

Alexa has new tools for coronavirus quarantine. Here's how to use them

Adjusting to a new schedule during quarantine is tough. You're now at home, except for trips to the grocery store and other essential errands, you're missing friends and family who you usually see weekly, and your days seem to run together.

To help you better adjust, Amazon has released new features for its Echo speaker to help you maintain a balance.

For example, Amazon has created two new routines specifically for staying at home that can help you schedule the day. I'm looking forward to using this one because I personally lose track of time when working from home and forget that I need to stand up and stretch.



Alexa can now also answer your questions about coronavirus concerns and sing to you while you wash your hands so you know how long to keep going. Read on for tips to use these new Amazon Echo tools to help you cope during the quarantine.

Two new routines to stay at home

Amazon's new routines -- **Work from Home** and **Stay at Home** -- remind you when it's time to start your day, when to eat, when you need to take a stretch break and when it's time to finish your workday or start dinner. Alexa will even recite a few fun facts during the day to give your mind a break.

To enable them, open the Alexa app on your phone, tap the hamburger menu (three horizontal lines) and select **Routines**. Then, tap **Featured** and you'll see the two new routines at the bottom of the list. At the top, it says

Disabled, so you'll need to toggle the switch on to enable the routines. Then you can customize them to your personal preferences.

Alexa can help you stay germ-free

If you're unsure about how long you or your kids are washing their hands (their seconds seem to be way faster than ours), you can now ask Alexa to help them out. At the sink, just ask Alexa to sing for 20 seconds. The voice assistant will then start singing an upbeat tune about washing hands and will hopefully make everyone more excited to give their paws a good scrub.

Questions you can ask Alexa about coronavirus

Using guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Amazon added new features to its voice assistant that can answer some of your questions about coronavirus. You can ask "Alexa, what do I do if I think I have COVID-19?" or "Alexa, what do I do if I think I have coronavirus?" Alexa will then ask you about your travel history, symptoms and possible exposure.

While you're at home, you can learn more about what your smart speaker can do. Here are six things you probably haven't tried with your Amazon Echo, 8 surprising Alexa tricks to experiment with tonight and how to customize Alexa for a better Amazon Echo experience.

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