

7 Amazon Echo Features You Might Want to Disable Right Now

Take a look at some lesser-known features of Amazon's smart speaker you might want to disable.

We all love our Amazon Echo devices. They make our lives easier in so many ways. But did you know that there are some features of Alexa that you might want to disable? You might not be aware of them, but there are certain things that Alexa can do that you might not be comfortable with.

Let's take a look at some Alexa features you might want to disable right now.

1. Turn Off Amazon Sidewalk

Amazon Sidewalk is a new feature that was introduced in 2020. It basically lets your Echo device share its internet connection with other devices nearby. This can be helpful if your internet goes out or if you're in an area with spotty coverage.

However, it also means that anyone within range of your Echo could potentially use your internet connection. Should you be worried about [Amazon Sidewalk's security implications](#)? Probably not. But if you're concerned about privacy, you might want to disable it.

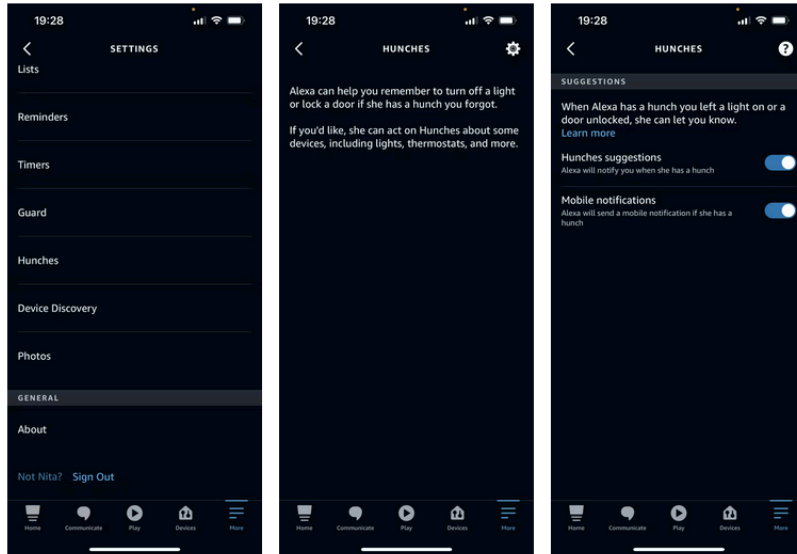
You can disable Sidewalk in the settings if you're not comfortable with that. To do so, go to the **Settings** menu from the **More** tab in the Alexa app on [iOS](#) or [Android](#) and select **Account Settings**. From there, tap on **Amazon Sidewalk** and toggle it off.

This is a new feature, so it's possible that Amazon will make some changes to it in the future. But for now, if you're not comfortable with it, it's best to disable it.

2. Turn Off Alexa Hunches

Alexa Hunches is a feature that allows your Echo device to make suggestions based on your daily routines. For example, if you usually turn on the lights in the kitchen at a certain time, Alexa might suggest that you do so even if you don't say anything.

Some people find this feature helpful, but others find it intrusive. If you'd rather not have Alexa making suggestions, you can disable the feature in the settings.

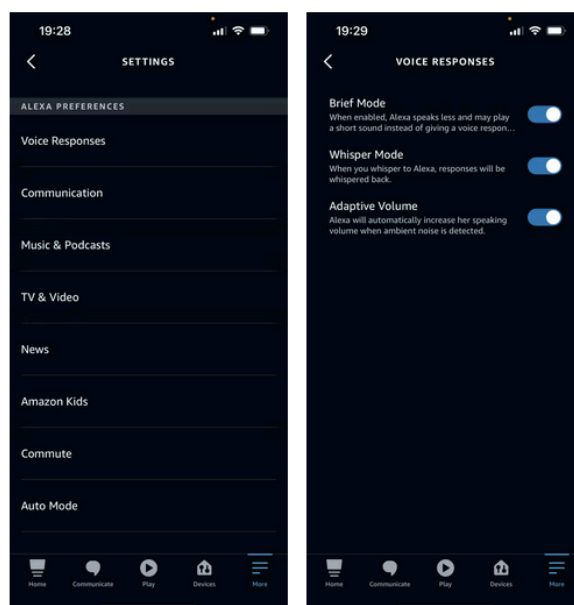


To do so, go to the **Settings** menu from the **More** tab in the Alexa app. From there, scroll down and tap on **Hunches**. From here, you can disable **Hunches suggestions** and **Mobile notifications** depending on your preferences.

Although disabling Hunches might make your Echo device less useful, it's a personal preference. If you're uncomfortable with the feature, it's best to disable it.

3. Enable Brief Mode

What's the one thing that people always complain about with virtual assistants? The fact that they talk too much! If you find Alexa's responses to be too long, you can enable Brief Mode. This will make Alexa give shorter answers that are less detailed.



To enable Brief Mode, go to the **Settings** in your Alexa app. Under Alexa Preferences, tap on **Voice Responses**. From here, you can enable **Brief Mode**.

Most people prefer the shorter responses, but if you find them too brief, you can always disable the feature and go back to the longer responses.

4. Turn Off Echo Show's Camera

If you have an Echo Show, you might not be comfortable with the fact that it has a camera. Although the camera is usually turned off, it's still there and can be a bit unnerving. From a privacy standpoint, there's really no reason to have the camera on unless you're using it.

[Placing a group video call on an Amazon Echo Show](#) can be a great way to stay in touch with family and friends. But it's best to disable the camera if you don't use that feature.

To turn off the camera, you need to toggle the switch on the top of the Echo Show. This will disable the camera without affecting any other features of the device.

5. Disable Drop In

Drop In is a feature that allows people to call your Echo device without you having to answer the call. If you have the feature enabled, anyone in your contact list you've previously approved can just call your Echo and start talking.

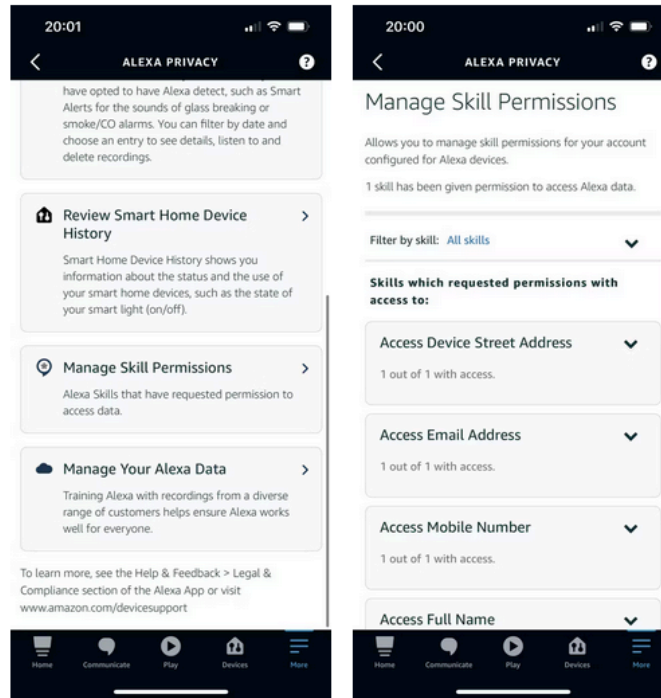
Although this might be handy in some situations, it's also a potential privacy concern. If you'd rather not have people being able to Drop In on your Echo or Echo Show, you can disable the feature in the settings.

To do so, go to the **Devices** menu in the Alexa app and select **Echo & Alexa**. Now, select which device you want and tap on **Communications** and then **Drop In**. From here, you can turn off Drop In or limit it to specific devices.

When it comes to Drop In, it's really a personal preference. If you're looking to [childproof your Amazon Echo](#) or just want more privacy, it's best to disable the feature.

6. Manage Skill Permissions

Skills are like apps for your Echo device. They allow you to do things like play games, listen to the news, and even order food. Although most skills are harmless, some of them could potentially access sensitive information. From your address to your Amazon Prime payment information, it's important to know which skills have access to what.



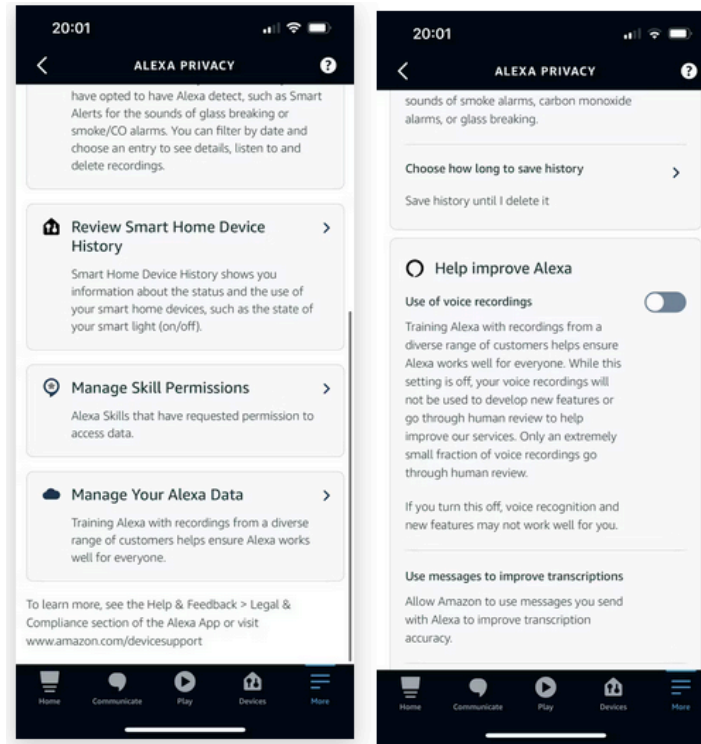
To see which skills have access to your sensitive information, go to the Amazon Alexa app, tap **More**, and go to **Settings**. From there, select **Alexa Privacy** and then **Manage Skill Permissions**. Here you'll see a list of all the skills that have access to your information. If you see a Skill that you're not comfortable with, simply toggle it off.

It's best to be selective about the skills that you allow accessing your information. If you're unsure about a skill, it's best to err on the side of caution and disable it.

7. Disable the Use of Voice Recordings

Alexa is always learning, and part of that process is collecting data about you and your activity. Amazon uses this data to help improve Alexa's accuracy. However, it states in the description of the feature that "an extremely small fraction of voice recordings go through human review" for the purpose of improving Alexa's accuracy.

The idea of a human listening to your voice recordings might be a bit unsettling. If you're uncomfortable with that, you can disable using your voice recordings to improve Alexa's accuracy.



To do so, go to the Amazon Alexa app and select **Settings** from the **More** tab. From there, go to **Alexa Privacy** and then tap on **Manage Your Alexa Data**. Under Help improve Alexa, disable the **Use of voice recordings**.

It's important to note that disabling this feature will not delete your voice recordings. Amazon will still have access to them, but they will not be used to help improve Alexa's accuracy.

Get Informed About Your Privacy

These are just a few of the ways that you can make your Amazon Echo more secure. It's important to be informed about your privacy settings and decide for yourself what you're comfortable with.