

THE HOMES MAGAZINE FOR MODERN LIVING

# Livingetc

April 2017 ₹150

INDIA EDITION

*All you need  
to know about*  
**Home  
Automation**

Exciting  
ideas for  
**KIDS'  
ROOMS**

## SHOPPING EDIT

- \* Wood accessories
- \* Bath tubs
- \* Fun stuff for little children

**HOMES THAT  
NURTURE**

*fun* with  
*family*

*Buyer's guide to*

# HOME AUTOMATION



Research and words/Dorothy Kikon

The Wink Hub 2

Setting up a smart home is not as complex as it seems. With the right devices, you can create a system that works for you and your family.

**T**echnology for the home is becoming smarter than ever, and it's time we play the catch-up game. Once considered a luxury reserved for the wealthy, home automation systems are becoming more accessible to a larger audience, thanks to the wide range of products and services available, and to smartphones and tablets.

Operating systems are also becoming less complex and more user friendly. Now all you need is a good Wi-Fi connection, a wireless router, a smartphone or tablet, and possibly a central controller—also known as a hub.

'Awareness of residential home automation has picked up in the last 10 years in India. Connecting appliances through a single point control is a growing trend that's leading to fully automated smart homes. The ability to control your home remotely through a mobile application helps you maintain an easier lifestyle,' says

Alok Hada, Director of Anusha Technovision, a leading Delhi-based automation solutions provider.

Cubical Labs, a Noida-based home automation company, also observes that there's a good demand for home automation in the metros, and with the growth of IOT and smart cities in India, it is bound to grow big.

While automating your home may seem daunting at first, there are smart, affordable entry points that offer high levels of functionality. With a little research and perhaps a little help from the right service provider, you can build a fairly comprehensive smart-home setup that suits your needs and your budget. Alok says, 'One of the biggest apprehensions homeowners have is that they are investing in a technology that they may find hard to use. But this fear is allayed by the simple user interface that is customised and programmed according to the client's needs.'

## What are the benefits?

### CONTROL AND CONVENIENCE

All smart devices at home can be controlled remotely via apps on smartphones and tablets. Turn on the lights and music as you arrive home, or switch off the airconditioner in your bedroom as you step out – it's all about convenience.

### SECURITY

A safe home will put your mind at ease. With smart security devices, you can ensure safety in your home with just a touch on your smartphone. Wi-Fi-enabled cameras and connected motion sensors can all be monitored from inside or outside a home via live video feed, email and text alerts.

### SAFETY

A smart home makes safety monitoring easy. Smart sensors can detect smoke, carbonmonoxide, water leaks etc, and alert you to help prevent accidents from turning into disasters.

### ENERGY SAVING

You can manage your energy costs and consumption with home automation. Programmable lights and airconditioning can help you reduce wasteful energy usage when you're not home.

### MONITORING

An automated home lets you look in on your loved ones, even when you're not at home. Cameras, keypads, automated timers, smart pet doors and alerts help you keep an eye on both people and pets.





All pictures are of a Mumbai home designed by Rajiv Saini and equipped with home automation solutions by Anusha Technovision.

Nexus 21 TV lift



## Good to know

**Map out your wiring ahead of time**  
If you're building a new home, plan your wiring from the beginning so you save time and money down the road. Earmark spots for audio, video, cable, security systems and anything else you might need in the future.

**Retrofitting solutions are possible**  
If you are renting an apartment or updating an existing residence and don't want to end up with unnecessary holes in the walls, there's good news. There are products in the market that do not require additional rewiring. For instance, Cubical has a range of switches that are designed to sit behind your switch panel while letting you control all the appliances on that panel. Smart home specialists who provide system integration services can also retrofit solutions to meet your needs.

### AUDIO-VIDEO

Home entertainment is a vital part of good living, and automating your audio-video systems makes it even better. Whether it's a family movie night or a party, you can enjoy the experience while controlling all entertainment units with one remote control. For seamless control, you could buy a smart TV, but you can also upgrade your existing TV with something like Google's Chromecast or the Apple TV. With these devices, you can stream videos from your phone or tablet, or control your TV through a smart home hub. You can even have several TVs connected – pause what you're watching in the living room and resume watching in the bedroom. Motorised TV lifts, such as the one by Nexus 21, can be easily integrated into your furniture so your TV can be hidden from view when not in use. Press a button and it emerges from your console or media unit.

Connected audio systems are another way of having music on demand wherever you are in the house. Surround yourself with in-built speakers that are discreetly mounted on walls and false ceilings.

### SHADING

'Motorized shades, which allow the homeowner to conveniently open or close shades, are increasingly considered the norm rather than the exception,' says Alok Hada. What you get is total light control at the touch of a button. Products range from roller blinds and curtain tracks to skylight blinds. In shading technology, Lutron is one of the best brands available in the market. Its simplified wiring and common communication language allows for easy integration with other smart home controls.





August smart door lock

## The next step

### TRY A STARTER KIT

One of the simplest ways to go smart is by using a starter kit. Many home automation companies sell their hubs in starter kits to get you going with a certain sub-section of home automation at a discounted price. This is a great way to test the waters without making a big commitment.

Starter kits usually come with a hub and a variety of sensors, switches or compatible third-party gadgets. There are multiple varieties designed to meet different needs, such as security and monitoring, power consumption and lighting control. For instance, the Philips Hue starter kit comes with two LED bulbs and a bridge, while the Cubical kit comes with a master device and two switches with sensors that detect the total power consumption per connected device and help in obtaining a real time energy analysis of your home.

### FIND A SMART-HOME SPECIALIST

While you could try to tackle home automation on your own, it would be a whole lot easier to hire a specialist that uses this technology everyday. Professional system integrators who offer comprehensive home automation solutions, such as Anusha Technovision, can integrate your existing systems, including your music, lighting, TV, thermostat, motorized shades and security alarms, so all are easily operable from one program or device. All of this comes at a price, but they can work within your budget. 'Home automation can be installed in new and existing homes in as quickly as one day, depending on the complexity and range of the requested functionality and device interoperability,' says Alok Hada.

### Useful contacts

Anusha Technovision: [www.anushagroup.com](http://www.anushagroup.com)  
 Cubical Labs: [www.cubical.in](http://www.cubical.in)  
 Oakter: [www.oakter.com](http://www.oakter.com)  
 Inoho: [www.inoho.com](http://www.inoho.com)  
 IFIHomes.com: [www.ifihomes.com](http://www.ifihomes.com)  
 Silvan Innovations labs: [www.silvan.co.in](http://www.silvan.co.in)  
 Sharp Node: [www.sharppnode.com](http://www.sharppnode.com)  
 Home Brain: [www.homebrain.in](http://www.homebrain.in)

[homebrain.in](http://homebrain.in)  
 Thasmai Automation: [www.thasmai.net](http://www.thasmai.net)  
 Metagan Technologies: [www.metagan.com](http://www.metagan.com)  
 eDomotics: [www.edomotics.com](http://www.edomotics.com)  
 Belkin: [www.belkin.com/in](http://www.belkin.com/in)  
 Honeywell Automation India Ltd: [www.honeywellsmarthomes.com](http://www.honeywellsmarthomes.com)  
 Philips India Ltd: [www.philips.co.in](http://www.philips.co.in)  
 Samsung SmartThings: [www.smartthings.com](http://www.smartthings.com)

# 3 of the Best

Smart home starter kits to help you get started

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Samsung SmartThings Home Monitoring Kit. Includes a hub, 2 multipurpose sensors, 1 motion sensor and 1 outlet.  
 Rs 16,895 approx, [in.mobilefun.com](http://in.mobilefun.com)



Cubical Smart Homes Starter Kit. Includes 1 Cubical Master, 1 Hex-Switch (6 appliances) and 1 Tri-Switch (3 appliances).  
 Price on request, [Cubical.in](http://Cubical.in)



Wink Security and Monitoring Kit. Includes a Wink HUB, GoControl Essential Home Security Suite and a Leviton Plug-in Appliance Module.  
 Rs 9,836 approx, [Wink.com](http://Wink.com)

