

Getting Started with Alexa

How an Alexa Skill Works

An Alexa skill has both an interaction model—or voice user interface—and application logic. When a customer speaks, Alexa processes the speech in the context of your interaction model to determine the customer request. Alexa then sends the request to your skill application logic, which acts on it. You provide your application logic as a back-end cloud service hosted by Alexa, AWS, or another server.



Steps to Build A Skill

Step 1: Design the Voice User Interface

Step 2: Build

Step 3: Test

Step 4: Certification and Launch

Voice Design Concepts: Utterances, Intents, and Slots

Wake word: The wake word tells Alexa to start listening to your commands.

Launch word: action word that signals Alexa that a skill invocation will likely follow. Sample launch words include tell, ask, open, launch, and use.

Invocation name: To begin interacting with a skill, a user says the skill's invocation name. For example, to use the Daily Horoscope skill, the user could say, "Alexa, read my daily horoscope."

Utterance: a user's spoken request. These spoken requests can invoke a skill, provide inputs for a skill, confirm an action for Alexa, and so on. Consider the many ways a user could form their request.

Prompt: A string of text that should be spoken to the customer to ask for information. You include the prompt text in your response to a customer's request.

Intent: An intent represents an action that fulfills a user's spoken request. Intents can optionally have arguments called slots.

Slot value: Slots are input values provided in a user's spoken request. These values help Alexa figure out the user's intent.

Utterances

Alexa, tell plan my trip I need a vacation

wake word

launch

Invocation name

utterance

I'd like to take a trip next Friday.

utterance

slot value

Intent

PlanMyTripIntent {value: "2017-12-20"}

Intent

slot value

Practice: How to identify slots for an intent

Look at the utterances in the table, and note the words or phrases that represent variable information. These will become the intent's slots.

Utterance	Maps to
"I am going on a trip <u>Friday</u> ."	TRAVEL_DATE
"I want to visit <u>Portland</u> ."	TO_CITY
"I want to travel from <u>Seattle</u> to <u>Portland</u> <u>next Friday</u> ."	FROM_CITY, TO_CITY, and TRAVEL_DATE
"I'm <u>driving</u> to <u>Portland</u> to go <u>hiking</u> ."	MODE_OF_TRAVEL, TO_CITY, and ACTIVITIES