HUNTERHUM

INDEPENDENT PRODUCT GUIDE

FREE EDITION

Smart Home Starter Kit

Plan your first smart home in the right order — on a budget you control — before you spend a single dollar on devices.

Inside this edition

- ✓ The Main Setup Checklist — foundation first, then first wins, comfort, and automation
- ✓ The Budget Worksheet — a fill-in planner with Starter / Mid / Premium planning tiers
- ✓ Buy In This Order — the 6-step priority sequence that prevents overspending
- ✓ Your First Weekend Plan — a realistic two-hour starting session

This free edition is an excerpt of the complete HunterHum Smart Home Starter Kit. It contains no product prices and no affiliate links — every figure is a planning estimate, and every price prompt points you to hunterhum.com to check the current price.

How to use this kit

Most smart homes fail the same way: a box of discounted gadgets arrives before anyone has checked the Wi-Fi, chosen a platform, or thought about what should work with what. This kit reverses that order. Work through the checklist first, fill in the budget worksheet second, and only then start shopping — one room at a time.

What you need

- A phone or tablet with your router's admin app (or its login details from the sticker on the router).
- Thirty quiet minutes for the Phase 0 foundation checks — they save hours later.
- A rough total budget in mind. The worksheet on page 5 turns it into per-device numbers.

The 6 rules of a smart home that just works

- **Fix the Wi-Fi first.** Every smart device is only as reliable as the network under it. No device purchase outranks a coverage problem.
- **Pick one platform before you buy.** Alexa, Google Home, Apple Home, or SmartThings — choose the ecosystem your household will actually talk to, then buy devices that support it.
- **Prefer Matter and Thread for new devices.** They are the current cross-brand standards, so today's purchase keeps working if you change platforms later.
- **Buy in priority order, not sale order.** A cheap device you did not need is not a saving. The sequence on page 6 exists for this reason.
- **Finish one room before starting the next.** A complete room teaches you what your household actually uses; a half-done house teaches you nothing.
- **Label and document as you go.** Name devices by room and purpose (“Kitchen Ceiling”), and keep one note with your hub location and network details.

Before you start —

About the dollar figures: every dollar amount in this kit is a **planning estimate, not a current price** — use it to size a budget, then check the current price before buying. Prices change frequently and vary by retailer, bundle, storage/size variant, and region.

© 2026 HunterHum LLC · hunterhum.com · An independent HunterHum publication

The Main Setup Checklist

Four phases, in order. Do not skip Phase 0 — it is unglamorous and it is where reliable smart homes are actually made. Tick items off as you complete them.

Phase 0 — Foundation (before any device)

- ☐ Walk each target room with your phone and note the Wi-Fi signal; run a speed test in the room farthest from the router.
- ☐ Move the router to a central, elevated, unobstructed spot if coverage is weak — before considering any new hardware.
- ☐ Confirm your router broadcasts a 2.4 GHz network (most smart devices use it) and that you know its exact name and password.
- ☐ Choose your platform: Alexa, Google Home, Apple Home, or SmartThings. Write it here: _____
- ☐ Check whether your chosen platform needs a hub for the devices you want, and where that hub will physically live.
- ☐ Start one inventory note (paper or phone): network name, hub location, and a line for every device you add.
- ☐ Decide your total starter budget and write it on the worksheet (page 5) before looking at any product page.

Phase 1 — First three wins

- ☐ Smart lighting in the room you use most — bulbs or a switch, grouped and named by room in your platform app.
- ☐ One voice assistant speaker or display where hands are busiest (usually the kitchen or living room).
- ☐ Entry visibility: a video doorbell or one well-placed camera covering the main entrance.
- ☐ Create your first two routines: a “Good morning” and a “Good night” routine using only the devices above.
- ☐ Add every device to your inventory note, with the room and the date installed.

Phase 2 — Comfort and savings

- ☐ Smart thermostat — after confirming your HVAC wiring has a C-wire or an adapter plan (see the full kit's thermostat worksheet).
- ☐ Smart plugs on two “dumb” devices you already own (a fan, a lamp, a coffee maker on a timer).
- ☐ Water leak sensors under the kitchen sink, behind the washing machine, and near the water heater.

© 2026 HunterHum LLC · hunterhum.com · An independent HunterHum publication

- ☐ Contact or motion sensor on the main door or hallway to trigger lighting automatically.
- ☐ Review your platform app's energy or usage reports and adjust one schedule based on what you see.

Phase 3 — Automate and refine

- ☐ Build an “Away” routine: lights simulate presence, cameras arm, thermostat sets back.
- ☐ Tune notifications — cameras and doorbells should alert on people and packages, not every passing car.
- ☐ Set up voice control names the whole household can remember; rename anything nobody can say naturally.
- ☐ Test every automation with a household member who did not set it up. If they can't use it, simplify it.
- ☐ Schedule a 15-minute monthly review: firmware updates, dead batteries, routines nobody uses anymore.

© 2026 HunterHum LLC · hunterhum.com · An independent HunterHum publication

The Budget Worksheet

Fill this in before you open a single product page. For each category, pick the tier that matches your total budget, write your own estimate in the worksheet, and let the totals tell you whether the plan fits — before emotion and sales banners get a vote.

Planning tiers by category

Ranges below are per-device **planning estimates, not current prices** — they exist so a beginner can size a realistic budget. Actual prices move constantly.

Category	Starter	Mid	Premium	What the tiers change
Voice assistant speaker/display	$30–60	$70–130	$150–250	Screen size and sound quality
Smart lighting (per room)	$40–80	$90–160	$180–350	Bulbs vs. switches, colour, hub quality
Video doorbell	$60–100	$120–180	$200–300	Resolution, battery vs. wired, AI detection
Security camera (each)	$30–60	$70–120	$150–300	Indoor vs. outdoor, local storage, night vision
Smart thermostat	$90–140	$150–200	$230–300	Sensors for extra rooms, learning features
Smart lock	$110–160	$170–230	$250–330	Keypad style, fingerprint, auto-lock
Robot vacuum	$180–280	$300–500	$550–900	Mapping, self-empty dock, mopping
Smart plugs & sensors (starter set)	$40–70	$80–130	$150–220	Count of plugs, sensor types included

Remember —

About the dollar figures: every dollar amount in this kit is a **planning estimate, not a current price** — use it to size a budget, then check the current price before buying. Prices change frequently and vary by retailer, bundle, storage/size variant, and region.

Your worksheet

One row per planned purchase. “Priority” uses the sequence on the next page (1 = buy first).

Device / category	Room	Priority (1–6)	Qty	My estimate ($)	Checked price ✓

© 2026 HunterHum LLC · hunterhum.com · An independent HunterHum publication

Device / category	Room	Priority (1–6)	Qty	My estimate ($)	Checked price ✓

My totals: Devices subtotal $ _____ + Hub / network gear $ _____ + Extras (mounts, batteries, cables — allow ~5%) $ _____ = **Year-1 total $ _____**

© 2026 HunterHum LLC · hunterhum.com · An independent HunterHum publication

Buy In This Order

The priority sequence, in short. Each step makes the next one work better — and each is a natural stopping point if the budget runs out.

Order	Buy	Why this position
1	Network fixes (router placement or coverage)	Everything else depends on it; costs the least per unit of reliability.
2	Platform anchor (speaker/display or hub)	Gives every later device one app and one voice to answer to.
3	Lighting in the main room	The highest-use, most visible win; teaches the household the system.
4	Entry security (doorbell or camera)	Protects the home and delivers daily value through alerts.
5	Thermostat and plugs	Where the measurable savings live; pays part of the kit back over time.
6	Convenience layer (lock, robot vacuum, sensors)	Wonderful devices — after the foundation can support them.

Check the current price before you buy —

This kit prints no prices on purpose: they would be stale within weeks. For each category above, HunterHum maintains product pages and buying guides at **hunterhum.com** with current retailer pricing, the specs that matter, and honest “worth it or skip” verdicts. Check the price there, write it on your worksheet, and then decide.

Your first weekend plan (about two hours)

- ☐ Hour 1: Complete Phase 0 — Wi-Fi walk-through, router placement, platform choice, inventory note started.
- ☐ Hour 2: Install the platform anchor and your main-room lighting; name everything by room.
- ☐ Finish: Create the “Good morning” and “Good night” routines, and test them once each.
- ☐ Write next weekend's single goal here: _____

Want the complete kit?

The full edition adds the complete budget planner with a total-cost calculator, setup checklists for five rooms (living room, kitchen, bedroom, entry/security, outdoor), the full compatibility matrix (Matter / Thread / Zigbee / Z-Wave / Wi-Fi across Alexa, Google Home, Apple Home, and SmartThings), and fill-in device-pick worksheets for robot vacuums, smart locks, cameras, lighting, thermostats, and video doorbells. Details at **hunterhum.com**.

© 2026 HunterHum LLC · hunterhum.com · An independent HunterHum publication

Disclosure: HunterHum is reader-supported. When you buy through links on hunterhum.com, we may earn an affiliate commission at no extra cost to you. This kit itself contains no affiliate links and no live prices — where it points you to check a price, it points to product pages on hunterhum.com, where current retailer pricing is shown.

The Smart Home Starter Kit is an independent publication of HunterHum LLC, published under the HunterHum "Independent Product Guide" banner. It is not affiliated with, endorsed by, or sponsored by any device manufacturer or retailer, and no manufacturer reviewed or approved its contents.

© 2026 HunterHum LLC · hunterhum.com · An independent HunterHum publication