Thinking about home devices the first think that comes to mind is Amazon Echo. The voice activated Amazon Echo Smart Column with Alexa Assistant is not only a futuristic device, but also practical and affordable. The rapidly growing list of features, integrations and usage scenarios is impressive. Alexa is the first artificial intelligence to receive its own separate device. It will constantly wait for your commands as it is always in listening mode, answer questions, turn on music and control smart home devices. Alexa is able to interact with third-party applications and even make purchases.

The device may seem impressive when you pull it out of the box, but indoors the Echo looks rather inconspicuous. The black or white cylinder will organically fit into any interior. Like many other Bluetooth speakers, the Echo has a 360 degree sound. Speaker grille in the lower half of the device is made in a concise and neat design. On the upper surface of the device there is a barely noticeable circle of cutouts for 7 differently directed microphones that allow you to receive commands from a user located in any part of the room. Also on top is a glowing bezel that signals with a pleasant blue light when you turn to Echo. This causes a strange warm feeling to see Alexa carefully waiting for your request. Almost always you will use voice commands, but there is a manual volume control and the microphone mute button.

It is unlikely that you will carry the Echo from place to place, since, unlike most Bluetooth speakers, the device does not have a battery and it should always be connected to a power outlet. There is also no AUX output, so an external audio system can only be connected via Bluetooth. Speech recognition works just incredible. Alexa will understand you even if you formulate a phrase a little strangely or slur. Echo sends all your requests to the Amazon server for recognition and analysis. The devise responds to the voice appeal of "Alexa", welcoming blue light, diverging around the circumference of the upper deck. Orders should be pronounced clearly, since Alex recognizes the keywords and sends them to the cloud, where analyzes them. Cancellation of any command takes place using the words "Alexa, off" or analogues of this phrase. Alexa sends questions to bing. She quite tolerably use the Internet search and Wikipedia in response to questions.