

EBOOK EXTRAS: v1.0

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TAKE CONTROL OF
**APPLE HOME
AUTOMATION**

Get started with
HomeKit-compatible
smart home products

by **JOSH CENTERS**

\$14.99

What Is Home Automation?

- In short: greater control of things around your house
 - Things like switches, light bulbs, thermostats, etc.
 - Also includes connected sensors for temperature, humidity, air quality, smoke alarms, etc.
- Control or monitor them remotely — manually or automatically

Barriers to Home Automation

- Home automation isn't new - around since at least the 1970s. Popular for home theater setups for decades.
- Cost — devices traditionally very expensive to buy and install
- Complexity — often required special installation
- Security — “Will my house get hacked?”

2010s: Home Automation Enters the Mainstream

- Thanks to smartphones, tablets, and smartwatches, new, simpler products are enabled
- Nest — first mainstream smart thermostat
- Philips Hue followed soon after, with colored LED lightbulbs
- Belkin WeMo popularized smart outlets
- Problems remain: separate app for each device, no voice control *show them Hue and ecobee apps*

HomeKit to the Rescue!

- Introduced in iOS 8. Devices not available until iOS 9.
- Siri-only at first
- iOS 10 introduced the Home app, a centralized app to control home automation devices *show them the app*
- Also available in Control Center and on Apple Watch. Siri control via Apple TV and HomePod.

What Exactly Is HomeKit?

- It's a framework for developers
 - Apple's Home app isn't the only game in town
 - Alt. apps: Elgato Eve, Home (yes, there's another one), HomeDash, myHome
- It's an ecosystem for devices
 - All HomeKit devices are approved by Apple

HomeKit Advantages

- Integration: all HomeKit devices integrate with iOS, tvOS, watchOS, and HomePod. That includes Siri and Control Center.
- Interoperability: different devices from different manufacturers can work together through HomeKit
- Security: Apple vets all devices and maintains high security standards for HomeKit software
- Sharing: HomeKit makes it easy to share access with family members
- Ease of Use: about as simple as home automation gets

HomeKit Drawbacks

- Doesn't work with all devices, only those approved by Apple
 - Limited device availability
 - Because devices must be approved by Apple, this limits the pipeline
 - It also increases costs; HomeKit devices are more expensive

More HomeKit Drawbacks

- Security isn't perfect
 - Major vulnerability in late 2017 — BUT it was fixed promptly
- Doesn't work with the Mac
- Doesn't work with some advanced features (can't animate lights)
- Apple's Home app doesn't support all functions, must go to other apps

Your First Device(s)

- Look for the Works with Apple HomeKit label
- I recommend outlets or smart bulbs
 - Easy to setup, relatively cheap and risk-free, and maximum bang for buck
 - Others recommend smart switches, but they take wiring
- Consider products with broad support like Hue and Wemo
 - But both require hubs and more security headaches

Considerations

- What problem am I trying to solve?
- Will my housemates understand this?
- Will my house still work like a house?
- What if something goes wrong?

The HomeKit Hierarchy

- Page 12
- Homes
- Zones
- Rooms
- Accessories
- Services

Other Important HomeKit Concepts

- Grouping: group devices together
 - Two bulbs in a light fixture
- Scenes: group actions together
 - Example: “Good Night” — turn off or dim lights, turn up thermostat, lock the door
- Automations: perform actions automatically
 - Activate Good Night every night at 10 PM

HomeKit Hubs

- A hub is needed to control automations away from home or to create automations
- A hub can be:
 - HomePod
 - Apple TV
 - iPad
- HomeKit hubs also work as Bluetooth extenders!

Ten Commandments of Automation

- To avoid “haunted house syndrome”
- Start small
- Use automations to reduce friction
- Consider actual usage patterns
- Choose the correct triggers

- Communicate with your housemates
- Make natural automations
- Test your automations
- Adjust your automations
- Do not become overly reliant on your automations
- Do not implement frivolous automations