

Review: Schlage Touchscreen Deadbolt lets you in without a key

June 6 2013, by Jim Rossman



As a child, I watched "The Jetsons" on TV every Saturday morning. I wasn't as enamored of the flying cars as I was the push-button home automation.

Don't get me wrong - I'm more than ready for my flying car, but for the past week I've been trying out the Schlage Touchscreen Deadbolt with Alarm. It's a game-changer.

It's a deadbolt for your doors that operates traditionally with a key but that you also can [lock](#) and unlock by entering a four- to eight-digit numeric code. For \$199, you too can have a door that opens at the touch of your [fingertip](#).

The Touchscreen Deadbolt is available wherever locks are sold, including Amazon and at some Best Buy and Lowe's stores.

Installing the Touchscreen Deadbolt is not difficult if your door is already cut for a deadbolt. If you've never had a deadbolt, you'll need to get the proper holes drilled first.

The Touchscreen Deadbolt fits doors with a 1 1/2- or 2 1/8-inch-diameter hole. If you have the smaller hole, as I did, you'll have to remove a round spacer.

Attaching the Touchscreen Deadbolt to the door took about 10 minutes, and the only tool needed was a Phillips screwdriver.

Because the locking mechanism uses a motor to open and close, it's very important that your door is aligned perfectly with the strike plate on the door frame. If the bolt does not line up with the strike plate, you could damage the lock when the motor engages.

A pretty extensive section of the installation guide covers adjusting your door so the bolt aligns correctly.

The deadbolt runs on four AA batteries that should last a year.

Schlage recommends you change the batteries when you change them in your smoke alarms. If the batteries die, you can still open the door with a key.

There's only one key included in the box. I think if you're going to spend \$200 on a deadbolt, the least Schlage can do is save you a trip to get another key made.

Once the lock is installed, you can program in your own codes. You can have up to 30 codes, which take about 10 seconds to add or remove. To add or remove codes, you'll need the master program code, which is on a sticker on the instruction book and also inside the lock casing.

To open the lock using the keypad, you touch the Schlage logo button on top and then punch in your code.

Once inside, you manually close the deadbolt.

If you're outside leaving the house, once you close the door, simply press the Schlage logo button and the door will lock.

The Touchscreen Deadbolt is ANSI Grade 1, which means it has the highest rating for residential security.

There's an anti-pick shield to prevent tampering. There's also a handy 30-second auto-lock setting that locks the deadbolt 30 seconds after you open it. If you're forgetful, you may never leave your door unlocked again. The auto-locking is off by default but is very easy to enable.

The Touchscreen Deadbolt also has an alarm with several modes. You can have the alarm chirp when the door is opened or have an alarm sound when the lock senses movement, like someone trying to force your door open or tamper with the lock. There are several sensitivity settings

so you can minimize false alarms.

The alarms associated with this Touchscreen Deadbolt are audible only and do not connect with or activate any home alarm system you may have.

Finally, if you have a Nexia Home Intelligence system, the Touchscreen Deadbolt can communicate with it. You can lock and unlock the door remotely, set new lock codes and even use a smartphone app to set a schedule for when certain codes are active.

The Nexia system can also alert you when an alarm is triggered on the deadbolt or when certain codes are entered at the lock.

I didn't review the Nexia system.

The Schlage Touchscreen Deadbolt with Alarm is just about the slickest and most useful feature you could add to your front or back door. Just imagine never being locked out of your home again.

The Touchscreen Deadbolt makes me smile every time I open or lock my door.

SCHLAGE TOUCHSCREEN DEADBOLT WITH ALARM

-Pros: Simple to install. Easy to program. Never lock yourself out again.

-Cons: Should come with more than one key.

-Bottom line: This so feels like the future. Every house should have one of these. Mine will from now on.

-Price: \$199

-On the Web: schlage.com

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Citation: Review: Schlage Touchscreen Deadbolt lets you in without a key (2013, June 6)
retrieved 8 May 2024 from
<https://phys.org/news/2013-06-schlage-touchscreen-deadbolt-key.html>

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