

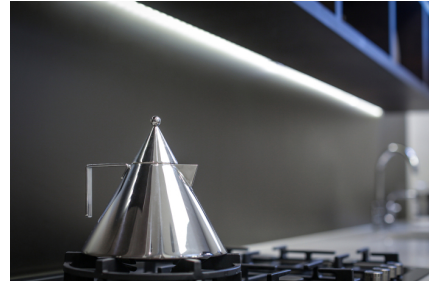


DAILY SHOUTS

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A SMARTER SMART HOME

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON ALDEN/BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY

Much progress has been made in the field of “smart” household appliances. The latest connected devices can anticipate and assist, even understand. They blink in pleasant, informative ways. Many can dance. They talk to one another and, after you go to work, will continue talking behind your back. The objects get to know you better than you know yourself. In fact, they will stop at nothing in pursuit of your total well-being. Here are a few of the more interesting recent breakthroughs:

LIGHTING: Smart lighting listens for conversational tone, knows the time of day, and adjusts for acne. The lights also change color based on physiology. Scrunch up your face and they’ll turn red. Laugh and disco lights will flash. Stop taking chances and they’ll turn yellow. Cry and disco lights will flash. With its body-heat sensors, smart lighting even intuits the difference between never-leading-to-sex cuddling and straight-into-sex cuddling.

REFRIGERATOR: By scanning its contents and sending recipes to your phone, the smart fridge helps you to become a better chef and more responsible eater. It knows when you’re standing with the

door ajar, bolting down cheese, and, rather than making you feel guilty, the smart fridge suggests finding crackers, schmearing them with the red-pepper jelly your parents brought back from Sedona, taking a seat, and savoring things for once in your life. The smart fridge can also help you to save money. For example, not everyone enjoys capers, yet caper purchase has become an adult rite of passage. The fridge may suggest that you stop buying a new jar every week and invest in some health insurance instead.

TOASTER: Never burns the bread, unless you're hungover and have been hoodwinked into thinking that carbon—carbon!—will help counteract the massive amounts of poison you ingested. The toaster explains, in plain English, what is accomplished by pressing the “bagel” button. What's more, the toaster explains this every single time, in a boisterous voice, which tests have shown can dramatically reduce your bagel consumption.

SMELL DETECTOR: Senses not just smoke and carbon monoxide but many things that humans can't smell. Cancer, for example. Excess cumin. An oncoming heart attack. Infidelity. How? Extramarital-sex sweat has a distinctive pH. As does your babysitter's breath when she's lying about something as innocuous as screen time, or the fact that she had to put your toddler's arm back in its socket after a trampoline incident at KidVille. Pass anything under it and receive a detailed analysis: a plate of five-day-old chicken, a book-club selection, or the succulent that's either alive, dead, or in some sort of succulent purgatory.

CLOSET: Helps coordinate the week's outfits, sets aside garments for dry cleaning, and offers a complete wardrobe overhaul if you change gender. If you return home at some odd hour after a business trip, the closet will announce whether any burglars are hiding inside it. There's no need to open all the doors like a frightened child! The smart closet even remembers what you wore the last time you hung out with those biannual acquaintances. Hint: your fancy shirt.

DRILL: Works like an ordinary drill, except for one new feature: a button that makes it scream, “I can’t focus with you staring at me like that!”

THERAPY OBELISK: A shoebox-sized, glowing, caring, dancing, truth-speaking hearth of emotional wisdom. For couples, the obelisk acts as a mediator, promoting the four-step L.O.V.E. technique (Listen, Observe, Validate, Engage). And L.O.V.E. demands W.O.R.K., the name of its four-step punishment system (Wail, Obstruct, Remove, Kill). All the obelisk wants is to help. That’s all! But some relationships are extra tough. Let’s say that the couple has mastered listening and observing, but is having trouble validating. The Obelisk wails until both parties have corrected their behavior. This usually works. For singles, the Therapy Obelisk becomes a confidant, guiding you on a surefire path toward self-actualization. Is compatible with Tinder, Grindr, OkCupid, Match.com, and whatever dating app they invent next.

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