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## 'Alexa, turn on the shower': Smart devices have come for the bathroom

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 **1 of 6** | The U by Moen Shower 2-Outlet Digital Shower Controller allows shower control from voice, phone or controller. (Courtesy of Moen)

By [Lindsey M. Roberts](#)

*The Washington Post*

One of the last places you might expect to talk to Alexa is the bathroom. And yet this most private of rooms is becoming smarter, with everything from voice-activated mirrors to aromatherapy shower heads.



*The U by Moen Shower 2-Outlet Digital Shower Controller allows shower control from voice, phone or controller. (Courtesy of Moen)*

“Alexa, turn on the shower” is a command made possible by the [U by Moen Shower 2-Outlet Digital Shower Controller](#) in beige or black (starting at \$664 with required thermostatic digital shower valve at [amazon.com](#)). Recommended by designer Steve Kadlec, founder and principal of Kadlec Architecture and Design in Chicago, the tool allows shower control from voice, phone or controller. Set a time for your shower, start and pause to control water use, and control the temperature. It’s also available with four outlets.



*Simplehuman's Sensor Mirror Hi-Fi Makeup Mirror has five-times magnification and is Alexa-enabled. (Courtesy of Nordstrom)*

[Simplehuman's Sensor Mirror Hi-Fi Makeup Mirror](#) (\$300 at nordstrom.com) has five-times magnification for makeup application or shaving. "I just love that it turns on upon approach and simulates natural sunlight," says Tracy Morris, an interior designer in McLean, Virginia. "In this latest version, you can apply your makeup and complete other tasks in the room with Alexa."



*Delta's Zura Single Handle Touch2O Vessel Bathroom Faucet is hands-free and, thus, germ-free. (Courtesy of The Home Depot)*

Casey Hardin, a North Carolina-based designer for Decorist, recommends hands-free (and thus, germ-free) faucets, such as [Delta's Zura Single Handle Touch2O Vessel Bathroom Faucet](#) (starting at \$38 at homedepot.com). Once only for commercial bathrooms, these faucets are making their way into homes. Turn water on and off manually with a light touch to the spout or handle or by placing hands near the faucet. It uses 20% less water than industry-standard faucets.



*Toto's Washlet C100 Electric Bidet Seat has a wireless remote that adjusts water pressure, temperature and position. (Courtesy of Toto)*

A popular toilet in Japan, the Toto Neorest, has a “heated seat, automated controls, bidet and memory sensors to provide a customized experience,” says Kadlec. And although Kirsten Gable, a kitchen and bath designer at Maryland-based Anthony Wilder Design/Build, has ordered the new Toto Drake Washlet+ S500E toilet for projects, she knows the \$2,035 cost can be prohibitive. The Drake features rear and front wash, a deodorizer, adjustable water temperature and a heated seat, as well as a super-effective flush.

However, “Toto offers simpler models for less,” she says, including the [Washlet C100 Electric Bidet Seat](#) (starting at \$366 at [homedepot.com](#)). A wireless remote adjusts water pressure, temperature and position. The seat is heated, and the lid closes softly. The seat also includes a warm air dryer and air deodorizer.



*The MAXOAK UV Toothbrush Sanitizer Case is a portable toothbrush sanitizer. (Courtesy of MAXOAK)*

Sticklers of cleanliness, rejoice: A portable toothbrush sanitizer is now available to sterilize toothbrushes between uses. The [MAXOAK UV Toothbrush Sanitizer Case](#) (\$30 at [maxoak.net](#)) “is a really convenient way to help keep it germ free and it only take three minutes,” says Greg Coccaro, co-founder of the home-goods store Beam in Brooklyn.

Because smart tech in the bathroom can quickly get pricey — smart toilets run up to around \$17,000 — Kadlec recommends keeping costs down elsewhere. Update the throne room by cleaning the tile and grout, replacing shower curtains with glass panels and finding a large-format porcelain or ceramic tile for big impact on the floor. Also consider installing affordable heated floor mats under the tiles, Coccaro says. He also recommends paint and artwork, specifically warm hues to bring out warm tones in the skin. Small, relatively inexpensive changes leave more in the budget for smart upgrades.