



THE BEST HOME SPEAKER FOR SENIORS

THE ECHO DOT VS. THE GOOGLE HOME MINI

Amazon and Google have 95% of the home speaker market. With 70% market share, **Amazon's Echo** speakers are the most popular. The best speaker for helping you age with independence will, however, depend on your priorities and where you live. (Some capabilities are only offered in the United States at this time).

WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU?

You may find the Echo Dot a better fit if...

You live in the United States and hands-free calling for 911 is your #1 priority (requires the *Echo Connect*),

You have a hearing loss (*Best light indicator*), or

Shopping & carrying groceries is difficult (*Integrated with Amazon Prime*).

You may find Google Home a better fit if...

You don't have a compatible SmartPhone to enable voice calling features (*Google calling works with both tablet & SmartPhone set-up*)

You want a good screen-reader alternative (*Best voice recognition and online search*), or

You need hard-to-miss reminders (*Best future & recurring reminders through alarm features*).



THE ECHO DOT WITH ALEXA

✓ Handsfree calling to Family & Friends

✓ **Call 911 (in the USA only)** if add Echo Connect to home phone



Alexa calling only works with compatible SmartPhone set-up.

✓ Voice recognition OK

✗ No future or recurring alarms

✓ Best visual indicator (Blue light ring)

+/- OK Shopping list; printable

✓ Integrates with Amazon Prime for home delivery in Canada & USA



GOOGLE HOME PMINI

✓ Handsfree calling to Family & Friends

✗ **Cannot call 911** through Google Assistant

✓ Google calling works with SmartPhones or Tablets

✓ Best voice recognition & online search

✓ Best future, recurring & named alarms

✗ Poor visual light indicator (4 small lights on top)

+/- Best shopping list; no print option

+/- Integrates with Google Express (**only in the U.S.**); no perishables

A CLOSER LOOK

DO YOU HAVE WHAT YOU NEED TO MAKE THE SPEAKERS WORK?

You will need a compatible SmartPhone, tablet, iPad or iPhone to set-up your home speaker and manage your digital assistant.

THE ECHO DOT REQUIRES THE **ALEXA APP** BE INSTALLED ON...



- a SmartPhone Running Android 5.0 or higher, or
- an iPhone 6 or higher.

You can set up Alexa on tablets and computers, but if you do, you won't be able to make call. Specially, you will need:

- a Tablet running Android 5.0 or higher,
- an iPad running iOS 9.0 or higher, or
- create an online Alexa account and use a computer.

GOOGLE HOME MINI REQUIRES THE GOOGLE HOME APP BE INSTALLED ON...



- a SmartPhone or Tablet running Android 5.0 or higher,
- an iPad or iPhone running iOS 9.1 or higher.

Voice calling requires access to your contacts. Google Contacts will sync automatically with your Google Account (GMAIL) to your tablet. If you do not use GMAIL, you can export your address book into Google Contacts to enable the calling feature.

KEY DIFFERENCES

#1 Emergency Services / 911 Calling Limitations. The Echo and Google Home Speakers cannot call 911 because the call must come from your home phone or mobile phone.

But, if you live in the United States, you can buy an Echo Connect for \$35us and turn your Echo into a handsfree speaker for your home phone line. Then, when you tell Alexa to call 911, she will use your home phone and 911 will accept the call. *The Echo Connect is **not** yet available in Canada and will not work with Alexa.ca accounts.*



Please note these speakers are not designed to be emergency services and there may be times when you cannot make a call.

#2 Alexa-to-Alexa Calling. I worry about my mother when I can't reach because her phone is off-hook and I get a busy signal. (This happens frequently!) With Alexa-to-Alexa calling I can get her attention through the Echo. It gives me peace of mind! *This option not available on Google Home.*

#3 Voice Recognition & Search Skills. Google has the best voice recognition and online search abilities. She is better at responding to naturally worded requests and more complex commands. Alexa is pretty good but you need to be more careful with the language you use. They're both still learning (and will tell you so) but Alexa has more to learn.

#4 Visual Light Indicators. These make a difference for everyone – not just people with hearing loss! The Echo has a bright blue ring that's easy to see; Google Home has 4 small lights on top that are hard to see.



Lights give you visual notification of timers, alarms, or reminders. When she's taking a few seconds to process a request, the lights also let you know she heard you the first time. You don't have to get close to see if she's responding and you don't mess things up by repeating your request!

#6 Reminders through Named Alarms

Google lets name your *Alarms* and set future or recurring alarms by duration (minutes & hours) or time of day. Just say:

Hey Google, set an alarm for tomorrow at 10am. Name it 'Coffee with Sandy', or

Hey Google, set an alarm for every morning at 8am. Name it 'Take Meds'.

Alexa cannot create future or recurring alarms and cannot name alarms.

Why care given both speakers have timers and reminder features? We care because:

Timers must occur within 24 hours and cannot be used for future or recurring reminders.

Reminders only give a single, short, **easy-to-miss** alert notification. The alert does not repeat or persist like alarms do.

TIP: Never use the words "Remind me to". *These words create that easy-to-miss reminder alert. Always say "Set a timer or set an alarm for...".*

#5 Shopping & To-Do Lists.

Both speakers let you add items to your shopping and to-do lists. Both have a few quirks.

Alexa can't handle adding multiple items to a list in one command. When you say "Add bread and milk" to my Shopping List, she'll add them both as one item with one check box.

Google, however, knows when you're talking about multiple items and will list them separately, each with their own check box.

Curiously, Google does not offer a To-Do list feature; you must use a more complicated 3rd party skill like "Todoist" which takes multiple steps to add one item to the *To-Do* list.

TIP: *Alexa will let you print your lists from a computer through an online Alexa account which syncs with the Alexa app.*

#7 Voice Purchasing for Home Delivery.

Alexa integrates Voice Purchasing with Amazon Prime.

Type of Products: all items eligible for Amazon Prime in Canada and the U.S.; includes fresh food (perishables) where available in the United States.

Cost: Requires annual Amazon Prime membership subscription (At \$80/year in Canada and \$99us/year in the U.S., free shipping regardless the order size costs less than \$10/month).

Google Assistant offers online purchasing through Google Express and its merchant partners in the U.S. **Google Express is not yet offered in Canada.**

Type of Products: non-perishable items under 100 lbs. (~45 kilos)

Cost: Small order fees (\$5) or delivery charges on orders under \$25-35us.

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