

Smart Homes

The Internet of Things is set to disrupt the way we live and work, but for now let's focus on the "live" portion of that statement. Smart homes filled with connected products are loaded with possibilities to make our lives easier, more convenient. Imagine that you're driving home on a hot summer day. But rather than turn the air conditioner on when you get home and wait for your house to cool, you simply use your smartphone when you leave your office to tell your smart thermostat to lower the temperature. Or imagine that you're cooking dinner, and you ask Alexa, the voice assistant on the Amazon Echo, to read you today's biggest news stories so that you can focus on chopping those vegetables. There is no shortage of possibilities for smart home IoT devices, and home automation seems to be the wave of the future. Below, we've compiled a list of ways in which the IoT and house automation will change our way of life.

Smart Buildings and Smart Homes

BI Intelligence, Business Insider's premium research service, expects the number of smart home devices shipped will grow from 83 million in 2015 to 193 million in 2020. This includes all smart appliances (washers, dryers, refrigerators, etc.), smart home safety and security systems (sensors, monitors, cameras, and alarm systems), and smart home energy equipment, like smart thermostats and smart lighting. The first and most obvious benefit to smart homes is convenience, as more connected devices can handle more operations (lighting, temperature, etc.) and frees up the resident to perform other tasks. But beyond this, smart home IoT devices can help reduce costs and conserve energy. In our example above, you'd have a comfortable and cool apartment when you get home, but you could also leave your air conditioner off when you're not home, which would lower your electric bill and reduce energy consumption. Smart lights would function in a similar way. Of course, there are disadvantages, as well. Smart home devices are typically more expensive than their non-connected counterparts, so consumers would certainly feel the hit in their wallets at first. Consider that connected LED bulbs cost \$15 on average, compared to \$8 for non-connected LED bulbs. However, the cost of these connected bulbs has dropped in the last two years, so the prices of smart home IoT devices could decline even further and make them more affordable to the average consumer.

Smart House IoT Devices

Several smart home IoT devices have already hit the market and made their way into thousands of houses around the world. First we have the Amazon Echo, arguably the first and most recognizable name in this space. The device functions as a central hub for your other smart home gadgets, and its voice-activated assistant, Alexa, provides convenience that few other products can match. Amazon also offers two sister products, the Tap and the Dot. Nest, one of the more famous smart home device manufacturers, has created a Learning Thermostat that can automatically adjust temperature based on your location and uses a far-field sensor to determine the time and temperature from a distance. And thanks to a recent update, it now works with Alexa, too. The August Smart Lock provides enhanced security for the home, is easy to install, and works with Siri through the Apple HomeKit. And for smart bulbs, there's the Lixf Color 1000, which can change color as necessary, and the Philips Hue Wireless Dimming Kit for your white-light needs.

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) comfortable: _____
- 2) to create sth in your head: _____
- 3) to transport sth: _____
- 4) usually: _____
- 5) cheap: _____
- 6) about which people could disagree: _____
- 7) a central element: _____
- 8) to make corrections: _____
- 9) to decide about sth: _____
- 10) which happened not so long ago: _____
- 11) improved: _____
- 12) a producer: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

1.	the internet	automation
2.	loaded	assistant
3.	a voice	equipment
4.	a shortage	market
5.	home	of things
6.	a smart	of sth
7.	home energy	operations
8.	to handle	energy
9.	to conserve	appliance
10.	to hit	with possibilities

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) zakłócić coś	7) odpowiednik
2) wypełnione czymś	8) zmniejszyć się
3) skupić się na czymś	9) przeciętny
4) stworzyć listę	10) urządzenie
5) odciążyc kogoś	11) rozpoznawalny
6) zużycie energii	12) dorównać czemuś

Grammar corner ...

Using modal verbs, i.e. *may, might, can, could, can't, must, should, shouldn't*, this way serves the purpose of making assumptions about the past or talking about possible past scenarios. If you say that something possibly happened you say that it *may / might / could have happened*. If you say that it *must or can't have happened* you mean that you're 100% sure that it did or didn't happen. When something *should have happened* you mean that it didn't, but was necessary.

Ex. 4 Choose the best option.

1. She can't / must have stolen the money, because she wasn't even at the office.
2. I must / may have lost the report on my way here - I'm not entirely sure.
3. You should / can't have helped me when I needed you, but you decided to go out with your friends!
4. This must / might have been an accident, but we need to wait for the official investigation report to be 100% sure.
5. You shouldn't / can't have sold your shares package then, because now they would be worth millions.

GLOSSARY	
convenient	wygodny
to imagine sth	wyobrazić sobie coś
to ship sth	transportować coś
typically	zwykle
affordable	w rozsądnej cenie
arguably	zapewne
a hub	centrala
to adjust sth	dostosować coś
to determine sth	ustalić coś
recent	niedawny
enhanced	ulepszony
a manufacturer	producent
the internet of things	internet rzeczy
loaded with possibilities	dający mnóstwo możliwości
a voice assistant	asystent głosowy
a shortage of sth	niedobór czegoś
home automation	automatyzacja gospodarstw domowych
a smart appliance	inteligentne urządzenie
home energy equipment	wyposażenie energetyczne domu
to handle operations	przeprowadzać czynności
to conserve energy	oszczędzać energię
to hit the market	wejść na rynek
to disturb sth	zakłócić coś
filled with sth	wypełnione czymś
to focus on sth	skupić się na czymś
to compile a list	stworzyć listę
to free sb up	odciążyć kogoś
energy consumption	zużycie energii

a counterpart	odpowiednik
to drop	zmniejszyć się
average	przeciętny
a device	urządzenie
recognizeable	rozpoznawalny
to match sth	dorównać czemuś

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) convenient
- 2) to imagine sth
- 3) to ship sth
- 4) typically
- 5) affordable
- 6) arguably
- 7) a hub
- 8) to adjust sth
- 9) to determine sth
- 10) recent
- 11) enhanced
- 12) a manufacturer

Ex. 2

- 1) the internet of things
- 2) loaded with possibilities
- 3) a voice assistant
- 4) a shortage of sth
- 5) home automation
- 6) a smart appliance
- 7) home energy equipment
- 8) to handle operations
- 9) to conserve energy
- 10) to hit the market

Ex. 3

- 1) to disturb sth
- 2) filled with sth
- 3) to focus on sth
- 4) to compile a list
- 5) to free sb up
- 6) energy consumption
- 7) a counterpart
- 8) to drop
- 9) average
- 10) a device
- 11) recognizable
- 12) to match sth

Ex. 4

- 1) can't
- 2) may
- 3) should
- 4) might
- 5) shouldn't