home screen.

CHAPTER 21

Alexa+ on Fire TV and with Ring Cameras

Alexa+ isn't only for Echo devices. It also works on many Fire TV devices, and it can tell you about what your Ring cameras saw.

Alexa+ on your Fire TV

In August 2026, Amazon made Alexa+ available at no extra cost on compatible Fire TV devices across the U.S. — with or without Prime. There's nothing to download or sign up for; eligible devices are upgraded automatically.

Question	Answer
Compatible devices	Current-generation Fire TV Sticks, the Fire TV Cube, Amazon Ember TVs, and some Hisense and Panasonic TVs with Alexa+ built in.
Free on Fire TV	Talking about what to watch, smart home control by voice, and general questions.
Needs Prime or the subscription	Alexa+ on Echo devices, plus Fire TV extras like Routines, some Ring camera features and advanced Home Modes.

Finding something to watch

Hold the microphone button on your Fire TV remote and speak. With Alexa+, you can describe what you're in the mood for instead of naming a title:

- "Show me a funny movie from the 1980s that the grandkids would like too."
- "What's that movie where Tom Hanks is stranded on an island?"
- "Find a cooking show that isn't a competition."

Amazon has also added a way to jump straight to a movie scene by describing it. It works on thousands of titles in Prime Video, as long as the movie is included with Prime or you've bought or rented it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

No more pecking out titles letter by letter with the remote. Just say what you'd like, the way you'd ask a friend.

Ask about your Ring cameras

If you have Ring cameras connected to Alexa and a paid Ring plan, Alexa+ can summarize what they picked up: "Alexa, did any packages come today?" or "Alexa, what happened around my home today?" It can only summarize new camera events after you've set the feature up.

GOOD TO KNOW

Which Ring plan?

Amazon's and Ring's pages describe the plan needed slightly differently, so check in the Ring app which of your plans includes this before you upgrade anything. Our Ring Doorbells & Cameras guide explains the plans.

TIP

The simplest Ring trick

Even without Alexa+, you can say "Alexa, show the front door" on an Echo Show or Fire TV to see a Ring camera's live view, and "Alexa, hide the front door" to close it.

PART 6

Getting Things Done with Outside Services

Booking a table, a ride, a haircut or tickets through Amazon's partner services — and keeping purchases by voice safe and under your control.

CHAPTER 22

Reservations, Rides, Food and Tickets

Alexa+ can do more than answer questions: through partner companies, it can actually book or order things for you. Amazon calls these connections **add-ons**, and you can browse them in the **Alexa+ Store** inside the Alexa app.

Partners Amazon has named in the U.S.

Service	What Alexa+ can do with it	Try saying
OpenTable	Book restaurant reservations and share the plans with family.	"Alexa, book a table for four at Ray's Place on Saturday at 6."
Uber	Book a ride.	"Alexa, get me an Uber to the Kent library."
Grubhub and **Uber Eats**	Order food delivery from a restaurant's menu.	"Alexa, order a large cheese pizza for delivery."
Vagaro	Book hair, spa or fitness appointments at businesses that use Vagaro.	"Alexa, book a haircut for next Tuesday afternoon."
Thumbtack	Find and compare local home-service pros by price and ratings.	"Alexa, find someone to clean my gutters."
Ticketmaster	Watch for tickets to go on sale or drop to your price, and buy them.	"Alexa, let me know when tickets for the Cleveland Orchestra drop below $60."

Connecting a service the first time

1. Open the **Alexa** app and find the **Alexa+ Store** (or simply ask in the chat: "How do I connect OpenTable?").
2. Choose the service and tap to connect it.
3. Sign in to your account with that company — or create one — when asked. This links the two accounts.
4. Back on your Echo, make your request in plain words. Alexa+ will confirm the details before it books.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Booking dinner, a haircut or a ride usually means an app, a website or being put on hold. With Alexa+ you can do it in one sentence from your armchair — and hear the details read back to confirm.

HEADS UP

Listen to the confirmation

Before Alexa+ books or orders, listen carefully to the date, time, address and price it reads back. If anything is off, say "No, wait" and correct it. Check the confirmation email or the company's app afterward, just as you would if you'd booked it yourself.

GOOD TO KNOW

Payment and fees

Each partner charges the way it normally does — a ride costs what Uber charges, food delivery has its usual fees. Some partners use a card you add with them directly. Amazon notes that its own voice purchase settings may not apply to purchases paid through another company (Chapter 23).

Local businesses

Whether a particular restaurant or salon in Portage County can be booked this way depends on whether it uses OpenTable, Vagaro or another partner. If Alexa+ can't book it, ask for the phone number — and check that number on the business's own website before calling.

CHAPTER 23

Shopping by Voice — Safely

Alexa can order from Amazon by voice: "Alexa, reorder paper towels." It's convenient, but it also means anyone near the Echo — a grandchild, a visitor, even a TV commercial — could try to buy something. A few minutes in the settings fixes that.

Turn on a purchase confirmation code

A **voice code** is a four-digit number Alexa asks for before it places an Amazon order. Without it, the order doesn't go through.

1. Open the **Alexa** app and tap **More**, then **Settings**.
2. Tap **Account Settings**, then **Voice Purchasing**.
3. Tap **Purchase Confirmation**, then **Manage**.
4. Turn on **Voice code** and choose four digits you'll remember — but not your PIN for the bank, and not a birthday.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Peace of mind. You can still reorder coffee by voice, but no one else can run up charges on your account just by talking to your Echo.

Other choices in the same place

- **Turn voice purchasing off entirely** if you never want to buy by voice.
- **Limit purchases to recognized voices** — only household members whose voice ID Alexa knows (Chapter 6) can order.
- **Turn off purchasing in kids' skills**, so games for children can't sell add-ons.

GOOD TO KNOW

What these settings don't cover

Amazon says its voice purchase settings may not apply to purchases where you pay another company directly, such as a card you've given to a partner service. And digital items such as Kindle books, Audible and Prime Video aren't covered by the recognized-voice restriction. Watch your email for order confirmations.

If something was ordered by mistake

1. Go to **amazon.com** (or the Amazon app) and open **Returns & Orders**.
2. Find the order. If it hasn't shipped, choose **Cancel items**.
3. If it has shipped, choose **Return or replace items** when it arrives.
4. Then turn on the voice code above so it doesn't happen again.

TIP

A gentle habit

Saying "Alexa, where's my order?" is a quick way to hear what's on its way. If you hear about an order you don't recognize, check your Amazon account — on amazon.com, never through a link in an email.

PART 7

Privacy, Family and Scam Safety

What Alexa+ hears and keeps, how to review and delete it, settings for grandchildren and guests, and the fake "Alexa+ upgrade" tricks to watch for.

CHAPTER 24

What Alexa+ Hears and Keeps

It's fair to wonder what an always-plugged-in microphone does. Here's the plain-English version, so you can decide what you're comfortable with.

Listening versus recording

- Your Echo listens on the device for one thing: the wake word, **"Alexa."**
- When it hears the wake word, the light comes on and what you say next is sent to Amazon's computers ("the cloud") to be understood and answered.
- Those recordings, and written transcripts of them, are kept in your account until you delete them or choose a setting that deletes them automatically (Chapter 25).
- With Alexa+, your conversations are also kept as chats you can reopen in the app or at Alexa.com.

The March 2025 change

A few Echo models — the Echo Dot (4th Gen), Echo Show 10 and Echo Show 15 — used to have a setting called **Do Not Send Voice Recordings**, which processed requests on the device itself (U.S. English only). Amazon removed that setting on **March 28, 2025**, telling owners that its new generative AI features rely on the processing power of its cloud. Devices that had it on were switched to **Don't save recordings**, which still sends your voice to Amazon but deletes the recording after Alexa has handled your request.

GOOD TO KNOW

What this means in practice

With Alexa+, every request goes to Amazon's cloud. What you control is *how long* it's kept. If that's not acceptable to you, the honest answer is that a voice assistant may not be the right fit — and that's a perfectly reasonable choice.

Your physical privacy controls

Control	What it does
Microphone off button	On every Echo. Press it and the light turns red: the microphones are switched off and Alexa can't hear the wake word. Press again to turn them back on.
Camera shutter	On Echo Show devices. Slide it closed and no one can see through the camera.
Unplugging	Always works. Nothing is heard without power.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You're in charge. Turn the microphone off during a private conversation or a doctor's phone call, close the camera cover when you're not on a video call, and you'll know for certain nothing is heard or seen.

TIP

Watch for the light

If the light on your Echo comes on when you didn't say "Alexa," it probably heard something similar on the TV or in conversation. That's normal now and then. You can see exactly what was captured in your voice history and delete it (Chapter 25).

CHAPTER 25

Reviewing and Deleting Your Recordings and Chats

You can look at — and listen to — everything Alexa recorded, and delete any or all of it. One important change with Alexa+: you can't delete recordings by voice any more. Use the app or the website instead.

Delete recordings in the Alexa app

1. Open the **Alexa** app and tap **More**.
2. Tap **Alexa Privacy**.
3. Tap **Review Voice History** (some versions call it **Review Alexa History**).
4. Use the drop-down menu to pick a date range, or filter by device or by person's profile.
5. Select the recordings you want to remove, or delete everything shown for that range, and confirm.

GOOD TO KNOW

"Alexa, delete what I just said" doesn't work with Alexa+

With the original Alexa, you could delete recordings by voice. Amazon says voice requests can't be used to delete your voice history with Alexa+. If you used to rely on that, switch to the app steps above.

Set recordings to delete themselves

Rather than remembering to delete, you can choose how long Amazon keeps recordings. In the app, go to **More**, then **Alexa Privacy**, then **Manage Your Alexa Data**, then **Voice and Typed Requests**. Your choices include saving them for a limited time, or **Don't save recordings**.

HEADS UP

The trade-off

Amazon notes that deleting recordings can make Alexa less personal and cause some features to stop working, and choosing **Don't save recordings** also deletes any voice IDs (Chapter 6). Alexa still works either way — just a little less tailored to you.

On a computer

You can manage the same things from a web browser: sign in at amazon.com and look for **Alexa Privacy Settings** in your account. Your Alexa+ chats are listed under **Recent Chats** at alexa.com.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A few minutes here lets you enjoy Alexa+ with a clear conscience: you know what's kept, for how long, and that you can wipe it whenever you like.

TIP

Do it once, together

If a family member set up your Echo, sit down with them and go through Alexa Privacy together. Choose a setting you're both comfortable with, and write it on the Cheat-Sheet in Chapter 29.

CHAPTER 26

Grandkids, Guests and the Whole Household

An Echo in a shared home hears everyone. A few settings make sure grandchildren get kid-friendly answers, guests can't buy things, and each adult gets their own experience.

For grandchildren

- **Amazon Kids**, set up in the Alexa app, gives children a kid-friendly Alexa with content filters and time limits a parent controls.
- With a child's voice ID set up under Amazon Kids, Amazon says the Echo switches to **Alexa+ Kids** when it recognizes the child.
- Turn on a **voice code** for purchases (Chapter 23) before the grandkids visit.

GOOD TO KNOW

Ask the parents first

Amazon Kids settings are usually best handled by the child's parent, who may already use it on a tablet or at home. A quick call to agree on the rules saves confusion.

For guests and caregivers

- Anyone who talks to your Echo can ask about linked calendars and lists. If that bothers you, keep private items off linked calendars or set up voice ID.
- A voice code stops guests — and the TV — from ordering things.
- Press the microphone off button during private conversations with a visiting nurse or caregiver, if you prefer.

For each adult

Each adult can have a profile and voice ID (Chapter 6), so reminders, music and calendars follow the right person. Amazon says a household member can also turn off Alexa+ for themselves without changing it for the main account holder.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Everyone in the home gets the Alexa that suits them — the grandchildren get safe, simple answers, and you keep control of the account and the credit card.

CHAPTER 27

Scams: Fake Alexa Setup Sites, "Upgrade" Emails and Calls

Whenever something new and popular arrives, scammers follow. Alexa+ is no exception. The good news: every trick below has the same simple defense.

The tricks to know

The trick	What it looks like
Fake "Alexa setup" websites	You search for help setting up your Echo and click an ad. The site looks official, then shows a phone number for "Alexa support," or asks you to download something. Real Echo setup happens in the free Alexa app — no website or phone call is needed.
"Upgrade to Alexa+" emails or texts	A message says your Alexa+ upgrade failed, your subscription is expiring, or you must "verify your payment" through a link. The link leads to a fake Amazon sign-in page that steals your password or card.
Phone calls	A caller says they're from Amazon about an Alexa+ charge or a problem with your Echo, and offers to "fix" it by connecting to your computer or having you buy gift cards.
"Your Echo was hacked" pop-ups	A warning on your computer with a phone number to call. Real warnings from Amazon don't come with a number to call.

SCAM ALERT

The one rule that beats them all

Don't use a link, phone number or website that came to *you*. Go to Amazon yourself: open the Alexa app you already have, or type **amazon.com** or **alexa.com** into your browser. Turning on Alexa+ never requires a phone call, remote access to your computer, or a gift card.

SCAM ALERT

Gift cards mean scam — always

No real company, including Amazon, will ask you to pay a bill, a subscription or a "fee" with gift cards. The Federal Trade Commission says anyone who demands payment by gift card is a scammer.

How to check a message about Alexa+

1. Don't click anything in the message.
2. Open the Alexa app or type **amazon.com** yourself and sign in.
3. Look under **Account & Lists**, then **Memberships & Subscriptions**. Is there really an Alexa+ charge? Is your Prime membership active?
4. Check **Your Orders** for anything you don't recognize.
5. If the message was fake, delete it. If there's a real problem, use Amazon's Help pages from amazon.com to contact them.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Once you know that Alexa+ is turned on from your own Echo or your own account — never by a stranger — every one of these scams loses its power over you.

If you already clicked, paid or let someone in

1. If someone connected to your computer, turn the computer off or disconnect it from the internet.
2. From a different, safe device, change your Amazon password and turn on two-step verification.
3. Call your bank or card company using the number on the back of your card.
4. If you bought gift cards, call the gift card company right away and keep the receipts.
5. Report it at **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**.
6. Then call me. I can check the computer and help you secure your accounts.

FROM BILL

Never be embarrassed

These scams fool careful, intelligent people every day. If something feels off, call me at (330) 200-8042 before you do anything. Checking first is never a bother.

PART 8

When to Call Bill & Your Cheat-Sheet

An honest word about when a hand is worth it, and a one-page summary of Alexa+ to keep handy.

CHAPTER 28

When to Call Bill

I've written this guide so you can handle Alexa+ on your own. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves you time and worry. Here's my straight advice, with no pressure.

Times it's well worth a call

- **Alexa+ won't turn on**, or your Echo is registered to someone else's Amazon account.
- **You're not sure whether you're paying twice** — for Prime and for a separate Alexa+ subscription.
- **Setting up a whole home**: several Echos, smart lights, a thermostat, Routines and profiles for each person. This is part of my Smart Home Installation service.
- **Choosing new equipment** — whether an older Echo is worth replacing, and which model fits.
- **Going through privacy settings together**: recordings, chats, voice ID and the camera.
- **A suspicious email, call or charge** about Alexa+ or your Amazon account.
- **Someone already got into your computer or account** after a fake "support" call.
- **You'd simply rather have a patient person set it up** and show you the ropes. That's always reason enough.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace — no rushing, no talking down, and no jargon. I explain what I'm doing in plain words, and I'll always tell you honestly when a purchase or a subscription isn't worth your money. I bring 30+ years of professional experience to every visit, and Bill's Home Tech serves Portage County, Ohio. I can often help over a remote session, or come to your home.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call or text **(330) 200-8042**, or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. This guide is free to keep and share.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may meet Sophie first

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you may be greeted by **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time with me. A real person — me — does the actual help.

Thank you for taking the time to understand Alexa+. Used with a little care, it can take a lot of small chores off your plate.

— Bill

CHAPTER 29

Your Alexa+ Cheat-Sheet

The whole guide, boiled down. Keep a copy near your Echo.

The essentials

To do this	Do this
Get Alexa+	Say "Alexa, upgrade to Alexa+," or sign in at **alexa.com**.
Cost (U.S., Nov. 2026)	Included with Prime. Otherwise $19.99 a month. Free on compatible Fire TV. Limited free chat at alexa.com and in the app.
Go back to the original Alexa	Say "Alexa, end Alexa+."
Original voice	Say "Alexa, go back to your original voice."
Teach it your voice	Say "Alexa, learn my voice."
Delete recordings	Alexa app > **More** > **Alexa Privacy** > **Review Voice History**. (Not by voice with Alexa+.)
Auto-delete	**Alexa Privacy** > **Manage Your Alexa Data** > **Voice and Typed Requests**.
Purchase code	**More** > **Settings** > **Account Settings** > **Voice Purchasing** > **Purchase Confirmation** > **Manage**.
Send a document	Email it to **alexa@alexa.com** (under 25 MB), or attach it in the app's chat.
Microphones off	Press the microphone button — the light turns red.

Write it down once

Keep handy	
My Echo models	_____
Amazon account email the Echo is on	_____
Do I have Prime? Renews on	_____
Paying separately for Alexa+?	_____
Voice purchase code (keep private)	_____
Recordings kept for	_____
Who set up voice ID	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. Say it again in different words, or say "Alexa, stop" and start over.
2. Check the light: red means the microphone is off — press the button.
3. Unplug the Echo for about ten seconds, plug it back in, and wait for it to start.
4. Check that your Wi-Fi is working on another device.
5. Open the Alexa app and make sure you're signed in to the right Amazon account.
6. Call Bill at (330) 200-8042 — that's what I'm here for.

Safe and money-smart habits

- If you have Prime, never pay separately for Alexa+.
- Turn on a **voice code** for purchases.
- Double-check anything about health, money or the law that Alexa+ tells you.
- Don't send documents with full account or Social Security numbers.
- Type **amazon.com** and **alexa.com** yourself — never use a link or number someone sent you.
- Gift cards for payment always mean a scam.