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The Highs and Lows of Smart Thermostats

With winter around the corner, you may be considering the pros and cons of replacing your home's traditional thermostat with a smart thermostat. We've taken a deeper look into the highs and lows of a smart thermostat.

THE HIGHS

Smart thermostats are convenient. A smart thermostat adjusts the heating and cooling temp setting of your home remotely from your smartphone. Your smart thermostat will provide a brand app that you download onto your mobile device. The app allows you to check your thermostat anywhere you have WiFi. You can change the temp setting on your thermostat while at the office, running errands, or even on vacation.

Smart thermostats are...well, smart! Many utilize sensors and algorithms to track your family's energy use. This function will help schedule the heating and cooling of your home, which saves you energy and money.

Smart thermostats are compatible with voice-command technology. Picture this: Your hands are covered in flour and oil, your kitchen is heating up, and your guests are arriving in half an hour. All you have to do is say: "Alexa, turn down the AC to 70 degrees."

Smart thermostats use Geofencing capabilities. This alerts the smart thermostat that you're heading home and will adjust the temperature according to your preferences.

Smart thermostats offer greater visibility. They are generally lighter, brighter, and use large, digital, easy-to-read numbers for the display.

Smart thermostats can provide reporting.

Some smart thermostats can show you easy-to-read monthly reports that help you analyze your family's energy usage and change filters.

THE LOWS

Smart thermostats can be pricey. A quality smart thermostat will run you about \$200, with some systems listed at \$400. A few systems will also require the additional cost of professional installation.

Smart thermostats may be unnecessary if you work from home. You won't be raising or lowering the temperature of your home during the day if your home is consistently occupied. You would likely not see a significant increase in savings.

A smart thermostat might not be compatible with your system. Depending upon its age, your current heating and cooling unit may not be compatible with a smart thermostat.

Programming a smart thermostat can get complicated. The setup of your smart thermostat system and interpretation of its display panel may not be something you're interested in investing your time and patience in.

Smart thermostats are subject to hacking and privacy concerns. Although you might think a hacker will not be interested in raising or lowering the temperature of your home, Travelers.com says, "smart thermostats can provide details about your daily comings and goings, which a thief could find insightful."

September Calendar

September 7 - Labor Day

September 11 - Patriot Day

September 22 - Fall begins

September is National Preparedness Month

Homeowner Tip:



Head Into Your Crawl Space

This month, before wet weather sets in, grab a flashlight and head into the crawl space beneath your house. Check out its edges and corners for changes or marks that might indicate water damage. Use your fingers to feel for damp areas. If you find water, check with a home inspector to determine where the water is coming from.

September 28 is National Good Neighbor Day

Being a good neighbor comes naturally to most of us. These days it's more important than ever to be a positive neighbor. Here are just a few ways to celebrate National Good Neighbor Day, and thank a neighbor you appreciate.

1. Get to know your neighbor. You can still maintain your privacy and theirs, but let them know you're there for them.
2. Keep the area around your home neat and attractive - take pride in your neighborhood.
3. Respect your neighbor's privacy.

4. Be aware of the noise coming from your home - like a constantly barking dog, or loud music all hours of the day.

5. Be conscientious about ending your parties at a reasonable hour, or better yet, consider inviting your neighbor to come, too.

6. Be respectful about returning your neighbor's property, such as tools and appliances.

7. Bring your neighbor a sweet treat on occasion, or treat them to something from your garden, whether it's flowers or vegetables.



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Welcome Fall with Apple Pie Baked Apples

Ingredients:

3 Granny Smith apples
3 pink lady apples
1 tbsp. warm water
2 tsp. cornstarch
2 tbsp. butter
Juice from 1/2 a lemon
1 tsp. cinnamon, plus more for sprinkling
1/3 c. granulated sugar, plus more for sprinkling
1 refrigerated pie crust
1 egg beaten with 1 tbsp. milk (egg wash)
Caramel, for drizzling

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375°. Peel and dice one green and one red apple. Slice off tops and, using a melon baller, hollow out the

remaining apples.

In a small bowl, whisk together water & cornstarch.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Add diced apples, lemon juice, cinnamon, and sugar. Bring to a simmer and cook until apples are tender, about 5 minutes. Add in cornstarch mixture and cook 5 minutes more.

Place hollowed out apples in a baking dish and fill with cooked apple mixture.

On a piece of wax paper, roll out pie dough and cut into 4 circles. Slice each circle into thin strips. Make a lattice top on each apple, trimming any excess.

Brush crust with egg wash and sprinkle with more cinnamon sugar. Bake until apples are tender and crust is golden, 28 to 30 minutes.

Drizzle with caramel before serving.



Photo & recipe courtesy of delish.com