BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS · NO. 105

# Ring Doorbells & Cameras

See who's at the door from anywhere — set it up, tame the alerts, share it with family, and know what the plans really cost

**Peace of mind at your front door**

Take your time — you can't break it

*Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech*

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

*For Ring video doorbells, cameras & the Ring app · facts current November 2026*

# What's Inside

This is your Ring manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace — there is no test, and you can't fall behind. Keep your phone handy and work along as you read. Every feature comes with what it actually does *for you*, and slow step-by-step directions anyone can follow. Ring updates its app often, so if a screen looks a little different on yours, the ideas here still apply.

### Part 1 — Getting to Know Ring

1 A Note from Bill
2 What Ring Is & the Ring Family
3 Doorbells: Battery or Wired?
4 Cameras: Indoor, Outdoor, Spotlight & Floodlight
5 What You Need Before You Start

### Part 2 — Setting Everything Up

6 Getting the Ring App & Your Account
7 Adding Your First Device
8 Installing a Battery Doorbell
9 Installing a Wired Doorbell
10 Mounting Cameras: Where and How High
11 Checking Your Wi-Fi Signal

### Part 3 — Using Ring Every Day

12 A Tour of the Ring App
13 Answering the Door from Your Phone
14 Live View: Checking In Anytime
15 Looking Back: History & Saved Videos
16 Alerts That Help Instead of Nag

### Part 4 — Making Ring Yours

17 Motion Zones, Sensitivity & Privacy
18 Modes: Home, Away & Disarmed
19 Smart Alerts & the Plan Extras
20 Chimes Inside the House
21 Ring with Alexa & Echo Show

### Part 5 — Plans, Sharing & Privacy

22 Ring Plans: Solo, Multi & Pro
23 Trying, Changing or Canceling a Plan
24 Sharing Access with Family

25 Privacy & Being a Good Neighbor
26 Keeping Your Ring Account Secure

## Part 6 — Batteries, Wi-Fi & Fixing Things

27 Batteries & Charging
28 When a Device Goes Offline
29 Common Problems & Quick Fixes
30 Ring Alarm & Sensors in Brief

## Part 7 — Help & Your Cheat-Sheet

31 When to Call Bill
32 Your Everyday Ring Cheat-Sheet

PART 1

# Getting to Know Ring

What Ring is, which doorbell or camera you have, and what you need before you start. Start here, and the rest of the guide will make sense.

CHAPTER 1

# A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Whoever is reading this guide, this is for **you**. Maybe a family member gave you a Ring doorbell so they'd worry less. Maybe you bought one after a package went missing from the porch. Or maybe it came with the house, and now your phone buzzes every time a car drives by and you don't know how to make it stop. Wherever you're starting from, you're in the right place.

I'm Bill. With 30+ years of professional experience, I've helped a lot of folks here in Portage County feel at home with their technology, and video doorbells are one of the most common things I set up. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it sitting at your kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, one step at a time. Any word you might not know, I'll stop and explain right then.

## What Ring does, in one sentence

A **Ring** doorbell or camera lets you see and talk to whoever is at your door, or check on your yard, driveway or living room, from your phone, whether you're in the kitchen, upstairs, or a thousand miles away.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

### What this guide does for you

By the end you'll set up a Ring device, answer the door from your phone, look back at who came by, quiet the alerts you don't want, share access with family, understand exactly what the monthly plans cost (and whether you need one), and fix the common hiccups yourself. Most of all, you'll feel safer and more in control at home, without feeling watched or nagged.

## The big promise: you can't break it

You cannot break your Ring by tapping around in the app. The worst that happens is you change a setting you didn't mean to, and every setting can be changed back. The only places to slow down are the ones I'll point out: house wiring, ladders, and anything that asks for money. I'll flag each one.

And you're never stuck alone. If you'd like a hand, call me at **(330) 200-8042** and we'll sort it out together, with no judgment. There's no such thing as a silly question.

***— Bill***

CHAPTER 2

# What Ring Is & the Ring Family

Ring is a home-security company owned by Amazon. It makes video doorbells, security cameras, an alarm system and a handful of sensors, and they all work in one free phone app, also called **Ring**. You don't need to own every piece. Most people start with a doorbell and stop there.

| Piece | What it does |
|---|---|
| **Video doorbell** | Replaces (or sits beside) your doorbell button. When someone presses it, your phone rings and you see them on video. It also notices motion on the porch. |
| **Security camera** | Watches one spot: the driveway, the back door, the garage, a room inside. Some run on batteries, some plug in, and some have built-in lights. |
| **Chime** | A small speaker that plugs into a wall outlet inside so you can hear the doorbell anywhere in the house. Some chimes also stretch your Wi-Fi to reach the door. |
| **Ring Alarm** | A full security system with door sensors, motion sensors and a keypad. It's a separate purchase; this guide covers it only briefly, in Chapter 30. |
| **Ring app** | The free app on your phone or tablet where you see, hear and control everything. |

GOOD TO KNOW

### You don't need Alexa or Amazon Prime

Ring is owned by Amazon and works nicely with Alexa and the Echo Show, but you don't need either one. A Ring doorbell works perfectly well with just your phone and your home Wi-Fi.

## How the pieces talk to each other

Every Ring doorbell and camera connects to your home **Wi-Fi**, the wireless internet signal from your router. When it notices something, it sends an alert over the internet to Ring, and Ring sends it to your phone. That's why a weak Wi-Fi signal at the front door is the number-one cause of trouble, and why Chapter 11 is worth reading before you mount anything.

CHAPTER 3

# Doorbells: Battery or Wired?

Ring doorbells come in two families. The difference is simply how they get their power, and it decides how you install it and how often you think about it.

| Family | In plain terms |
|---|---|
| **Battery doorbells** | Run on a rechargeable battery. You can put one up anywhere, even if you have no doorbell wires. Every so often you take the battery out and charge it. If you *do* have doorbell wires, many battery models can connect to them so the battery stays topped up. |
| **Wired doorbells** | Connect to the low-voltage doorbell wires most houses already have. No batteries to charge, ever. Installing one means working with those wires, which is easy for some folks and a good reason to call for others. |

## Ring's 2026 doorbells

In March 2026 Ring refreshed its doorbell lineup. These were the launch prices; stores run sales often, so treat them as a guide, not a promise.

| Model | Power | Launch price | Worth knowing |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wired Doorbell (2nd Gen) | Doorbell wires | $79.99 | The least expensive Ring doorbell. |
| Battery Doorbell (2nd Gen) | Battery | $99.99 | Goes anywhere, no wiring needed. |
| Battery Doorbell Plus (2nd Gen) | Battery | $179.99 | Quick Release Battery Pack: the battery slides out without taking the doorbell off the wall. |
| Battery Doorbell Pro (2nd Gen) | Battery | $249.99 | Sharpest picture (4K video). |

Older Ring doorbells (Video Doorbell, Video Doorbell 2, 3 and 4, Wired Doorbell Plus, Wired Doorbell Pro and others) still work in the same app. Everything in this guide applies to them too, with small differences I'll mention where they matter.

TIP

### Which one should you get?

If you have a working wired doorbell button today, a wired Ring is the no-fuss choice: no charging, ever. If you don't have doorbell wires, or you rent, a battery model is the easy answer. A sharper picture is nice, but the least expensive models show you who's at the door just fine.

## Finding the name of yours

If you're not sure which model you have, open the Ring app, tap the menu (three lines) at the top left, tap **Devices** and pick your doorbell. The model name appears in the device's details. Write it in the cheat-sheet at the end of this guide; it helps whenever you look something up or call for help.

CHAPTER 4

# Cameras: Indoor, Outdoor, Spotlight & Floodlight

Ring's cameras all do the same basic job: watch a spot, alert you to motion, and let you look in live and talk through a little speaker. What changes is where they go and what extras they have.

| Kind | What it's good for |
|---|---|
| **Indoor cameras** | Small cameras that sit on a shelf and plug into an outlet. Good for keeping an eye on a pet, or on an entryway while you're away. Some models have a privacy cover or can turn their lens away. |
| **Small outdoor cameras** | Weather-resistant cameras that mount on a wall or sit on a shelf. Ring has sold these for years under the Stick Up Cam name. They come in battery and plug-in versions. |
| **Spotlight cameras** | An outdoor camera with small built-in lights that come on when motion is detected. Battery, plug-in, solar and wired versions exist. |
| **Floodlight cameras** | Bright twin floodlights with a camera between them. These replace an existing outdoor light fixture, so they're wired into house power. That part is a job for an electrician or a handy family member. |

STAY SAFE

**Floodlights connect to house power**

A floodlight camera is wired to 120-volt household power, not the gentle low voltage of a doorbell. If you've never replaced a light fixture, don't start on a ladder with this one. Hire an electrician, or call me and I'll help you plan it.

## How many cameras do you really need?

Fewer than you think. For most homes, a doorbell covers the front door, and one camera covers the spot you actually wonder about: the driveway, the back door, or the side gate. Start small. Every extra camera means more alerts, more batteries and, on some plans, more cost (Chapter 22).

CHAPTER 5

# What You Need Before You Start

Gather these before you open the box. Having them ready turns setup into a calm fifteen minutes instead of a frustrating hour.

- **A smartphone or tablet** (iPhone, iPad or Android) with the free Ring app.
- **Your Wi-Fi network name and password.** Passwords are case sensitive, so capital letters matter. If you're not sure of yours, it's often printed on a sticker on the router.
- **An email address you check**, for your Ring account.
- **A good Wi-Fi signal where the device will go.** Stand at the front door with your phone. If videos stutter there, the doorbell will struggle too (Chapter 11).
- **For a battery device:** time to charge the battery fully before you mount it.
- **For a wired doorbell:** access to the breaker box, and a screwdriver (Chapter 9).

## A word about 2.4 GHz

Most home routers send out two kinds of Wi-Fi: **2.4 GHz**, which reaches farther, and **5 GHz**, which is faster but doesn't travel as far through walls. All Ring doorbells and cameras work on 2.4 GHz, and some newer ones can also use 5 GHz. If setup can't find your network, make sure your router's 2.4 GHz signal is turned on.

GOOD TO KNOW

### If your Wi-Fi shows two names

Some routers show two network names, one ending in "5G." For a Ring device at the front door, the one *without* 5G usually reaches better. Our companion *Smart Device Offline?* guide explains the two bands in more detail.

PART 2

# Setting Everything Up

The app, your account, adding your first device, and getting it on the wall with a strong signal. It's a one-time job, and we'll go slowly.

CHAPTER 6

# Getting the Ring App & Your Account

Everything starts with the free Ring app. You'll use it to set up each device, to answer the door, and to change settings. The account you make is the key to the whole system, so it's worth doing carefully.

## Getting the app

1. On an iPhone or iPad, open the **App Store**. On Android, open the **Play Store**.
2. Search for **Ring**. The real app is made by **Ring LLC**. Check that name before you tap Get or Install.
3. Install it and open it.
4. Tap **Create Account** if you're new, or **Sign In** if someone already made one for you.

SCAM ALERT

### Install only the real Ring app

Look-alike apps and fake "Ring support" websites exist. The genuine app is free and made by Ring LLC. If an app or website asks you to pay just to watch your own doorbell, or to call a phone number for "activation," stop. Ring setup never requires a phone call.

## Making your account

Ring asks for your name, email address and a password, and then sends a code to your email or phone to confirm it's really you. That code step is called **two-step verification**, and it protects your cameras from strangers. Choose a strong password you don't use anywhere else, and write it on the cheat-sheet.

FROM BILL

### Who should own the account?

The person whose home it is should usually be the account owner, even if a son or daughter does the setup. Family can be added as shared users afterward (Chapter 24). That way nobody gets locked out of their own front door if a relative changes phones or email.

CHAPTER 7

# Adding Your First Device

Adding a device means introducing it to the app and to your Wi-Fi. The app walks you through each screen; here's what to expect so nothing surprises you.

1. Charge the battery fully first, if your device has one.
2. Stand near where the device will go, with your phone connected to your home Wi-Fi.
3. Open the Ring app and tap **Set Up a Device**.
4. Scan the QR code on the device or its box when the app asks. (A QR code is that square of black-and-white dots; your phone's camera reads it.)
5. Choose your location (your home's address) so Ring knows where the device lives.
6. Follow the screens. When asked, pick your Wi-Fi network and type the password carefully.
7. Wait while it connects and updates. This can take several minutes. Don't close the app.
8. Give the device a name you'll recognize, like **Front Door** or **Driveway**. You'll use this name with Alexa, too.

TIP

### Set it up on the table, then mount it

Do the app setup indoors near your router or at the door, before you climb a ladder or drill a hole. Once it's connected and you can see live video, then put it up. That way, if something needs redoing, the device is in your hand, not over your head.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Your free trial starts now

A new Ring doorbell or camera usually comes with a free 30-day trial of a Ring plan, as long as your home doesn't already have one. That trial lets you try saved videos before deciding whether to pay. Chapter 23 explains what happens when it ends.

CHAPTER 8

# Installing a Battery Doorbell

A battery doorbell is the easiest Ring to install. If you can use a screwdriver, you can do this. The box includes a mounting plate, screws and usually a small screwdriver bit.

1. Charge the battery fully and finish app setup (Chapter 7) first.
2. Hold the doorbell where you want it. A good height is about 4 feet off the ground, so it sees faces, not the tops of heads. Check the live view on your phone while you hold it.
3. Mark the screw holes through the mounting plate with a pencil.
4. On brick, stucco or stone, drill holes and use the plastic anchors from the box. On wood or vinyl, the screws can usually go straight in.
5. Screw the mounting plate to the wall, then attach the doorbell and fasten the small security screw on the bottom.
6. Press the button and make sure your phone rings.

TIP

### Wiring a battery doorbell to keep it charged

If you already have doorbell wires, many battery doorbells can connect to them so the wires trickle-charge the battery. Ring lists 8 to 24 volts AC for its battery doorbells when wired. The safety steps in Chapter 9 still apply: turn the power off at the breaker first.

HEADS UP

### Mind the angle

If the door is set back in a corner, the doorbell may see more wall than visitor. Ring sells small angled wedges for this. Check the live view before you drill.

CHAPTER 9

# Installing a Wired Doorbell

A wired doorbell uses the thin doorbell wires already behind your old button. Those wires carry low voltage from a small box called a **transformer**, usually found near the furnace, in the basement, in a closet, or at the old indoor chime.

STAY SAFE

**Turn the power off first**

Before touching doorbell wires, switch off the breaker (or remove the fuse) for the doorbell circuit. Ring says this in its own instructions. Never connect a doorbell to 120-volt house power. Ring also notes that a qualified electrician might be required where you live, and that permits may be required for electrical work. If you're unsure, stop and get help.

## Does your transformer have enough power?

Each doorbell needs a certain amount of power, written as **volts AC (VAC)** and **volt-amps (VA)**. Both numbers are printed on the transformer. Ring lists these ranges:

| Ring doorbell | Transformer range Ring lists |
|---|---|
| Battery doorbells (when wired) | 8 to 24 VAC, 5 to 40 VA |
| Video Doorbell Wired | 10 to 24 VAC, 8 to 40 VA |
| Wired Doorbell 2K | 12 to 24 VAC |
| Wired Doorbell Plus, Wired Doorbell Pro, Wired Doorbell 2K Plus, Wired Doorbell 4K Pro | 16 to 24 VAC, 10 to 40 VA |

If your transformer is too weak, the doorbell may restart, lose features, or not charge. Ring notes that some features, such as package detection and Bird's Eye View, need more power. Ring sells a plug-in transformer and a **Plug-In Adapter** that powers some models from an indoor outlet through a thin cable, skipping the old transformer altogether.

## The basic steps

1. Finish app setup first (Chapter 7) if your model allows it; otherwise follow the app's order.
2. Turn off the doorbell's breaker.
3. Unscrew the old doorbell button and gently pull it out. Two thin wires are behind it.
4. Loosen the screws and remove the old button. Don't let the wires slip back into the wall; a piece of tape helps.

5. Attach the two wires to the screws on the Ring mounting plate or doorbell. For a doorbell, it doesn't matter which wire goes on which screw.
6. Mount the doorbell, turn the breaker back on, and wait for the light to show it's powered.
7. Finish setup in the app and press the button to test your indoor chime and your phone.

**HEADS UP**

### Some new models don't ring old chimes

Ring says its Wired Doorbell 4K Pro and Wired Doorbell 2K Plus aren't compatible with existing indoor chimes (unless the 4K Pro is powered by an Ethernet cable). Ring suggests its Chime Kit Mini instead, or a plug-in Ring Chime. Check this before you buy if you love your old ding-dong.

**FROM BILL**

### This is a perfectly good reason to call

Wired doorbells are where I'm called most. Old houses have surprises: a weak transformer, a broken wire, a chime nobody can find. If any of this makes you uneasy, call (330) 200-8042. It's usually a short visit.

CHAPTER 10

# Mounting Cameras: Where and How High

Where you put a camera matters more than which camera you buy. A good spot gives you clear faces and few false alerts. A poor spot gives you a view of the street and a phone that never stops buzzing.

## Good spots

- **Covering one entrance**: the back door, the garage door, the side gate.
- **About 7 to 9 feet up** for most outdoor cameras: high enough to be out of easy reach, low enough to see faces. Follow the height your camera's instructions give.
- **Under an eave or overhang**, out of the worst rain and direct sun.
- **Pointed across the path people walk**, rather than straight down it, so people stay in view longer.

## Spots to avoid

- Facing the street or a busy sidewalk. Every passing car becomes an alert.
- Pointed straight at the sunrise or sunset, which washes out the picture.
- Behind a window. Glass reflects the camera's night lights and blinds it at night.
- Aimed into a neighbor's windows or yard. That's both rude and, in some places, against the law (Chapter 25).

STAY SAFE

### Ladders: slow and steady

If mounting means a ladder, have someone hold it, keep three points of contact, and don't reach sideways. Set the camera up and test it on the ground first. A fall is far more costly than a service call.

CHAPTER 11

# Checking Your Wi-Fi Signal

A Ring device is only as good as the Wi-Fi reaching it. A weak signal causes slow live video, missed alerts, choppy talk and fast-draining batteries. The Ring app can tell you exactly how strong the signal is.

1. Open the Ring app, tap the menu (three lines), then **Devices**, and choose your doorbell or camera.
2. Tap **Device Health**.
3. Look at the signal strength, shown as an **RSSI** number (a measure of signal strength). It's always a negative number.
4. For a fresh reading, use **Test Your Wifi** on the same screen.

| RSSI number | What it means |
|---|---|
| 0 to -60 | Ring's best range for good performance. |
| Around -70 | Weaker. Expect slower live view and missed moments. |
| -80 and below | Too weak. Fix the signal before you blame the device. |

## Ways to make it stronger, cheapest first

1. **Restart the router.** Unplug it for 30 seconds and plug it back in. Free, and it helps more than you'd think.
2. **Move the router.** A router on the floor, in a cabinet or at the back of the house struggles. Higher and closer to the front helps.
3. **Add a Ring Chime Pro.** It plugs into an outlet inside, chimes when the doorbell rings, and also extends Wi-Fi for Ring devices on both 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz. Place it roughly halfway between the router and the doorbell.
4. **Consider mesh Wi-Fi** if several rooms have weak signal. Our *Mesh Wi-Fi* guide explains it.

PART 3

# Using Ring Every Day

Answering the door, peeking in live, looking back at what happened, and getting alerts that help instead of nag. This is where Ring starts to earn its keep.

CHAPTER 12

# A Tour of the Ring App

Ring updates its app often, so the exact look may differ a little from a friend's phone. The main pieces stay the same, and once you know them you can always find your way.

| Part of the app | What it's for |
|---|---|
| **The home screen** | Shows your devices as tiles or pictures. Tap one to see it live. Recent motion and rings appear here too. |
| **The menu (three lines, top left)** | Your way to everything else: **Devices**, settings, the plan, help, and the **Control Center**. |
| **Devices** | A list of every doorbell, camera and sensor. Tap one to open its settings, including **Device Health** (battery, Wi-Fi signal, updates). |
| **Control Center** | Ring's privacy and security hub: who has access, your two-step verification, and privacy features in one place (Chapter 25). |
| **History (event history)** | A list of every ring and motion event. With a plan, each one has a video you can replay (Chapter 15). |

TIP

### Lost in the app?

Close the app completely and open it again. You'll land back on the home screen. From there, the menu (three lines) gets you to anything in this guide.

CHAPTER 13

# Answering the Door from Your Phone

This is the heart of a video doorbell. When someone presses the button, your phone rings like a call, and you can see and talk to them without opening the door, from anywhere.

1. When the doorbell is pressed, a Ring alert appears on your phone with a sound.
2. Tap the alert. Live video of your porch opens.
3. To talk, tap the **microphone** button and speak normally. On many phones you tap it again to listen.
4. When you're done, tap the red **end** button or simply close the video.

Talking through the doorbell is called **Two-Way Talk**, and it's included free with every Ring doorbell and camera, with or without a plan.

STAY SAFE

**You never have to open the door**

That's the whole point. Ask who they are and what they need, through the doorbell. A delivery driver will leave the package; a real utility worker will have identification and won't mind you calling their company to check. If something feels off, don't open the door, and call 911 if you feel unsafe.

## When you can't get to the phone

Ring's **Quick Replies** can answer for you with a short, friendly recorded message, and can invite the visitor to leave a message. The *Ways Ring Can Make Life Easier* topic walks through setting it up.

GOOD TO KNOW

**Answering on a TV or Echo Show**

If you have an Echo Show or a Fire TV, you can see the front door on that big screen, too (Chapter 21).

CHAPTER 14

# Live View: Checking In Anytime

**Live View** lets you look through any of your Ring doorbells or cameras right now, without waiting for anyone to ring. It's free with every Ring device; no plan is needed.

1. Open the Ring app.
2. Tap the doorbell or camera you want to see.
3. Wait a moment while it connects. Battery devices may take a few seconds to wake up.
4. Use the microphone button to talk, if you'd like.
5. Close the video when you're done.

## Good everyday uses

- Checking whether a package arrived before you walk out in the cold.
- Seeing whether you closed the garage, or if the dog is napping.
- Peeking at the driveway when you hear a car door.

HEADS UP

### Live View uses battery

On a battery doorbell or camera, every minute of Live View drains the battery a little. Short peeks are fine. Leaving it open for long stretches means charging more often (Chapter 27).

CHAPTER 15

# Looking Back: History & Saved Videos

Sometimes you want to know what happened while you were out. Who left that box? Did the furnace technician actually come? That's what **event history** is for.

## What you get with and without a plan

| | Without a Ring plan | With a Ring plan |
|---|---|---|
| Alerts when someone rings or moves | Yes | Yes |
| Live View and Two-Way Talk | Yes | Yes |
| A list of events | Yes | Yes |
| Video recordings you can replay later | No | Yes, kept up to 180 days |
| Download and share a video | No | Yes |

In plain terms: Ring does not record video for you unless you pay for a plan. Ring itself answers the question "Can I record video without a plan?" with a simple "No." Chapter 22 explains the plans and their prices.

## Replaying a video

1. Open the Ring app and go to **History** (or tap a device and look at its recent events).
2. Tap the event you want. Each one is labeled with the device, the date and the time.
3. Watch it. Pause, rewind or drag along the timeline as you like.
4. To keep a copy, look for **Share** or **Download** on the event.

TIP

### Save the important ones

Recordings disappear automatically after your plan's storage time, and Ring says you lose access to all recordings if you cancel a plan. If a video matters, such as a package theft or a fender-bender, download it to your phone right away.

CHAPTER 16

# Alerts That Help Instead of Nag

Ring can send two kinds of alerts. Getting them right is the difference between loving your doorbell and wanting to throw it in the lake.

| Kind | What it means |
|---|---|
| **Ring alerts** | Someone pressed the doorbell button. These matter; keep them on. |
| **Motion alerts** | The device noticed movement. Useful, but they can come by the dozen if a camera sees the street, trees or a busy sidewalk. |

## Taming motion alerts

1. First, shrink what the camera watches with motion zones (Chapter 17). This fixes most of the noise.
2. Lower the motion sensitivity a step if small things still set it off.
3. If you have a plan, turn on alerts for people only (Chapter 19), so cars and squirrels stay quiet.
4. For a short break, use **Snooze** on that device to pause motion alerts for a while. Rings still come through.
5. To stop motion alerts from one device altogether, turn its **Motion Alerts** switch off in the device's settings. Ring alerts are not affected.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Phone settings matter too

If you get no Ring alerts at all, check your phone: Ring needs permission to send notifications. On an iPhone, look in **Settings**, then **Notifications**, then **Ring**. On Android, look in **Settings**, then **Notifications** or **Apps**, then **Ring**. Do Not Disturb and Focus modes can also silence them.

FROM BILL

### Aim for alerts you'd want to get

A good rule of thumb: if you find yourself ignoring an alert, it's set too loose. Tighten the zone or the sensitivity until each buzz is worth a glance. That's when Ring becomes peace of mind instead of noise.

PART 4

# Making Ring Yours

Motion zones, modes, smart alerts, Alexa and indoor chimes: the settings that turn a gadget into a helper that fits your home.

CHAPTER 17

# Motion Zones, Sensitivity & Privacy

A **motion zone** is the part of the picture where Ring pays attention. Anything outside the zone is ignored. Drawing good zones is the single best thing you can do to cut false alerts. Custom motion zones are free on every Ring device.

1. Open the Ring app, tap the menu (three lines), then **Devices**, and choose the device.
2. Open its **Motion Settings**.
3. Choose the option to edit **motion zones**. You'll see a still picture from the camera.
4. Drag the corners of the zone so it covers your porch, walk or driveway, and leaves out the street and the neighbor's yard.
5. Save, then walk through the area yourself to test it.

## Motion sensitivity

Near the zones you'll find a sensitivity setting. Higher catches more, including small things; lower catches less. Move it one step at a time and live with it for a day before changing it again.

## Privacy zones

Many Ring cameras also let you black out part of the picture entirely, so a neighbor's window or a public sidewalk is never recorded or shown. Look for **Privacy Zones** in the device's settings. It's a kind thing to do, and it can keep you on the right side of local rules (Chapter 25).

CHAPTER 18

# Modes: Home, Away & Disarmed

**Modes** let you change how all your Ring devices behave with one tap, instead of adjusting each camera. There are usually three:

| Mode | Typical use |
|---|---|
| **Disarmed** | You're home and going about your day. You might want indoor cameras off and fewer alerts. |
| **Home** | You're home, but want the outside covered, for example at night. |
| **Away** | Nobody's home. Every camera watches and alerts. |

You choose what each device does in each mode: whether it detects motion, records, or sends alerts. Look for **Modes** in the Ring app's menu or on the home screen, and follow the setup screens. If you have Ring Alarm, these modes also arm and disarm the alarm.

TIP

### Indoor cameras and privacy

If you have an indoor camera, set it to stop detecting motion in **Disarmed** mode. You get privacy while you're home, and protection while you're away, without remembering to unplug anything.

GOOD TO KNOW

### Ring doorbells still ring

Changing modes affects motion, not the doorbell button. Visitors can always ring you.

CHAPTER 19

# Smart Alerts & the Plan Extras

With a paid plan, Ring can tell the difference between a person, a package, a car and a swaying branch. These **smart alerts** let you choose to be told only about people, for example, which cuts the buzzing dramatically.

## What the higher plans add

Ring's top plan, **Ring Pro**, adds features built on artificial intelligence (AI), meaning the camera's software tries to understand what it sees:

- **Video Descriptions**: a short written summary of what happened, such as "a person drops off a package," right in the alert.
- **Familiar Faces** (in testing): you can name people the camera sees often, so alerts say "Mom is at the door" instead of "a person." Because of state and local privacy laws, Ring doesn't offer it in Illinois, Texas or Portland, Oregon.
- **24/7 Professional Monitoring** for Ring Alarm, where an agent responds to alarms.

FROM BILL

### Nice to have, not need to have

Smart alerts are genuinely useful if your camera sees a busy area. But plenty of people do just fine with good motion zones and no plan at all. Try the features during your free trial and keep only what you actually use.

CHAPTER 20

# Chimes Inside the House

Your phone isn't always in your pocket. An indoor chime makes sure you hear the doorbell anywhere in the house, whether or not your phone is nearby.

| Option | What it does |
|---|---|
| **Your existing chime** | Most wired Ring doorbells ring the chime you already have. Check Chapter 9 for the newer models that don't. |
| **Ring Chime** | Plugs into any outlet. Rings when the doorbell is pressed, and can sound for motion too. |
| **Ring Chime Pro** | A chime that also extends Wi-Fi to your Ring devices (Chapter 11). Ring says not to chain it to another Wi-Fi extender. |

TIP

### Hard of hearing?

Put a plug-in chime in the room where you spend the most time, and turn its volume up in the Ring app. Some people add one in the bedroom too. A flashing light on an Echo Show (Chapter 21) also helps.

## Adding a plug-in chime

1. Plug the chime into an outlet between your router and the doorbell.
2. In the Ring app, tap **Set Up a Device** and scan the QR code on the chime.
3. Follow the screens to connect it to Wi-Fi.
4. Choose which doorbells and cameras it should chime for.

CHAPTER 21

# Ring with Alexa & Echo Show

If you have Alexa, Ring works with it at no extra cost. Ring lists Alexa integration among the features every Ring device gets free.

| What you can do | How it works |
|---|---|
| **Doorbell announcements** | Your Echo speakers say "Someone is at the front door" when the button is pressed. Ring says announcements are supported in the United States. |
| **See the door on a screen** | On an Echo Show or Fire TV, say "Alexa, show Front Door" (use your device's name), and "Alexa, hide Front Door" to close it. |
| **Talk through the Echo Show** | Answer the doorbell from the Echo Show's screen and talk to the visitor. |

To connect them, open the Alexa app, find the **Ring** skill (search the skills for Ring), turn it on, and sign in with your Ring account. The *Ways Ring Can Make Life Easier* topic has the full steps. Our *Echo Show* and *Amazon Alexa & Echo* guides cover the Alexa side.

PART 5

# Plans, Sharing & Privacy

What Ring's monthly plans cost and whether you need one, how to let family help, and how to keep your cameras private and your account safe.

CHAPTER 22

# Ring Plans: Solo, Multi & Pro

Ring doorbells and cameras work without any monthly fee. A plan is optional. What it buys you is mainly **saved video**: the ability to look back at what happened.

## Free with every Ring device

- Live View, any time
- Real-time alerts when someone rings or moves
- Two-Way Talk
- Custom motion zones
- Alexa integration

## The plans, as of November 2026

In January 2026 Ring renamed its plans under the **Ring Protect** name. These are the prices Ring listed in October 2026:

| Plan | Monthly | Yearly | Covers | Highlights |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ring Solo | $4.99 | $49.99 | One device | Saved video and sharing for one doorbell or camera. |
| Ring Multi | $9.99 | $99.99 | Every device at one address | Saved video for all your devices, plus extended warranties. |
| Ring Pro | $19.99 | $199.99 | Every device at one address | Adds 24/7 Professional Monitoring for Ring Alarm, Video Descriptions, Familiar Faces (in testing) and more. |

Ring also offers add-ons, such as round-the-clock continuous recording, and a separate, much more expensive Virtual Security Guard service ($99 a month) where people watch your cameras live. Most homes don't need either.

## If you had a plan before 2026

| If you had... | It's now called... |
|---|---|
| Home Basic | Ring Solo |
| Home Standard (no professional monitoring) | Ring Multi |
| Home Standard with 24/7 Professional Monitoring | Ring Pro |
| Home Premium | Premium Legacy |

| If you had... | It's now called... |
|---|---|
| AI Pro | Ring Pro |

Ring says the renaming didn't change existing subscribers' features or add a charge for the change.

## Do you need one? Ask yourself three questions

1. **Do I ever want to look back?** If you mainly answer the door live, you may not need a plan at all.
2. **How many devices do I have?** With one device, Solo is cheapest. With two or more, Multi costs about the same as two Solos and covers them all.
3. **Do I have Ring Alarm and want professional monitoring?** Only then does Pro make sense for most homes.

> **FROM BILL**
>
> ### My honest take
>
> For one doorbell, the least expensive plan is usually plenty. Saved video is most useful when something goes wrong, like a stolen package, and at about the price of a cup of coffee a month, many people find it worth having. But it's your call, and your doorbell keeps working either way.

CHAPTER 23

# Trying, Changing or Canceling a Plan

## The free trial

When you set up a new Ring doorbell, camera or alarm, Ring usually gives a free 30-day trial of its plan, unless your address already has a subscription. Use it to see whether you actually look back at saved videos. When the trial ends, the plan features stop unless you subscribe.

## Checking what you pay

1. On a computer or your phone's web browser, go to **ring.com** and sign in.
2. Open **Account**, then **Billing History**, to see your charges.
3. Select **Plan** on the top menu to see or change your plan.

## Canceling

1. First, download any videos you want to keep. Canceling removes access to all your recordings, and Ring says they can't be restored, even if you subscribe again.
2. Go to **ring.com** and sign in.
3. Select **Plan** on the top menu.
4. Select the plan you want to cancel.
5. Confirm the cancellation.

| Good to know | |
|---|---|
| When it stops | At the end of your billing period. You keep the features until then. |
| Refunds | Ring says refunds aren't available for cancellations unless the law requires one. |
| Bought on Amazon? | If you subscribed through Amazon, the charge and the cancel button are in your Amazon account, under Memberships & Subscriptions. |

HEADS UP

### Check before a renewal

Yearly plans renew automatically. Put a reminder on your calendar a week before the renewal date so you can decide on purpose, not by surprise.

CHAPTER 24

# Sharing Access with Family

Ring lets the account owner invite other people, such as a spouse, a grown child or a trusted neighbor, to use the doorbell from their own phone, with their own Ring login. Ring says no subscription is needed to add shared users. This is one of the most valuable features for anyone who lives alone.

1. Open the Ring app and tap the menu (three lines).
2. Go to **Control Center** (or **Settings**), then **User Permissions**.
3. Tap **Invite User**, then choose **Family, friend or employee**.
4. Enter their email address and choose their permission level.
5. Send the invitation. They'll get an email and will need the Ring app and their own Ring account.

| Level | What it means |
|---|---|
| Standard | Can see live video and gets real-time alerts. The usual choice for family. |
| Advanced | Can do more, including some settings. For a spouse or someone who helps manage the system. |
| Limited | Can view, but does **not** get real-time notifications. Not the right choice if you want them alerted. |

- Only the account owner can invite people.
- Invitations are good for 14 days.
- After they accept, it can take up to 15 minutes for the devices to appear on their phone.
- Shared users can't change the device's Wi-Fi network; the owner has to do that (Chapter 28).

FROM BILL

### Agree on a plan together

Sharing works best when everyone knows what to do with an alert. Talk it through: if your daughter sees someone at your door at an odd hour, does she call you, a neighbor, or nobody? A two-minute conversation makes shared access far more useful.

## Removing someone

Go back to **User Permissions**, tap the person's name and choose the option to remove them. Do this for a former caregiver, a contractor who's finished, or anyone you no longer

want watching.

CHAPTER 25

# Privacy & Being a Good Neighbor

A camera on your house sees more than your house. A little thought keeps your own family's privacy safe and keeps the peace on your street.

## Your own privacy

- Use the **Control Center** in the Ring app's menu to review who has access and which privacy features are on.
- Turn off indoor cameras while you're home with Modes (Chapter 18).
- Review shared users once in a while and remove anyone who no longer needs access (Chapter 24).
- Saved video lives in Ring's cloud for as long as your plan keeps it. You can choose a shorter storage time in the app if you'd rather not keep it that long.

## Your neighbors' privacy

- Point cameras at your own property: your door, your drive, your yard.
- Use privacy zones to black out a neighbor's windows or yard (Chapter 17).
- Be careful about recording sound near property lines; some states have strict rules about recording conversations.
- Before posting a video of a person online, think twice. Share it with police if it's evidence; don't shame someone on social media.

## Neighbors, Search Party and community features

Ring's app includes **Neighbors**, a local feed where people share safety posts and videos, and features such as **Search Party**, which uses participating outdoor cameras to help find a lost dog. These are optional. Look for them in the Ring app's menu and Control Center, and turn on only what you're comfortable with.

GOOD TO KNOW

**Facial recognition depends on where you live**

Because of privacy laws, Ring doesn't offer its Familiar Faces feature in Illinois, Texas or Portland, Oregon. If a feature you saw advertised is missing from your app, your location may be why.

CHAPTER 26

# Keeping Your Ring Account Secure

Your Ring account opens a window into your home, so it deserves the same care as your bank login. Four habits keep it safe.

1. **Use a strong password you use nowhere else.** A password manager makes this easy; see our *Passwords & Password Managers* guide.
2. **Keep two-step verification on.** When Ring texts or emails you a code, that's your protection working. Never read that code to anyone who calls you.
3. **Keep the app and your phone updated.** Updates fix security holes.
4. **Check who has access** in Control Center every few months.

SCAM ALERT

### The "your camera was hacked" call

Scammers call, text or pop up a warning claiming your Ring camera has been hacked, then ask for payment, a gift card, or remote access to your computer to "fix" it. Ring doesn't do that. Hang up, close the window, and open the Ring app yourself. If you're worried, change your password and call me at (330) 200-8042.

SCAM ALERT

### Fake "Ring support" numbers

Searching the web for a Ring phone number can turn up fake support lines run by scammers. Get help from inside the Ring app (menu, then Help) or by typing ring.com/support yourself.

TIP

### Selling or giving away a Ring?

Remove it from your account in the app first, so the next owner can set it up, and so it's no longer connected to your home.

PART 6

# Batteries, Wi-Fi & Fixing Things

Charging, getting an offline device back, the everyday hiccups, and a quick look at Ring Alarm and sensors.

CHAPTER 27

# Batteries & Charging

Battery doorbells and cameras are wonderfully easy to install, and the trade-off is charging. How often depends on how busy the spot is, how strong the Wi-Fi is, and how cold it gets.

## Checking the battery

Open the device in the Ring app and tap **Device Health**. The battery level is shown there, and Ring will send an alert when it's getting low.

## Charging

1. Remove the battery. On many doorbells you first loosen the small security screw on the bottom with the screwdriver that came in the box. On the Battery Doorbell Plus, the Quick Release Battery Pack slides out without taking the doorbell off the wall.
2. Charge it with the cable that came in the box and a phone-style wall charger.
3. Wait until the light shows it's full. It can take several hours.
4. Put it back, and check Live View to make sure the device is back online.

> TIP
> **A spare battery means no downtime**
> Many Ring battery devices accept a spare battery pack. Keep one charged indoors and swap it in, so the door is never unwatched while you charge.

## Making a charge last longer

- Tighten motion zones so the device wakes up less (Chapter 17).
- Fix a weak Wi-Fi signal (Chapter 11). A device straining to reach the router uses more battery.
- Keep Live View peeks short.
- Connect a battery doorbell to existing doorbell wires to trickle-charge it (Chapter 8), or use a solar charger made for your model.

> HEADS UP
> **Ohio winters drain batteries**
> Rechargeable batteries don't like deep cold. In January you may charge more often, and a battery can refuse to charge if it's very cold. Charge it indoors at room temperature.

CHAPTER 28

# When a Device Goes Offline

"Offline" means the device has lost its connection to the internet. Usually it's the Wi-Fi, not the device. Work down this list in order.

1. **Is it powered?** Check the battery level or, for wired devices, that the breaker is on.
2. **Is the internet working?** Can your phone load a web page on your home Wi-Fi? If not, restart your modem and router: unplug them for 30 seconds, plug them back in, and wait a few minutes.
3. **Did the Wi-Fi change?** A new router, a new password, or a new box from the internet company all knock Ring devices offline. Reconnect with the steps below.
4. **Is the signal weak?** Check the RSSI number in Device Health (Chapter 11).

## Reconnecting to Wi-Fi

1. Stand near the device with your phone on your home Wi-Fi.
2. Open the Ring app, tap the menu (three lines), then **Devices**, and choose the device.
3. Tap **Device Health**.
4. Under **Network**, tap **Change Network** (or **Reconnect**) and follow the prompts.
5. If the device is mounted out of reach, the app may let you choose **Movement** instead of pressing the setup button: you wave in front of it to confirm.

If that doesn't work, Ring says you can simply run setup for the device again in the app and choose your network. Remember: Wi-Fi passwords are case sensitive, and a shared user can't change the network; the account owner has to.

TIP

**Replacing your router? Keep the same name and password**

If you give a new router exactly the same Wi-Fi name and password as the old one, many devices, including Ring, simply reconnect on their own. Our *Smart Device Offline?* guide explains this trick in detail.

CHAPTER 29

# Common Problems & Quick Fixes

| What's happening | Try this |
|---|---|
| No alerts on my phone | Check phone notification settings for Ring and Do Not Disturb (Chapter 16). Make sure Motion Alerts are on for that device and it isn't snoozed. |
| Too many alerts | Shrink the motion zone, lower sensitivity, or alert for people only with a plan (Chapters 16, 17 and 19). |
| Live View is slow or won't load | Weak Wi-Fi. Check Device Health and RSSI (Chapter 11). |
| Can't watch old videos | Saved video needs a Ring plan (Chapter 22). |
| Indoor chime doesn't ring | Check whether your model works with existing chimes (Chapter 9) and that the chime is turned on in the device's settings; or add a plug-in Ring Chime (Chapter 20). |
| Wired doorbell keeps restarting | Usually a weak transformer (Chapter 9). Worth a professional look. |
| Battery drains fast | Busy view, weak Wi-Fi or cold weather (Chapter 27). |
| Picture is blurry or washed out | Wipe the lens with a soft dry cloth. Check for sun shining straight in, or glass in front of the camera. |
| Night video is white or foggy | Night lights bouncing off a nearby wall, eave, cobweb or window. Move or re-angle the camera. |
| Family member doesn't get alerts | Their permission level may be Limited. Change it to Standard (Chapter 24). |

TIP

### The universal first step

Many Ring problems clear up after a restart. For a battery device, take the battery out for a few seconds and put it back. For a wired device, turn the breaker off for 30 seconds and back on. Then try again.

CHAPTER 30

# Ring Alarm & Sensors in Brief

Ring also makes an alarm system and sensors that show up in the same app. You don't need any of them for a doorbell, but a few are worth knowing about.

| Product | What it does |
|---|---|
| **Ring Alarm** | A security system with a base station, keypad, door and window sensors and motion detectors. It uses the same Modes as your cameras (Chapter 18). |
| **Water sensors** | Ring's newest Flood & Freeze Sensor ($39.99 in November 2026) and Sump Pump Monitor ($49.99) connect over Amazon Sidewalk, a low-power network shared by nearby Echo and Ring devices, and don't need an alarm base station. |
| **Smoke & CO** | Kidde smart smoke and CO alarms can be set up in the Ring app, and Ring's Smoke & CO Listener (for Ring Alarm owners) listens for your existing alarms. |

Our *Leak Sensors, Sump Pump Alarms & Water Shutoff* and *Smart Smoke & CO Alarms* guides cover these in depth.

STAY SAFE

### A listener isn't an alarm

Ring states plainly that its Smoke & CO Listener doesn't detect fire, smoke or carbon monoxide itself; it listens for a working alarm. Keep your real alarms tested and in date.

PART 7

# Help & Your Cheat-Sheet

When it makes sense to call, and the whole guide boiled down to one page.

CHAPTER 31

# When to Call Bill

This guide is meant to make you confident with your Ring, and most days it will. But you should never feel you have to wrestle alone with something frustrating. Calling for help is a smart move, not a failure. Here's when it makes good sense.

## Good reasons to call

- Installing a wired doorbell, especially in an older house, or anything with a floodlight.
- A doorbell that keeps going offline. That's usually a Wi-Fi problem worth solving properly.
- Mounting cameras up high when a ladder is involved and you'd rather not do it alone.
- Deciding whether a Ring plan is worth it for how you actually use your doorbell.
- Setting up shared access so a son or daughter far away gets alerts, and making sure they actually do.
- Taming endless motion alerts so each buzz is worth a look.
- Any time a call, email or pop-up is pressuring or frightening you about your cameras. Stop and call first.

SCAM ALERT

**Real help never cold-calls or demands remote access**

No legitimate company will call you out of the blue, claim your camera was hacked, demand payment, or insist on remote access to your computer or phone. If anyone pressures you like that, hang up and call me at **(330) 200-8042**. I'd much rather take a two-minute "is this real?" call than help undo a scam later.

## How to reach me

I'm Bill, and I help folks right here in **Portage County, Ohio** with exactly this kind of thing. Call or text **(330) 200-8042**, or book online at **billshometech.com/book**. If you reach my assistant **Sophie** on the main line, she can answer simple questions and get you on my schedule. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. With 30+ years of professional experience, there's very little about a home camera setup I haven't seen, and no question is too small.

***— Bill***

CHAPTER 32

# Your Everyday Ring Cheat-Sheet

Print this page and keep it handy. It's the whole guide boiled down to the moves you'll use most.

## Everyday moves

| I want to... | Do this |
|---|---|
| Answer the door | Tap the Ring alert, then the microphone to talk. |
| Look outside now | Open the app, then tap the doorbell or camera (Live View, free). |
| See what happened | Open History and tap an event (needs a plan). |
| Save a video | Open the event, then Share or Download. |
| Fewer motion alerts | Devices, then the device, then Motion Settings: shrink the zone (Chapter 17). |
| Pause alerts for a while | Snooze motion alerts on that device. |
| Let family see the door | Menu, Control Center, User Permissions, Invite User, Standard (Chapter 24). |
| Check battery or Wi-Fi | Devices, then the device, then Device Health. |
| Fix an offline device | Device Health, then Change Network (Chapter 28). |
| Change or cancel a plan | ring.com, sign in, then Plan (Chapter 23). |

## Write these down and keep them here

| Keep handy | Fill in |
|---|---|
| My Ring devices and names | _____ |
| My Ring account email | _____ |
| My Ring plan and renewal date | _____ |
| My Wi-Fi network name | _____ |
| Who I share access with | _____ |
| Bill's Home Tech | (330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book |

FROM BILL

### You've got this

Your Ring is there to give you peace of mind, not to add worry. Keep this guide nearby, and remember I'm one phone call away for the rest. You can't break anything by exploring, and you're not alone. — Bill, (330) 200-8042