



Smart Technology Makes for Smart Hosting

Imagine this: Your guests walk up to your property and key in their lock code. This action automatically turns on the interior lights and raises the heat to a comfortable 68 degrees ... and maybe some nice background music clicks on, for good measure.

This is not a futuristic scenario. It is very much within reach utilizing smart technology. Smart Technology can enhance any home, but there is no better place to test its mettle than in a short-term rental property -- particularly if you are an off-premise owner. Smart technology can assist you and your guests with comfort, convenience, economy and -- most importantly -- security.

Smart devices are now accessible to everyone and can easily be added to enhance any home. Here are examples of smart technology devices and how they relate to short-term rental properties:

SmartLocks: Smart locks provide a huge enhancement to your AirBnb. In this age of social distancing, most renters desire contactless check in. At this point, lock boxes and keys under the mat feel positively last millennium. Even push-button locks without exclusive check-in codes present security risks -- which are worrisome to most renters. Each renter should feel confident that they, alone, have access to the rental property. So, we recommend assigning each guest the last four digits of their cell number as a check in code. It is easy for a guest to remember and lets him or her know that you care enough to safeguard their stay. These codes can be assigned remotely using an application on your smartphone. Many apps even offer direct AirBnB calendar integration, enabling hosts to seamlessly assign exclusive lock codes to guests. Smart locks can be set up to alert you when guests are coming and going, and ditto for your cleaning staff. Some top-rated locks are [August Home](#), [Schlage Sense](#) and [Kwikset](#).

WiFi Security Cameras: Worried about parties or extra guests? Want to keep tabs on the coming and goings of your cleaning staff or maintenance professionals? Then a security camera is a great addition. For obvious reasons, security cameras are only allowed outside your property and you must disclose their presence on your AirBnB listing. That being said, mount the cameras in inconspicuous locations, so they are not tampered with and so that your guests do not feel like they are under constant surveillance. Most cameras are inexpensive and easy to install and are visible from an application on your smartphone. Footage is typically free for a 24-hour period, however many apps will charge for smart alerts or if you wish to be able to access footage from previous days. Most cameras take only minutes to install and cost about \$100 per camera. Some popular brands are [Logitech](#), [Ring](#) and [Nest](#).

Noise Sensors: Do you own a condo or apartment unit with high-maintenance neighbors? Do you want to make sure no wild parties are occurring on your watch? [Noise-level monitoring devices](#) have come down in price and are an unobtrusive way to keep tabs on guests. Nip noise problems in the bud, before they occur, and cut down on noise-related complaints. Just letting your guests know in your description that you have a noise monitor on the premises is a great deterrent.

Smart HVAC Systems: A smart heating and cooling system is something you need to plan for -- however most newer systems incorporate this technology. A system like this will allow you to raise or lower the temperature between guests, or turn up the heat for a guests' impending arrival, so guests do not have to enter a chilly property. You can also set minimum and maximum temperatures. While this technology is not a must-have, it can certainly help you manage your energy bills and lower your costs during unoccupied stints.

SmartLights: Almost any light can be turned into a smart light with the addition of a Wifi bulb. [Apple](#) makes smart bulbs, and even [Ikea](#) makes low-cost smart lighting. SmartLights may not be something your guests are able to control (see next bullet point), but will enable you to set lights based on timing or daylight, ensure lights are turned off when guests leave and allow you to set lighting scenes for guest entry. If smart bulbs are not an option due to older fixtures, consider wifi-enabled switches and outlets by [Lutron](#). They can turn virtually any device into a smart device, from coffee makers to AC units. The possibilities are endless!

Electronic Personal Assistants: Voice-enabled personal assistants have become commonplace in most homes. They are a great way for guests to be able to control some of your smart technology using simple commands like, "[Alexa](#), dim the lights" or "[Siri](#), play some jazz." Just be aware that some guests may not like the presence of a personal assistant in the house, such as an Amazon Echo or Apple HomePod, and may choose to turn the device off. That can be problematic if you are using this as your main hub, so keep this in mind during setup.

QR Codes: QR codes can be scanned from almost any smart phone and can be used for many applications. Post a QR code for easy guest WiFi log in. Or place QR codes in your home anywhere more in-depth instructions are needed, (i.e. how to use the washing machine, a link to your local guidebook, etc.) QR codes can be created [free of charge](#) and can link to any web page you create. The possibilities are endless!

You know what else is smart? Free products for your guests! [Free Products for Hosts](#) is a great way to introduce your guests to an amazing array of new products, curated just for them. Best of all, these high-quality products are free for hosts. [Sign up here](#).