

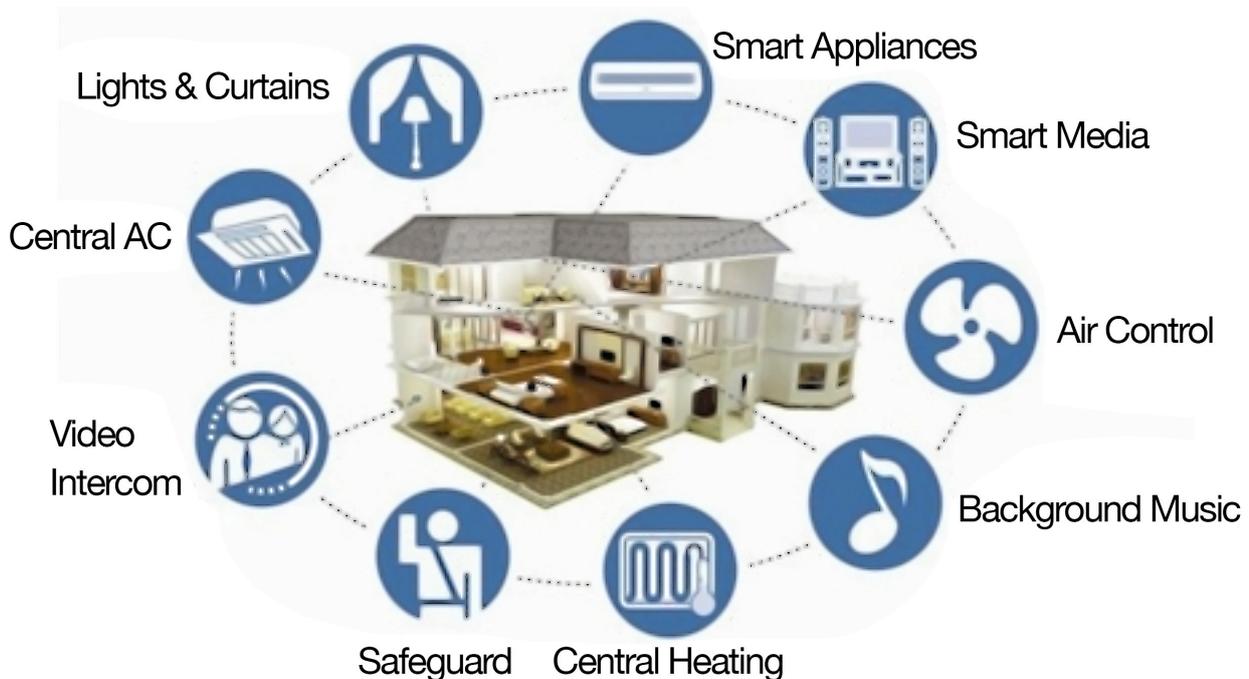
Smart Home Automation

If you have limited movement or coordination, Smart Home Automation provides an alternative way for you to easily control your environment, allowing you to remain independent.

What is a Smart Home?

A smart home is a house that has a network connecting electrical appliances and services. You can control these appliances by a central device, such as a tablet or smart phone.

What Can a Smart Home Control?



How is a Smart Home Controlled?

Smart Phone Apps

Most modern smart homes can be easily controlled by an app on your phone or tablet. This allows you to control appliances using direct touch, switch scanning, a stylus, head pointer or mouth stick.

Computers

Alternatively, your smart home could be controlled by a computer. This gives you the option to control appliances using joysticks or trackballs, a head mouse, voice activation or eye gaze.



What is Required to Set Up a Smart Home?

Sensors

Sensors measure and give feedback on temperature, light or motion detection. A smart home can trigger a command based on this information, for example turn a light on when motion is detected.

Controller

Can range from a general-purpose computer through to a dedicated automation controller. Information is received from the user, sensors and timers, and in turn, commands are relayed to the appliances.

Compatible Appliances

The equipment to be controlled by the smart home system, for example a television or air conditioner.

User Interface

Could be a smart phone, tablet, computer or even a wall panel display that allows you to control the appliances in the smart home system.

Actuators

Motorised valves, light switches and motors that activate the appliances. These can either be built-in or completely separate.

System Network

The method of transmitting data and commands within the smart home system. This could be wired or wireless, such as WIFI, radio frequency or infrared.

Internet

Smart home appliances can be controlled from any room in the house, or even when you are not at home, via the internet. For example, you could turn on the lights and heater half an hour before you return home at night.

Sensors and Timers

A smart home with sensors and timers can automatically trigger appliances, reducing the need for you to operate controls.

Scene Activation

Scenes are settings where the press of a button can trigger a number of different appliances. For example when you activate a pre-set movie scene, the lights could dim, the TV and DVD player could turn on and a movie starts playing.



Considerations

Accessibility

If you have difficulty controlling a tablet, smart phone or computer, seek advice from an occupational therapist to help you identify alternative access methods.

Appliances

What appliances would you like to be able to control? Do you want to control one or two appliances, or have a fully automated home?

Complexity

It is possible for a smart home system to be installed yourself with off-the-shelf products - depending on the complexity of the set up you want. A more complicated set up will need a home automation technician or electrician.

Cost

Is funding available for smart home automation? Consider costs for installation, ongoing technical support and troubleshooting.

Wired or Wireless

A smart home sends data and commands through either a wired or wireless system network.

Wired networks are usually more reliable, but installation may be costly, especially if it is retrofitted into your home.

Wireless networks can be easier and cheaper to install, but require a reliable internet connection, and are at risk of blind spots and interference.

The Independent Living Centre provides a free and impartial information and advisory service to help you choose the right product for you.

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