



InfoCARE | Supporting Informal  
Caregivers of People with Dementia



## MODULE 1



# Digital Literacy for Caregivers of Dementia Patients



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## PROJECT INFORMATION

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@infocareproject

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### Introduction

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The Digital Literacy for Caregivers of Dementia Patients manual is part of the InfoCARE project training materials and aims to be a practical tool for informal caregivers, legal guardians and relatives of people with dementia to learn how to use new technologies and digital devices in order to:

- Enhance the quality of support provided to the person with dementia they care for.
- Improve caring and assistance conditions.
- Ease and support their caregiving tasks, as well as their daily activities, which ultimately will decrease the burden they feel.
- Give practical responses to social distancing, isolation, and long distances, by improving remote caring.
- Reinforce the bonding between the carer and the person with dementia.

Nowadays, there are many software and digital devices that will allow caregivers to achieve these goals. Among them, smart devices with integrated virtual and voice assistants are the most complete ones, since they offer a variety of functionalities that effectively support caregiving tasks in many senses (remote and face-to-face caring, cognitive stimulation, etc) and can be used in an easy and intuitive way.

This manual aims to equip learners with the basic digital skills to use one of these smart devices for dementia caregiving. More specifically, it is focused on the Amazon Echo Show device and Alexa's virtual assistant, although it is worth mentioning that there are similar devices available in the market, these can be consulted at the end of the manual.

By reading this manual, you will:

- Be aware of the significance and advantages that using digital technology may bring to your responsibilities as a dementia caregiver.
- Learn what is needed and the necessary steps to set up and use the Amazon Echo Show device and Alexa's virtual assistant for dementia caregiving: device installation, account creation, downloading the app, and linking devices.
- Get familiar with the Amazon Echo Show interface, explore and use all the functionalities it offers for dementia caregiving: navigate through the device, voice commands, video calling, amazon skills, calendar, and reminders.

The Digital Literacy for Caregivers of Dementia Patients manual also includes a series of video tutorials that will help you to get familiar with the device and explore its possibilities, enabling a more interactive and enriching learning experience.

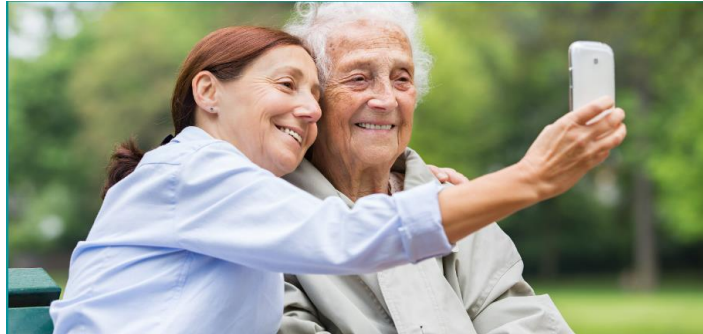
If you are interested in learning more about how to use these digital devices to implement mind-stimulating activities with the person you care for, you can also consult the manual "Remote Caring - Mind Stimulating Activities" and the related video tutorials, available on the InfoCARE website.

## CHAPTER 1. The rationale for digital literacy

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### 1.1. The importance of digital literacy in caregiving

Digital skills are essential for daily activities such as banking transactions, information research, and shopping. Informal caregivers of people with dementia should have the skills to learn, understand and use information from the Internet, as well as to use assistive technologies effectively to ease their daily caregiving tasks. Also, the use of digital tools can be really helpful in dementia caregiving to cognitive stimulation of dementia patients with various activities.



Digital skills are essential in all aspects of a person's everyday life. The use of digital devices such as smartphones, computers, or tablets is becoming necessary for daily activities such as banking transactions, research of information, shopping, managing health appointments, being in contact with relatives or even managing our relations with the public administrations, especially in the new post-covid reality.

Despite the growing array of digital tools with big potential for supporting caregiving tasks, the reality is that the majority of caregivers do not take advantage of them. The reason for this is that the learning process is perceived as a challenging experience, due to age, the lack of support, time, or literacy.

However, the use of digital tools is becoming easier and more intuitive, especially thanks to technologies like virtual assistants and voice-driven devices, as well as software improvements such as visually appealing interfaces, straightforward navigation, installation, and updates, etc.

All these facts make the learning process not as hard as it seems in the beginning, and undoubtedly, the outcome is worthwhile, since acquiring this knowledge will ultimately improve both your life quality as a caregiver and the life quality of the person you care for.

As the informal caregiver of a person with dementia, it is beneficial for you to have the skills to learn, understand and use digital tools and information from the Internet, as well as to use assistive technologies effectively to ease daily caregiving tasks. Also, the use of digital tools can be really helpful in dementia caregiving to cognitive stimulation of dementia patients with various activities.

### 1.2. The benefits of digital literacy for dementia caregiving

As said, digital literacy is important for dementia caregivers because it directly affects their life quality by providing access to information, communicating with their long-distance family, saving time in daily chores, and can also provide critical tools for managing the health of the person they care for. With the extensive use of technology and devices to pass information through the internet, social media, assistive devices, and mobile phones, caregivers can easily access crucial information and manage tasks in just seconds. However, to use these tools while caregiving, they need some basic digital literacy skills.



Especially individuals with mild dementia depend on assistance from either relatives or caregivers to carry out some tasks such as booking medical appointments, paying bills, and shopping. A caregiver with digital literacy skills may easily accomplish such tasks in minutes. Moreover, this dependency will grow as dementia evolves to more advanced stages, where the person will need constant assistance and support, even for the more basic daily tasks and needs (personal hygiene, feeding, mobility, etc), digital tools can also help in this stage, since they will become a powerful resource to ease daily caregiving tasks and help with the stimulation.

As an example, by using assistive devices, such as Kardiamobile, smartwatches or Amazon Echo Show, caregivers can easily monitor the health of the person they care for and make sure they cover all their needs, not forgetting any aspect, as these devices can, for example, monitor individuals' health status and remind them of their medications. If caregivers have the digital literacy skills to use the necessary technologies, they can even offer some health support and provide effective health care in emergencies.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, family members of many dementia patients usually live far from them and it may take a long time to visit. Skype, WhatsApp, Messenger and other similar applications help them to keep in touch with their families whenever they need and in case of emergencies. The pandemic showed us that digital literacy is a good way of communicating and keeping our loved ones safe from harm.

## CHAPTER 2. Use of digital devices and tools for dementia caregiving.

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### 2.1. Prerequisites

Today, digital assistive devices, smart devices, voice assistants and their related services and functionalities require internet access. Although a paid subscription is often required to enjoy their advantages fully, the truth is that the general features and functionalities can be used and seized without any cost.



Moreover, it is advisable to acquire the device itself (which can be purchased at an affordable price), which allows a more intuitive and broad use of the features. Although it is worth mentioning that these features can be also used with a smartphone, by downloading the related app (Alexa in the case of Amazon Echo Show Devices).

Smart devices and related voice assistants are capable of carrying out a wide range of tasks when given a wake word or instruction. They can play music, answer questions, manage reminders, make calls, and more. Most of them are devices like the Amazon Echo Show, that can be paired to other smart devices and smartphones, helping people with dementia and their

caregivers being connected, apart from easing daily care.

Anyone with basic digital skills can easily connect devices, but a certain level of digital knowledge is required to use them effectively. Read the next sections to learn more about it.

### 2.2. Installation of Echo Show 5 Device

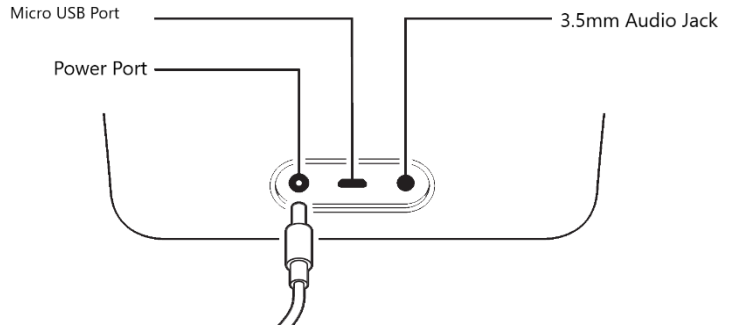
The basic installation information of each device is provided by its manufacturer. In this section, you will find installation instructions for the selected device, Amazon Echo Show 5.

#### How to set up your Amazon Echo Show 5

How to set up your Amazon Echo:

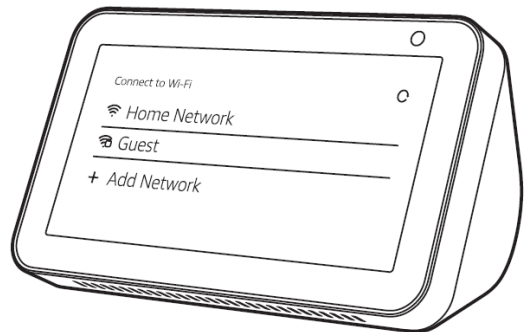
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1. Place your Echo in a central location, like a living room or kitchen.
2. To get started, plug the included power adapter into a power outlet, then into the back of your Echo.
3. Sign into your Amazon account using your smartphone on the Alexa app.  
Go to the “Settings” menu.
  - Select “Add Device.”
  - Select “Amazon Echo” and then your device type (e.g. Echo Dot, Echo Studio).



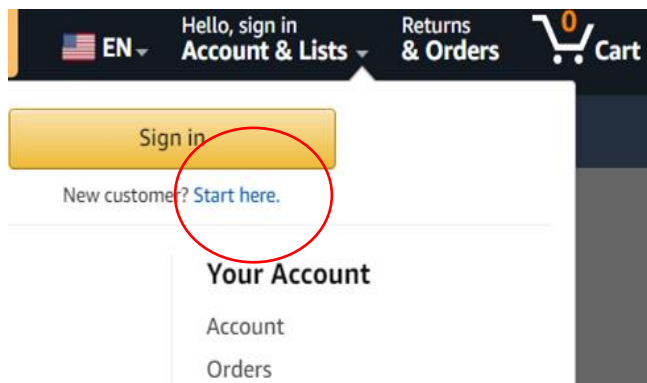
If you don't have an Amazon account, you should visit Amazon.com on a computer or smartphone to create your free account. You must have an Amazon account to use an Echo.

4. Complete the remaining on-screen instructions to finish setting up your device.
  - Select a language by tapping the screen.
  - Identify your Wi-Fi network name from the list of available networks.
  - Enter your Wi-Fi network password, then tap Done in the bottom right corner.
  - Type in your Amazon account email and password and tap Sign In at the bottom.
  - Confirm the time zone and tap Continue.



### 2.3 Creation of an Amazon account.

To create an Amazon account, you have to follow these steps:



First, go to the Amazon website.

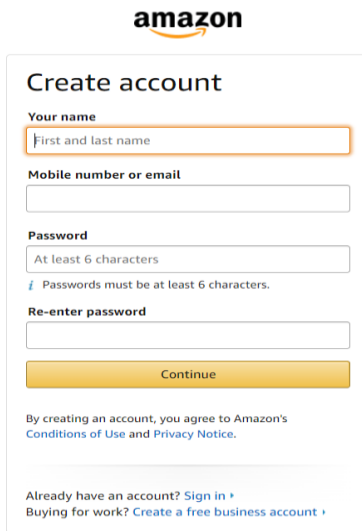
<https://www.amazon.com/>

Move your mouse to the left corner. Over the “Hello, sign in Accounts & Lists” menu.

Click on “Start here”. It directs you to a new page.



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The screenshot shows the Amazon account creation process. At the top is the Amazon logo. Below it is the heading 'Create account'. The form includes several input fields: 'Your name' with a sub-label 'First and last name', 'Mobile number or email', 'Password' with a sub-label 'At least 6 characters' and a note 'Passwords must be at least 6 characters.', and 'Re-enter password'. A yellow 'Continue' button is at the bottom of the form. Below the button, there is a link to 'Conditions of Use and Privacy Notice'. At the very bottom, there are links for 'Sign in' and 'Create a free business account'.

Enter the required information.

After entering your name, mobile number, or email you have to choose a password you'll remember. The password must be at least 6 characters. It is recommended you use a combination of Upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and special characters.

After you enter the password, you should write the same password in the "Re-enter password" section.

Then click to continue

An email will be sent to your email address to verify. Verify your Email address by providing the verification code sent there. Amazon account login will be automatic when you verify.

Check these links for more details on how to create an account:

- [Youtube](#)
- [Amazon](#)

## 2.4 Download Alexa App on Smartphone (Android and IOS).

### Android

Download the Alexa app.

1. Open the Google Play store on your smartphone.
2. Search for the Amazon Alexa app.
3. Select "Install".
4. Select "Open".

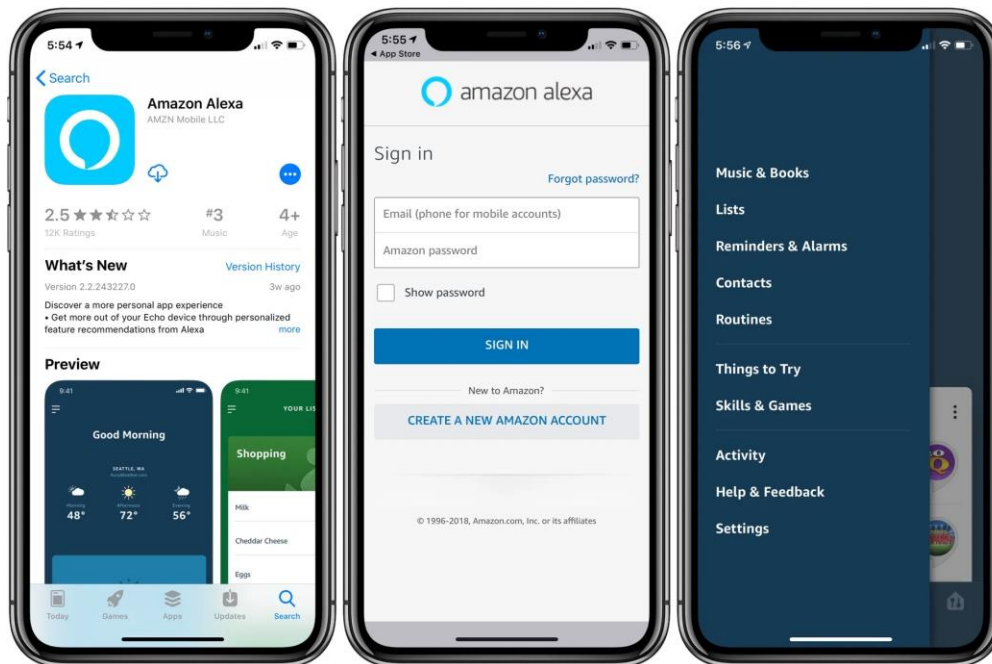


1. Amazon Alexa  
Amazon Mobile LLC

★★★★☆ FREE

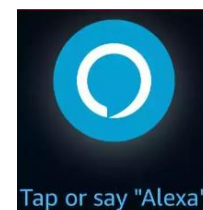
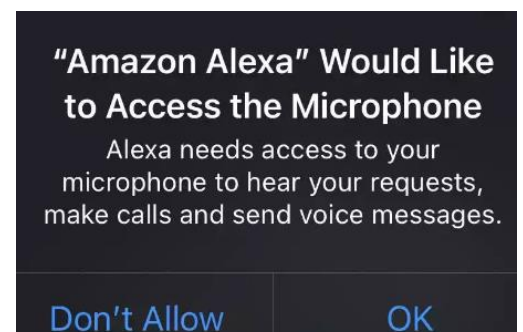
### IOS

1. Open the App store on your smartphone.
2. Search for the Amazon Alexa app.
3. Select "Install".
4. Select "Open".



After you download the Amazon Alexa app, you will receive notifications to pair your device:

1. In the pop-up menu about enabling Bluetooth, tap OK to allow Alexa to set up or connect with other devices (like your iPhone or Echo speaker).
2. Sign in to your Amazon account.
3. Tap Continue to agree to Amazon's terms and conditions.
4. Tap Yes or No to set up a device.
5. Tap to select who you are from the list of options. Confirm your first and last name, then tap Continue.
6. Tap Allow if you want to give Alexa access to your contacts (so that you can use commands like "call mom") and allow notifications. To skip this step, tap Later.
7. Continue to follow the on-screen prompts to set up Alexa, which includes teaching Alexa your voice. You can skip any steps in the set-up process by tapping Skip.
8. To enable Alexa, say "Alexa" or tap the blue Alexa icon at the top of the screen, then speak your request. You can also tap the keyboard icon to type out your request.



### 2.5 Link Echo Show device to the carer's smartphone.

#### Android

Use the Alexa app to pair your phone or with your Echo Device.

1. Put your Bluetooth device in pairing mode.
2. Open the Alexa app.
3. Select Devices.
4. Select Echo & Alexa.
5. Select your device.
6. Select Bluetooth Devices, and then Pair A New Device.

Once you connect your phone, you don't have to repeat all these steps the next time. When you want to connect, just enable Bluetooth on your phone or Bluetooth speaker and say, "Pair Bluetooth." Once the initial pairing is complete, certain Bluetooth devices may automatically reconnect to your Echo when in range.

#### IOS

1. Go to your Bluetooth settings and put your iPhone into pairing mode
2. Open the Alexa app and click on Devices
3. Click Echo and Alexa
4. A list will appear on your screen and select your device from the list of options. Tap Bluetooth Devices and pair a new device

Your iPhone is now connected to an Amazon device!

### 2.6 Make sure your family members are set up, and import contacts

You can video call anyone from your contacts who have an Echo Show, or who has the Alexa app downloaded to their phone. Make sure your friends and family download the free Alexa app if they do not have an Echo Show.

#### How to import video calls on your Amazon Echo Show

1. Open the Alexa app on your smartphone or tablet.
2. Sign in to the Alexa app with your Amazon account associated with your Echo Show.
3. Select "Communicate," enter your mobile phone number, and grant permissions for calling and messaging. You'll receive a verification code via text. Enter the verification code into the app.
4. Select "Import Contacts" from the contacts menu, then manually save any contacts you will want to talk to via your Echo Show.

### Make calls

1. Simply ask Alexa, “Alexa, call [contact name]” and your Echo Show will automatically initiate a video call.

- Make sure you refer to the person you want to call in the same manner they are saved in your phone contacts (e.g., if your son is saved in your phone as “David,” then say “Alexa, call David.” Do not say “Alexa, call my son.”).
- You can turn off the video by saying “Alexa, video off” after the call has started, or by tapping the Video button on the screen if you would prefer to only talk to your friends and family.

2. To end a call, say “Alexa, end call” or “Alexa, hang up.” You can also tap the Hang Up button on the screen of your Echo Show.

## CHAPTER 3. Familiarise with interface

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Now that the Echo Show device is set up and paired with a smartphone with Alexa's app, everything is ready to start learning how to use the device and explore the different options it offers for dementia caregiving. In this chapter, you will learn more on how to:

1. Navigate through the device and app.
2. Exploring possible setups for the device:
  - Voice Commands.
  - Video Control/Video Call.
  - Useful Amazon Echo Skills for Dementia Patients.
  - Calendar and reminders & Routines.

### 3.1. Navigate through the device and app

In this part, you will learn how to navigate the Amazon Echo Show device and the Alexa app in more detail.

The Echo Show is an intuitive device that provides the opportunity to manage various tools for caregiving. It makes it easy for the caregiver and the person with dementia to perform activities remotely and get in contact with or check up on the person with dementia. Before setting up your device, we recommend that you read the short pamphlet included in the box. It explains how to manage the setup step by step and provides important information.

#### Echo Show exterior:

Your Amazon Echo Show has four buttons.

To the left, you find the button that turns the microphone and camera off and on. Then the volume down and volume up buttons.

To the right, you will find a sliding button that works as a camera cover. Two small microphones are placed between the buttons. On the back of the device, you will find the plug for the power adaptor which is included.



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### Connect to your Amazon account:

When you first set up your Echo Show, it will ask you to log in to your Amazon account. If you don't have an Amazon account, you can go to amazon.com and create one.

### Download the Amazon Alexa app:



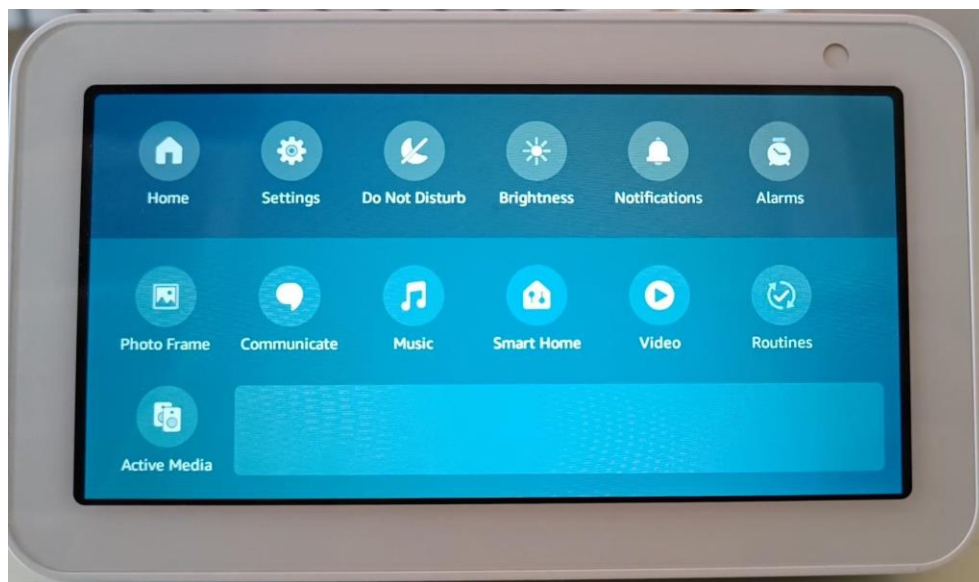
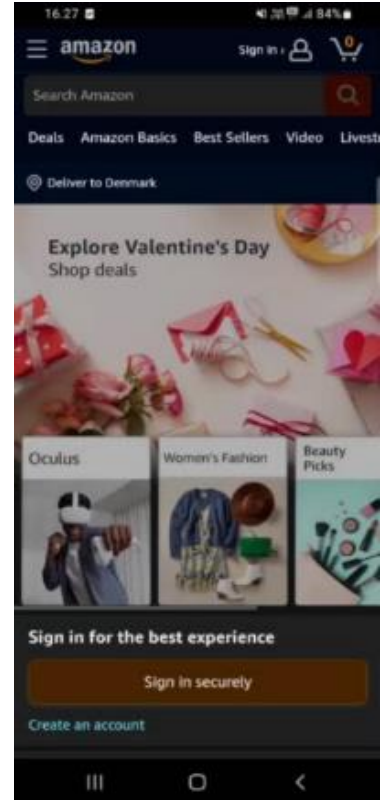
To maximise the use of your Echo Show, as well as pair it with your phone, you can download and log on to the Alexa app. Having Alexa's app in your phone will allow you to control the Echo Show Device as well.

Check Chapter 2 for more details on how to create an Amazon account, download the Alexa app and pair the Echo Show device with a smartphone.

### How to navigate the Amazon Echo Show device?

When you have completed the initial setup, you will find yourself on the home screen.

- To access the control panel and change your settings, swipe down from the screen or say: Alexa, show settings. Here you access **Settings** and different actions available, such as: Communicate, Music, Routines, and Alarms.
- The Home button will always take you back to the home screen.



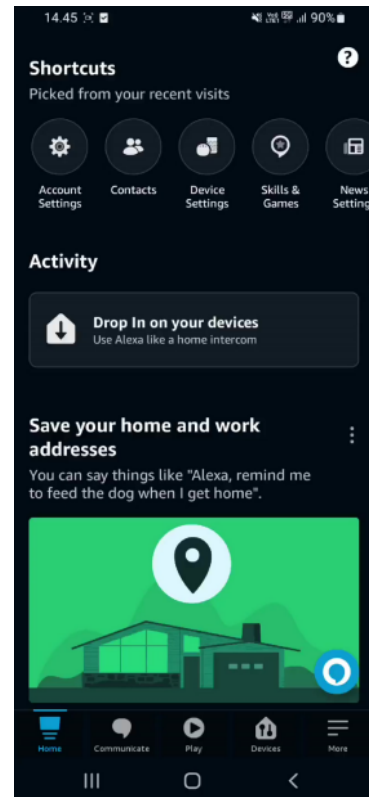
### How to navigate the Alexa app to maximise its potential?

To use your Echo Show to its fullest potential you must use the Alexa app that allows you to:

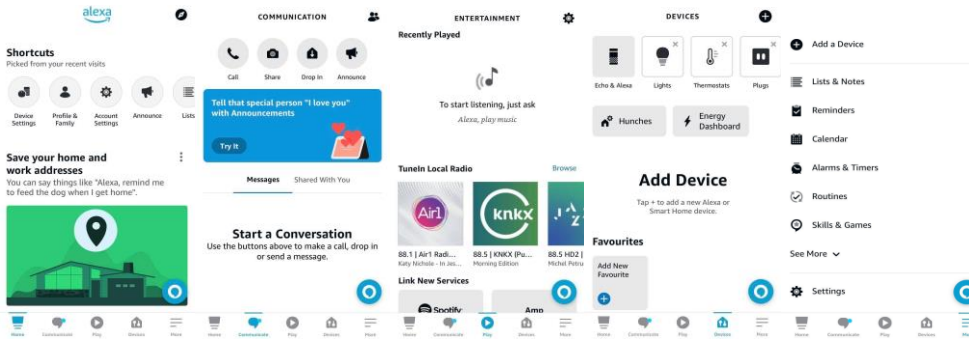
- Drop In on family and friends,
- Track upcoming reminders,
- Alarms and activate timers,
- Get information and answers,
- Play games and more.

The app is set up like an advanced remote control that helps you find settings and activities. Find your way around the app by pressing on the tabs at the bottom of the screen:

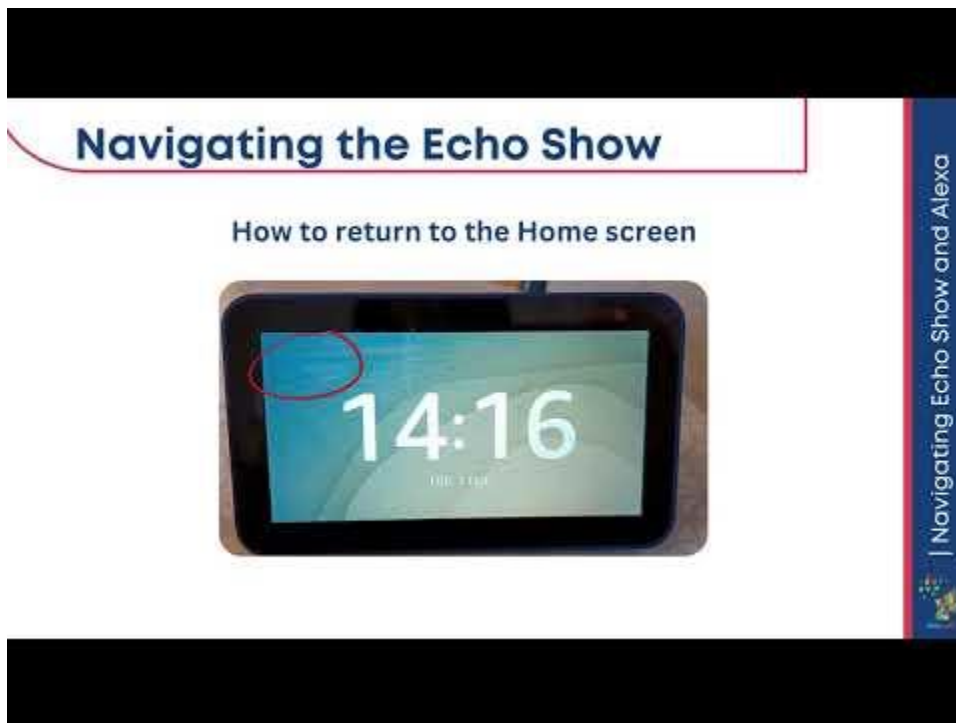
- At the homepage you can access different shortcuts which are automatically picked from your recent actions inside the app. When scrolling down the homepage, various suggested actions are visible. For instance, it may suggest creating a routine for waking up or going to bed, creating announcements for waking up your children, etc.
- Under the tab “Communicate” you can manage calls or message people from your contact list as well as share photos, create announcements or make a Drop-in call.
- The tab called “Play” makes it possible to play music or radio. Furthermore, you are able to add music services such as Spotify.
- Under “Devices” you can manage other devices connected to the app. Besides the Echo Show, you can connect the lights in your home to your Alexa app, which allows you to control and schedule your lights to turn on and off automatically. With Alexa it is also possible to control and monitor the temperature of your home from anywhere. Additionally, it is possible to control the plugs in your home, for example, turning electronic appliances on or off with your voice via. Alexa. Moreover, by adding a smart camera, you are able to monitor activity inside and around your house.
- Under “More” you can access various actions;
  - Lists and Notes, where you can create lists and notes.
  - Reminders, where you can schedule reminders.
  - Calendar, where you can schedule appointments.
  - Alarms and Timers, where you can set alarms.
  - Routines, where you can set up routines.
  - Skills and Games, where you can access various actions related to games and trivia, kids, news, health and fitness, etc.
  - Settings, where you control and change the settings of your Alexa app.



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## Video: Navigating through the device and app





## 3.2. Exploring possible setups for the device

### 3.2.1. Voice Commands

In this part, you can understand why voice commands are useful for dementia caregivers and learn more on how they work and what their different uses are.

#### *Voice commands and dementia caregiving*

Voice commands make people with dementia lives easier and simplify the use of digital devices since they can be controlled just with our voice. They give both people with dementia and their caregivers access to technology and its advantages, enabling a more intuitive use.

Voice commands can be used directly by people with early and moderate stages of dementia and cognitive impairment.

There are plenty of helpful voice commands for getting information, such as the news, the time, and the weather forecast. They also ease daily routines and activities for both the caregiver and the person with dementia, just by using your voice, you can manage alarms, appointments, reminders, and lists.

Moreover, voice commands are useful to entertain and stimulate the person with dementia, spend quality time, have fun, and reinforce the bonding with different activities.

#### *How to use and control voice commands?*

Both Amazon Echo Show and Alexa app on smartphones can work through voice commands. Check the following steps to set up and control them in both devices:

#### **Voice commands on Amazon Echo Show:**

Once Echo Show is set up, it is ready to respond to voice commands. Using voice commands on Amazon Echo show is simple:

- Stay close to the device
- Say the wake word “Alexa”
- Give a clear indication

Remember that you always need to say “Alexa” to activate it before you give the command.

#### **Tips to control voice commands on Amazon Echo Show:**

##### **Adjust the volume:**

The volume of your echo show device can be adjusted easily with voice commands.

- You can say, **Alexa, increase volume** or **Alexa, lower volume**.
- You can also set the volume to a **specific level** between 0 and 10, by saying **Alexa, set the volume to 5**.

### Mute and Unmute:

Ask Alexa to mute the audio, by simply indicating:

- **Alexa, mute,** and, **Alexa, unmute.**

### Disable / Enable:

If you want to disable voice commands on your echo show device:

- Click on the microphone button located on top of the device.
- A red string will appear.
- Click again on the button to re-enable them.



### Voice commands on a smartphone (Alexa App):

If you are using a smartphone, you will need to open the Alexa App and set up the Alexa Hands-Free feature to use voice commands. Follow these steps to enable it:

- Access Alexa app
- Go to More > Settings > Alexa App Settings
- Click on Alexa Hands-Free
- Toggle the button to the ON position

### Useful voice commands for Dementia caregiving

Let's learn some useful voice commands for dementia caregiving.

#### Getting General Information

Alexa will help you to get information about many topics, with simple voice commands such as: **Alexa, what's the weather like?** **Alexa, what time is it?** or **Alexa, what's in the news?**

There are many options that you can try out, another good option is using voice commands to find services nearby with commands like: **Alexa, find pharmacies nearby** or **Alexa, what is the closest pharmacy open right now?**

#### Ease daily routines and activities

Setting alarms, lists, events, and reminders can ease your daily routines as a caregiver, since they will help you make sure the person you care for does not miss any important appointment, takes the medication, maintains healthy habits, etc.

General commands to manage reminders and events are:

- **Alexa set a reminder**
- **Alexa, add an event to my calendar**
- **Alexa, cancel the reminder/event**

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- **Alexa, show my reminders.**
- **Alexa, what's on my calendar for tomorrow?**

Once you start setting the reminder or event, Alexa will guide you through the process by asking for different details (name, date and time, frequency, etc).

There are two helpful default lists for your caregiving tasks: to-do and shopping lists. You can create and customise as many lists as you want. To add items to those lists, you can say, for example:

- **Alexa, add go to the pharmacy to my to-do list**
- **Alexa, add bread and water to my shopping list**

### Entertain and Engage

Stimulating the person with dementia is also possible with voice commands. There are many options in this sense, some of them are listed as follows.

Calm or comfort the person by playing some music: **Alexa, play relaxing music.**

Ask Alexa for specific data and information to start the dialogue and engage the person in a conversation, for example: **Alexa, tell me some Spanish traditions for New Year's Eve.**

Have some fun by using voice commands:

You can also provide the person with dementia with some fun by encouraging them to ask Alexa to play rock, paper, and scissors, tell a riddle or a joke: **Alexa, let's play rock, paper, scissors** or **Alexa, tell me a riddle/joke.**

### Video: Using Voice Commands



### 3.2.2. Video Control and Video Call

In this part, you learn how to use the video call and drop-in functions on a smart speaker, using Amazon Echo Show and on the Alexa app on your smartphone. After reading this part, you will know why the video call drop-in functions are useful for dementia caregivers and how to set them up and use them. You will also learn how to adjust the settings while on a video call. And you will also obtain some useful tips on how to have better video calls with a person with dementia.

#### *Video calls and dementia caregiving*

Being physically present with your loved one is not always possible. Phone calls may be adequate if the person with dementia is still in quite the early stages of the condition. Talking on the phone can become more difficult as dementia develops. The person may stop recognizing the disembodied voice at the end of the line, and may simply hang up or walk off if they're not interacting with a face or image. However, if they can see family members, they may be more likely to continue to talk.

In such cases, video calls can be a great way to see each other again and spend some meaningful time together. Family members can stay in contact and provide sensory stimulation, meaningful occupation, and company to their loved ones. Video calls can reduce loneliness and social isolation.

#### **The DROP-IN function**

There are plenty of video calling apps and devices out there, but for many older people, using these modern apps is confusing and overwhelming.

The drop-in" function is a video calling system that lets us see and talk to a loved one without any action needed on their end. With a device that has "drop-in" calling, you just place it in the room where they usually read or watch TV. Then when you call, you just appear on the screen, they hear your voice, turn and see you, and off you go.

The drop-in function also allows you:

- To feel close while enforcing their independence. You can watch and assist them while they are doing something that they used to like eg. Cooking
- Monitor them to ease stress. For instance, you can "drop-in" when you haven't heard back from them. They may have misplaced their phone and cannot hear it ringing.

#### *How to make video calls to Amazon Echo Show, and the Alexa app and use the 'drop in' function?*

To make a video call using the Echo Show, first, make sure the person you want to speak to either has the Alexa app set up on their mobile phone or also owns an Echo Show device.

There are two ways to initiate calls: with your voice and by tapping the Echo Show display. We'll walk you through both.

- **With voice commands:**  
Say, "Alexa, video call [contact name]." Alexa might ask you to confirm the contact information of the person you're trying to reach before initiating the call. Wait for the other

## MODULE 1 | Digital Literacy for Caregivers of Dementia Patients

person to answer. If you can't see yourself on the screen, make sure the camera shutter on your device isn't closed, or that the camera off icon isn't selected. If you didn't mean to make the call, click the red hang-up button or say, "Alexa, end video call."

- **Through the display:**

Swipe down the display from top to bottom to open the Echo Show feature menu. On the menu that appears, click communicate. Click '**Show contacts**' to see your contact list. Scroll to find the contact for the person you're looking to reach and select their name. Click the call icon under the 'Alexa devices' menu on the contact's information page. This will initiate a video call.

### **How to make a group video call on the Echo show;**

Before making a group call, you need to create a group. Enhanced features must be enabled on all call members to make or accept group calls.

1. Swipe down from the top to the bottom of the screen on your Echo Show device.
2. Open Communicate.
3. Select Call.
4. Select the name of the group you want to call.
5. Or, using voice commands, say: "Alexa, video call [contact group name]" to initiate the call.

### **How to make a group a call through the drop-in function on Amazon Echo show;**

Use Drop In to open an instant conversation between your devices or with your Alexa contacts. When you receive a Drop-In, the light indicator on your Echo pulses green and you connect to your contact automatically.

Again, there are two ways to initiate the "drop in" function: with your **voice** and **by tapping** the Echo Show display. We'll walk you through both.

- **With voice commands:**

Using voice commands, say: "Alexa, drop in [name of device]" to initiate the drop-in.

- **Through the display:**

1. Swipe down from the top to the bottom of the screen on your Echo Show device.
2. Open Communicate.
3. Select Drop in.
4. Select the name of the device you want to drop in.

### **Ethical Considerations when using the drop in function**

Amazon Alexa's drop in feature acts like an intercom system. It allows you to use your phone or Alexa-enabled device to "drop in" on another Alexa-enabled device. The device that is being dropped in on will ring for a few seconds. It will then show a green light, for as long as the drop in occurs. When the drop in ends the device that was dropped in on will make a final chime, indicating the "call" is over. The sounds and lights alerting anyone around the device that a drop

in has started (or is underway), cannot be shut off or disabled. However, these alerts/signs may go unnoticed.

It is important to respect privacy and intimacy of the person with dementia. If the person is at the early-mid stage of dementia and their memory functions are not significantly damaged, the caregiver can agree on a specific schedule to make the calls required for the activities, so the person is informed in advance instead of using the drop-in function.

### VIDEO CONTROLS

- To Adjust the volume, use the + and - buttons on the top of the device.
- To mute tap on Mute.
- To end the call, tap on End.

### *How to make video calls through the Alexa app on your smart device*

#### Video Calls

Open the Alexa smartphone app and Tap Communicate at the bottom of the screen, and if prompted grant permission for Alexa to access your contacts list. You may also be asked to associate a phone number with your Amazon account and confirm it with a code sent by SMS message.

You can now tap on a contact to see their information, including the different numbers you have saved for them, and whether they can receive Alexa voice or video calls. Only those with an Echo Show (or the Alexa app installed on their smartphone) can be called using video.

#### Drop in

1. Open the Alexa smartphone app.
2. Tap Communicate.
3. Select the Drop-In icon.
4. Select the name of the device you want to drop in on.

### *Tips for better video calls*

It's important to choose a quiet area of the house, and it may be good to try how the person with dementia interacts with the technology. You can do some trials when you are both physically present in the same room.

Ideally, position yourself and your device at a desk or table and consider the lighting to ensure the person can see you well. For example, do not sit in front of a window, as the backlight will make it difficult for others to see your face and expressions. Sit at eye level with the camera, and try to position yourself so that it shows your upper body and head. Placing the camera too high leaves the person with dementia staring down at you, too low and it may appear to them that you are looking down on them and possibly make them feel intimidated.

Similarly, you need to concentrate on the video screen otherwise you might give the impression that you are not paying attention or seem aloof, which may be distressing for a person with dementia. Looking into the camera lens is the equivalent of looking into the person's eyes; you

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may want to practice how you come across with another family member so you're comfortable with it.

Minimise other potential distractions for you and the person with dementia, for example, turn off your TV (even a mute screen can distract you), turn off any background music, log out of any open windows on a computer, such as an email, social media, or any apps that may send you 'ping' type notifications. Don't forget, the person with dementia may hear these things but not know where they are coming from. Importantly, set your phone to 'Do Not Disturb' or turn off your ringtone. The best of all would be to turn it fully off so you can fully concentrate on talking to your loved one with dementia and vice versa, giving them the attention they need and deserve.

When setting up the calls, make sure your appearance is as familiar as possible for the person with dementia, otherwise, it may cause concern for them or a failure to recognize you. Wearing your hair up or down if this is something you usually do can limit the risk of this happening. You could also put some familiar photographs of family members or family events behind you to help with reminiscence. Setting aside some time to sing a favorite piece of music together or putting on a recording can further help to stimulate the person and help with valuable feelings of connection.

Do not forget to give people with dementia more time and always be patient

You may, however, find that neither of the above options is suitable for either your needs or your family members. The person could struggle and may find it difficult to understand the technology. In this case, it may be a good idea to use such devices while you are both physically present in the same room and take advantage of other functions such as listening to music, viewing photo albums, etc.

### Video: Using Video control and video calls

**How to make video calls on Amazon Echo show**

Voice command	Through the display
Say, "Alexa, video call [contact name]."	Swipe down the display from top to bottom to open Menu.
Wait for the other person to answer.	Tap "Communicate"
If you didn't mean to make the call, click the red hang up button or say, "Alexa, end video call."	Tap 'Show contacts' and Scroll to find the contact you want to call Click the call icon under the 'Alexa devices' menu

Video call and "drop in" functions

### 3.2.3. Amazon Skills

In this part, you will learn more about some useful skills for people with dementia, and how these skills work. The "Skills" feature within the Amazon Echo Show makes the use of the device very functional, with many different features.

#### *Amazon Skills and Dementia caregiving*

Amazon Skills are very simple to use, fun, and full of "skills" that we can spend our free time with. In practical terms, skills are similar to mobile apps that we use and can guide us through the day and certainly, they can make our lives easier. In particular, the Amazon Echo Show has proven to be useful for people with dementia. Indeed, it provides the users with skills that aim at maintaining cognitive capacity and improving memory. Let's take a closer look at it;

- Amazon skills provide users with a variety of functions.
- Alexa offers fun trivia games that train the mind with entertaining challenges.
- Brain teasers have the benefit of keeping the mind active and responsive and they can delay cognitive impairment.

As it is known, some cognitive deficits occur in patients with dementia. The cognitive impairment tends to increase as dementia evolves, but some methods can be applied to minimise or slow down these impacts.

Some symptoms of the disease, such as memory loss, can be reduced with some activities provided by Amazon Skills. This process can be beneficial to cognitive capacities in general.

Preserving cognitive capacities and physical abilities is crucial to increase the person's well-being and keeping their relationship with the environment. In particular, Amazon Skills offers various exercises and games for mental well-being in this respect.

#### *How to use the skills of Amazon Echo?*

You can use voice commands for this, the easiest way to add skills to your Echo show is to simply say, "Alexa, enable [skill name]."

If you're not sure which skills to add - you can ask for some recommendations, by saying: "Alexa, recommend me some skills" or "Alexa, show me your skills", you can discover many skills you can use by also, sorting your searches: "Alexa, show me skills for caregiving".

Amazon Echo Show's skills are divided into several categories based on their functions and concepts. Thus, it becomes easier to find the activity, game, or topic you are looking for.

There are a variety of categories available, some of them are:

- Education & Reference
- Games & Trivia
- Health & Fitness
- Kids
- Productivity
- Shopping



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- Smart Home
- Sports

### How to find skills using the Alexa app with a smartphone?

1. Open the Amazon Alexa app.
2. Click on More and select Skills & Games
3. You will see "Featured Categories" and "Popular Skills".
4. Drag down the page and you will see Alexa suggests some skills for you.
5. Find a skill you want to add to your collection.
6. On the skill's description page, you'll see the option to Enable use - tap it.
7. Once enabled, you can either initiate the skill on your Echo Show Device or use it directly in your phone. The skill will automatically be added to your collection.

### *Useful skills for dementia caregiving and mind stimulation*

There are plenty of skills that you can use for these purposes, most of them will be based on your country's availability since skills are developed by external providers that use Amazon technologies to make these skills accessible by the general public.

You can select the skills you want to explore by searching with keywords such as dementia, Alzheimer, cognitive stimulation, and memory, and even try to find skills for specific interests and needs of the person you care for (for example physical stimulation, recipes, popular sayings and proverbs, jazz music, languages, etc).

Here, we list a selection of skills you can start exploring that certainly will be helpful to support and stimulate the person you care for:

- Phone Finder
- Brain Workout
- Question of the Day
- Memory Recall Training
- Thunderstorm Sounds

Tip: when selecting amazon skills to use with your loved one, always make sure that they are suitable for them. Especially for advanced stages of dementia, it is important to make sure that the activities included in the skills you selected are not too challenging, since this will generate stress and anxiety in the person, being counterproductive for their stimulation. Remember that the goal should always be to provide a positive and pleasant experience that will comfort the person you care for.

- **Phone Finder**

"Connect your phones or tablets and never worry about losing them again"

Memory loss is one of the problems that patients with dementia can develop. In addition, the phone is very functional and one of the main devices that can make their daily life easier. Due to the nature of the disease, people with dementia often forget where they put their phones. This can put them in a tough spot. The "Phone Finder" skill allows you to find the phone you have paired with by sounding an alarm. You can easily try this feature with the commands;

"Alexa, open Phone Finder and search for my phone" and "Alexa, ask Phone Finder to find my device".

- **Brain Workout**

"The more you train with Brain Workout, the more you will improve critical cognitive skills that are proven to boost productivity and confidence."

The skill presents the advantage of training your brain in improving your focus, concentration, memory, math skills, and more. The brain games have been designed by drawing from research in memory studies. However, it is more appropriate to be used for patients with mild dementia. Each workout is fun, interactive, and personalized. The exercises customized themselves over time to offer the users the best experience. Brain Workouts will improve critical cognitive skills which have a direct impact on productivity and self-confidence.

- **Question of the Day**

The Question of the Day skill explains itself as follows:

"A fun interactive quiz game offering a customized player experience. You will be served one question per day and if answered correctly another one follows! Questions from 6 topics are available, and more to come soon. You can personalize your experience by stating your preference for each question topic."

With The Question of the Day skill, dementia patients can feel like they are in a competition and have an activity that will attract their attention.

The user can find questions on 6 different topics:

- 1) Music
- 2) Cinema
- 3) Sports
- 4) History
- 5) Science
- 6) Celebrities

- **Memory Recall Training**

"Continue to play, and train yourself to recall details more easily."

Memory Recall Training skill explains itself as follows:

A passage will be read out to you. Concentrate, listen carefully, and try to remember what is said. Afterward, you will be asked some questions which will test your comprehension and memory. Continue to play, and train yourself to recall details more easily.

With this ability, it is aimed to focus more on details in short sentences. This is very beneficial for the cognitive capacities of dementia patients.

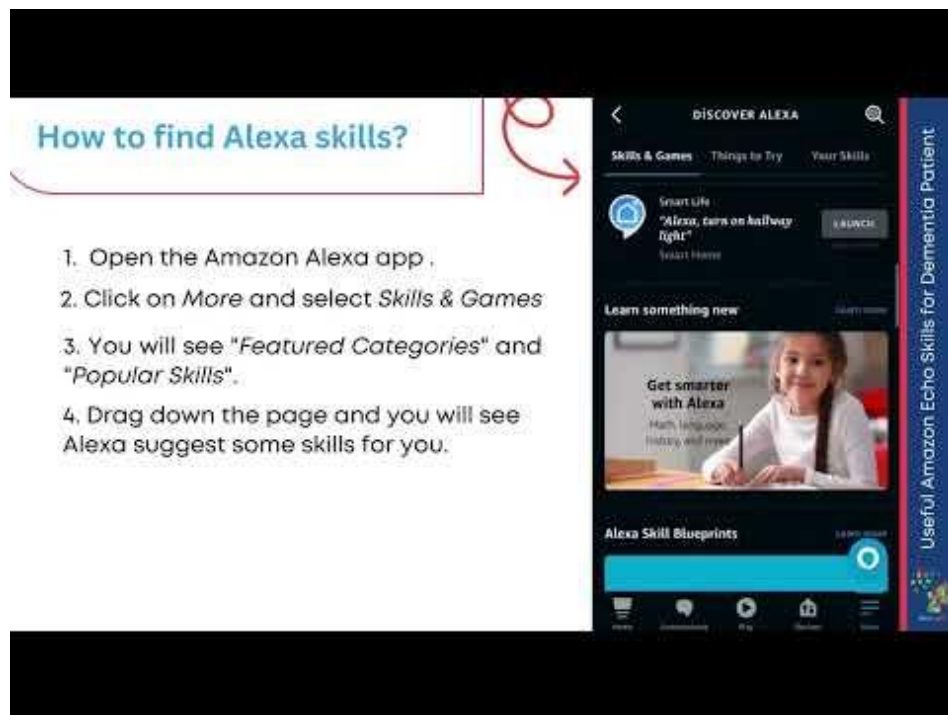
- **Thunderstorm Sounds**

Thunderstorm Sounds play sleep sounds and ambient sounds to help you sleep, relax, meditate, relieve stress, or block out unwanted noise.

Sleep disorders in people with dementia include excessive daytime sleepiness, difficulty falling asleep, waking up frequently, or waking up early in the morning. Another condition unique to dementia patients is sunset syndrome, which is responsible for creating confusion, agitation, and aggression in the evening hours.

The 'Thunderstorm Sounds' skill plays a loop of a thunderstorm or ocean and rain sounds to induce relaxation. Because of the nature of Alzheimer's, both the patient and carers can experience anxiety and stress. Taking time to sit down and relax is important for both's well-being. These sounds are also very effective in making it easier to fall asleep.

### Video: Using Amazon skills



### 3.2.4. Calendar and reminders for Routines

In this part, you will learn more about how to set up and use calendars and reminders for organising the daily routines of dementia patients.

#### *Calendar and Reminders for Dementia Caregiving.*

They are very really useful tools for organising events, activities, and appointments. They are also effective life-saving instruments, particularly for those with dementia, to live more comfortably.

A calendar simply serves to keep track of upcoming events and a log of everyday activity, making sure that you don't miss anything when it comes to your loved one's normal routines, needs, and appointments.

It can assist you in organising schedules at home, as well as managing everyday tasks. The organisation is greatly facilitated by having a visual representation of forthcoming activities. The Amazon Echo calendar can serve as your own personal "to-do" list, simplifying life.

#### *How to set up a calendar?*

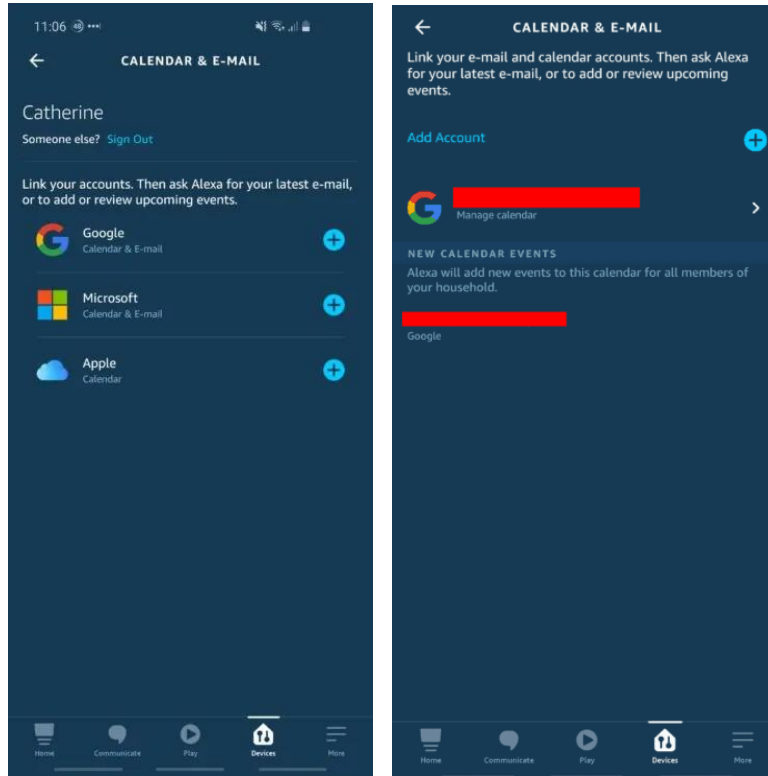
Manage your calendar by linking it to the Alexa app and Alexa can add, delete, or update your calendar events. Alexa currently natively supports Google, Microsoft, and Apple calendars, which is good because the vast majority of people will run computers and phones powered by one of these. If your calendar isn't supported, you have three main options:

- See if the Amazon Skill section has a skill for your calendar.
- Sync your calendar into a Google, Microsoft, or Apple calendar.
- Create a new Google calendar account.

#### **How to link your calendar accounts to Amazon Echo?**

To link your calendar accounts to Amazon Echo you should follow the steps below;

1. Open the Alexa app.
2. Open More and select Settings.
3. Select Calendar. and, then, Add Account.
4. Select your account provider, and then select Connect Account.
5. Follow the on-screen instructions. Repeat these steps for each calendar you want to link.



If it asks you whether to link email and calendar (or just one of them), choose accordingly. You'll need to log in to your Google/Microsoft/Apple account and say **'Yes'** to link your email/calendar with Alexa.

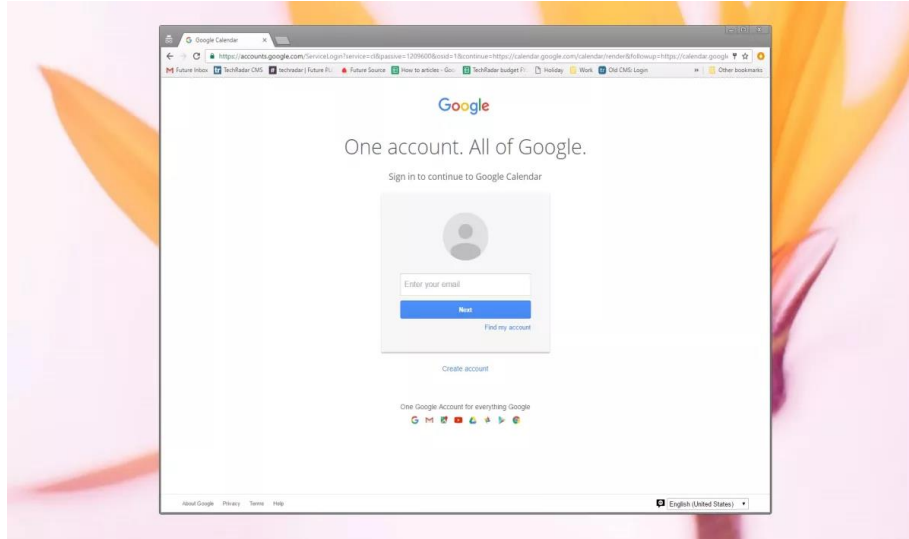
In the end, the **"Calendar & Email"** screen will appear the following: You have now successfully linked your calendar with Alexa, and you can start managing it by saying things like:

"Alexa, what's on my calendar today? "

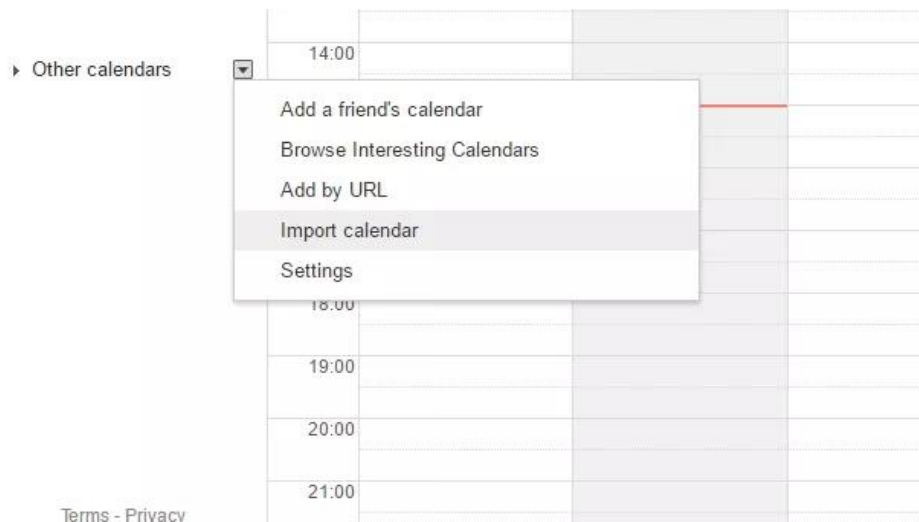
### How to create a Google Calendar account?

If you do not have a digital calendar, you can create one in google:

- Go to: <https://www.google.com/calendar>
- Sign in using your Google Account. If you don't have one, click 'Create account'.



To import events from another calendar, click the down arrow next to **'Other calendars'** in the menu on the left-hand side of the screen and select **'Import Calendar'**.



If you use an **online calendar** service then you can try adding the URL of the calendar by selecting **'Add by URL'** instead.

### *How to use Alexa to hear about appointments or create new events?*

After your Amazon Echo is connected to your Google Calendar, you can get Alexa to check your calendar. Here are some of the things you can ask Alexa to do with your calendar:

- Alexa, when is my next event?
- Alexa, what's on my calendar?
- Alexa, what's on my calendar tomorrow at 9 PM?
- Alexa, what's on my calendar for Saturday?

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If you want to add an event to your calendar, say; “Alexa, add an event to my calendar.” Alexa will then ask your questions to complete the event. You can also set specific events by saying something such as “Alexa, add “Doctor’s appointment” to my calendar for Monday, January 16, at 1 PM”.



Echo Show's 'calendar events' home card will rotate around the Show's home screen and show you imminently occurring events (such as ones later today). If you're not seeing it, go to settings (by clicking in the top right, and selecting "Settings" in the top bar that appears) and go to home card content.

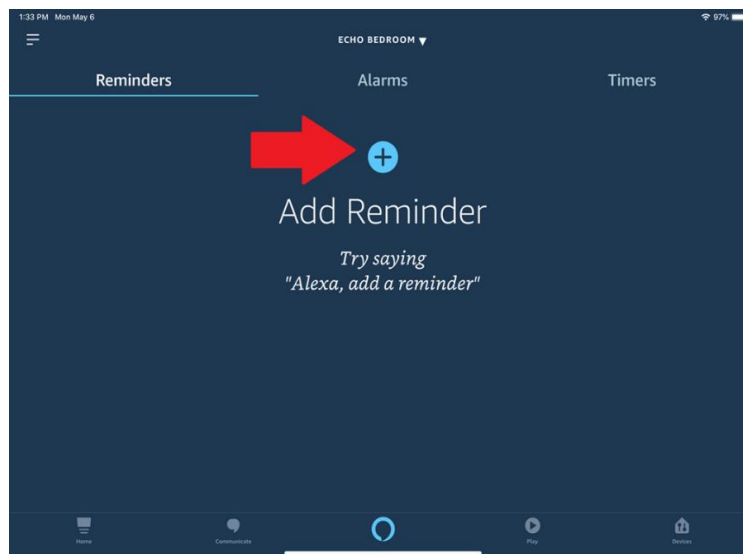


There are some view options; you can view your events: daily, 3-day, or monthly.

Deleting an event is very easy. Just simply click on it and then press 'Delete'.

### How to create a reminder?

Reminders serve as short-term alarms that can help you remember certain activities or events. When a reminder comes due, Alexa chimes out “Here’s your reminder,” and then she tells you twice.



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There are several ways to set up a reminder with Alexa:

You can use a voice command such as: “Alexa, create a new reminder,” at which point Alexa will ask you what the reminder is for; you can tell her what it is, such as “go to the grocery shopping,” “start the laundry,” or “begin cooking dinner.”

Alexa then asks you for the date and time. You can say something like:

- “Today at 5 pm,”
- “Tomorrow at 7 pm,”
- “June 11 at 9 am.”

You can also give all the details of the reminder in one shot, like: “Alexa, remind me to go to the dentist today at 2:30 pm.”

### How to set reminders manually using Alexa App on a smartphone?

To set reminders manually using Alexa App on iOS or Android device you should follow these instructions:

1. Open the Alexa App.
2. Select Menu.
3. Select Alerts and Alarms.
4. Select Add Reminder.
5. Select Remind me to and enter the reminder name.
6. Once you are done typing the reminder name, tap on Done.
7. Tap on the down arrow to choose the right Date.
8. After selecting a date, tap on Done.
9. Once again tap on the down arrow next to the time and choose a time.
10. Tap on Done after selecting time.
11. Select the Echo device by tapping on the down arrow.
12. Finally, Tap on Done to save it.

### How to Edit a Reminder on Alexa App?

Sometimes you need to edit a reminder that you have already set before. you can follow these steps to do so:

1. Open the Alexa App.
2. Select Menu.
3. Select Alerts and Alarms.
4. Here you will find the reminder you have set.
5. Tap on any reminder that you want to edit.
6. Now, tap on the Edit Reminder button and make changes.



### *How to Delete a Reminder on Alexa App?*

Deleting a Reminder from Alexa App also requires similar steps. To delete a reminder:

1. Open the Alexa App.
2. Select Menu.
3. Select Alerts and Alarms.
4. A list of all reminders will appear here.
5. Tap on the reminder that you want to delete.
6. Finally, tap on Delete Reminder.

### *How to set up a routine?*

Alexa Routines can be used to automate tasks or tie multiple actions to a single voice command. Routines are shortcuts for Alexa, saving you time by grouping actions so you don't have to ask for each one individually. You can have up to 200 routines on your account at a time.

For example, say "Start my day" to have Alexa turn on your compatible smart lights and tell you the weather forecast.

Routines can contain one or multiple actions, such as:

- Start an Alexa skill.
- Get briefings or traffic reports from Alexa.
- Make a call.
- Turn on compatible Fire TV devices.
- Arm-connected home security systems.
- Play music.
- Adjust dimmable lights.
- Turn on or off smart home devices.
- Turn on compatible smart home devices based on your home's indoor temperature.

To set up Routines, use the Alexa app: [Link](#)

1. Open the Alexa app.
2. Open More and select Routines.
3. Select Plus.
4. Select When this happens, and follow the steps in the app to choose what starts your routine.
5. Select Add action, and follow the steps in the app to choose the action of your routine.
6. You can select multiple actions for the same routine.
7. Select Save.

Video: Setting up calendars, reminders and routines



## CHAPTER 4. Other digital devices and country's availability. Important warnings.

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The use of Echo Show device and Alexa's virtual assistant has been selected by the project consortium for training and informative purposes, with information about them included in some of the project training materials. Digital and training content developed by the project consortium was tested and piloted on Echo Show devices, however, this does not represent any obligation for the users to use Amazon Echo Show while following the steps provided by this manual or by any other InfoCARE's training material.

This warning is our attempt to draw readers attention towards the fact that other devices exist and can be used for the same purposes. As stated, training contents provided in InfoCARE manuals have been elaborated by using Amazon Echo Show and Alexa's virtual assistant due to their availability and useful functionalities for dementia caregiving and stimulation, as well as for the project's actuality and to clarify target groups for the sake of enabling the optimised flow of information and support.

However, before following the instructions provided in this manual, you can check your country's availability through personal assistance devices and select the most convenient according to your preferences. Also, you can easily use general virtual assistant applications available in nearly most countries such as Google Assistant and Google Nest Hub (supported by all android devices). Another alternative for virtual assistants can be SIRI, provided by all apple devices. Lastly, Microsoft Personal Digital Assistant and Cortana can be good examples for Microsoft users. Moreover, there are some local digital assistant providers in every country, for further information you can search in your national language for the assistance programs provided by your country.

As for Alexa's virtual assistant, Alexa Voice Service (AVS) International offers language and region-specific services, so you can speak to Alexa and receive responses and content in your preferred language and region. Alexa-supported (AVS) languages and regions include:

USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Germany, Austria, India, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, France, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Brazil, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Alexa can also interact with customers in US-English, UK-English, CA-English, English with an Australian

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or Indian accent, German, Japanese, CA-French, FR-French, Italian, ES-Spanish, MX-Spanish, US-Spanish, IN-Hindi, BR-Portuguese, and SA-Arabic.

Moreover, Amazon Supported languages are:

- Chinese (Simplified)      Chinese (Traditional)      English
- French                      German                      Italian
- Japanese                    Korean                      Portuguese (Brazilian)
- Spanish

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