



What Are Smart Locks?

Smart locks augment existing deadbolt systems through wireless protocols, like Bluetooth, in order to allow your smart phone to become a “key” into your home. Using your phone, you can unlock your door instead of fumbling for your keys, assign digital “keys” to visitors, and check the status of your lock when you’re not home.

What are the benefits of smart locks?

Smart locks add convenient features to your locks, including hands-free ways to lock your doors, temporary access for visitors, and the ability to track who comes and goes (and when). If you find yourself having a lot of keys made, the ability to create digital keys saves you time going to get a key cut – and can even save you a bit of money. ■

How do smart locks work?

By using wireless protocols, like Bluetooth, your phone links to your smart lock and becomes a “smart key.” This key is unique to your phone, and you can control the security of your home in a way that giving away a traditional key would not allow. For example, if you have a dog sitter who comes in during the afternoon, you can assign the sitter a key that ONLY works during the afternoon. This ensures that your sitter can’t come into the house when you aren’t expecting them. You can use WiFi to see if you locked the door when you’re not home, and lock it if you accidentally left it open. Since this is done over wireless protocols, there is always a risk of the system being compromised, so most locks come with safety features—for example, some locks can detect if your phone is inside versus outside the house and give you access to certain features depending on that information. ■

What are the challenges of smart locks?

A lot of people will think smart locks are easily hackable, and thus less secure than a traditional deadbolt. But since smart locks also include deadbolts, they are no more “defeatable” than traditional locks are. Smart lock manufacturers are aware of hacking risks, and some have done an excellent job of encrypting data and keeping your information – and your home – safe. The initial cost of a smart lock is also a barrier for adoption, but if a homeowner finds themselves needing a lot of keys, there are benefits in the long run that would offset that cost. ■



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This work was authored by Center for REALTOR® Technology Labs, the technology research and development center at the National Association of REALTORS®. To learn more, visit <http://crtlabs.org>

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