

15 awesome 'Google Home' tricks

July 14 2017, by Marc Saltzman, Usa Today



Whether you already own one or have thought about it, you probably know Google Home (\$129) is one of those popular voice-activated personal assistants for the home.

After saying the wake words "OK, Google" (or "Hey Google"), ask a question or give a command, and you'll hear a human-like female voice respond from its clear speaker—whether you want to hear a specific song, set a timer for the oven, or control your smart devices in your

home (such as a Wi-Fi-enabled thermostat).

But you already know all this, you say?

The following is a handful of lesser-known Google Home features, including a few tips and tricks, and hidden Easter Eggs.

Google Home can help you remember where you left things. Say something like "Ok Google, remember my passport is in the top drawer." When you need it in the future, ask "OK Google, where's my passport?" and it will tell you where it is, and what date you asked it to remind you.

Funny sounds. Want to entertain the kids? Google Home can play you recordings of animal noises and vehicle sounds. For example, ask what a horse or train sounds like. Google will sing for you, too! Simply say "Hey Google, sing a song" or "OK Google, serenade me," and you'll hear the assistant belt out a ditty. Ask it to do it again and it'll likely be a different tune. You can also ask it to drop a beat if you want to rap on top: say "OK Google, beatbox."

Play that song. Speaking of music, Google Home will find a song for you—even if you don't know the title. For example, say "Ok Google, play that song that says 'passionate from miles away'" and it will play Drake's Passionfruit. Your personal assistant can also be an instrument tuner; if you have a guitar on your lap, say "Hey Google, start an instrument tuner" and it will ask what musical note you want to hear.

Get flight prices ASAP. Say something like "OK Google, how much does it cost to fly from Los Angeles to New York today, returning Monday?" and you'll hear the lowest roundtrip cost. It can keep track of the cheapest flights for those dates and even email you a summary to your Gmail account.

Play games with Google Home. Say "OK Google, Mad Libs" ("the world's greatest word game") or "Hey Google, play Lucky Trivia." Expect more games to be added over time.

Personalize. You might've heard Google Home can detect different voices in your home. Therefore, if you ask how long it'll take to get to the office this morning, you'll hear a different response than if your partner asks the same question.

Shortcuts. Did you know you can create custom shortcuts for long phrases you commonly ask? For example, instead of "Hey Google, turn off all the lights in the house," you can say something like "OK Google, good night." To create a shortcut, open the Google Home app on your smartphone, enter Settings, and you'll see "Shortcuts" under "More" settings.

Google Home helps with homework. You can ask math questions ("OK Google, what's the square root of 729?"), get history help ("OK Google, who founded the United States?") or learn geography facts ("OK Google, what's the capital of India?"). You can even ask how to spell something, such as "OK Google, how do you spell 'emancipation'?" Try something trickier like "OK Google, what's 'quantum theory'?" or "Ok Google, search for monkey facts."

Weather forecasts. You likely know you can ask for weather information, but you can also for multi-day forecasts, too, in any city. For example, say "OK Google, "what will the weather be like over the next 5 days in Kingston, Jamaica?"

Voice volume. You can adjust Google Home's volume by swiping your finger on top of the unit, but you can also use your voice to change volume. Say something like "OK Google, volume at 50%," if you're not near the speaker.

Random. Google Home has a Magic 8-ball, of sorts. Say "OK Google, Crystal Ball" and ask a yes or no question.

Get organized. Google Home lets you access your calendar by simply asking for info like "OK Google, what meetings do I have today?" But you can also add events to your calendar using Google Home, too, such as asking "Ok Google, add dinner with Kellie tomorrow at 8 PM to my calendar."

My day. When you wake up, say "OK Google, tell me about my day," and you'll hear the date and time, weather, calendar events, and news. You can also change where you get your news from by opening the Google Home app and selecting desired sources.

Jetsons skills. If you own a Roomba, you can now initiate the vacuum cleaner using your voice. After you pair your Roomba with Google Home, say "Ok Google, ask Roomba to start cleaning." The future is here!

©2017 USA Today

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: 15 awesome 'Google Home' tricks (2017, July 14) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-07-awesome-google-home.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.