Google Home Smart Speaker

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

V2.0

November 30, 2021

Digital Inclusion Program

Sourcewise Google Home FAQs for Clients

As of November 30th, 2021, Sourcewise is no longer distributing Google Home Smart Speakers and is no longer providing training or technical support. However, we are providing this document to share many questions we have answered with additional instructions and tips to use the device.

Tip: If you are using your computer to read this document, you can use Ctrl + F (Find) on the keyboard to search by typing in key words into the field with the magnifying glass icon.

1. What are some of the ways I can use the speaker?

Some uses for the Google Home device include:

- Set timers and reminders, including medication and appointments
- Play music and soothing sounds
- Check the weather
- Order groceries
- Phone family and friends
- Translate conversations into other languages

2. Does Google Home understand commands in different languages?

According to Google Support, these languages are supported. Other languages may also be available.

Country or Region	Supported Languages
Australia	English
Austria	German
Canada	English, French CA
Denmark	Danish
France	French
Germany	German
India	English (India), English (US), Hindi
Ireland	English (UK)
Italy	Italian
Japan	Japanese
South Korea	Korean
Mexico	Spanish
Netherlands	Dutch

Norway	Norwegian
Singapore	English (Singapore), English (US)
Spain	Spanish
Sweden	Swedish
United Kingdom	English
United States	English

For the Chinese language, you can set up the speaker in three dialects including: Chinese (Taiwan), Chinese (Mandarin) or Chinese (Hong Kong).

3. Does the speaker understand commands in Vietnamese?

The speaker unfortunately does not currently understand Vietnamese commands.

4. How can I use the speaker to make calls? What is Google Duo? Why does my speaker use Duo to call people?

There are 2 ways to make a phone call.

1) You can make a direct phone call through the speaker to a contact on your smart device if you have the contact loaded into your contact list. You can say the following command "Hey Google, make a phone call to Jane Doe (a name in your contact list)" or "Hey Google, make a phone call to xxx-xxx-xxxx (say the complete phone number; however, please note this feature will not be available starting December 2022)". (Refer to the instruction guide on how to set up your contacts).

2) Google Duo is a video/voice chat app like FaceTime and Skype. It allows you to make Wi-Fi calling to use Google Duo. It also requires both the caller and the receiver to have the application installed on their phones and to be logged in.

5. I'm a caregiver for older adults, I have already setup this speaker with my own phone. Can I use my phone to call the speaker while I'm away from home?

Yes, you must have Wi-Fi or mobile hotspot connected to your smartphone/tablet then you can call the speaker by using Google Duo. However, Google Duo needs to be installed on your phone/tablet first

before you can initiate the call. Please also make sure your speaker is turned on and connected to the internet.

For Android devices:
The easiest way to install the Duo app is to tap and open the Google Home app on your Android devices. On the menu, please find and tap "Call Home." It should look something like this:
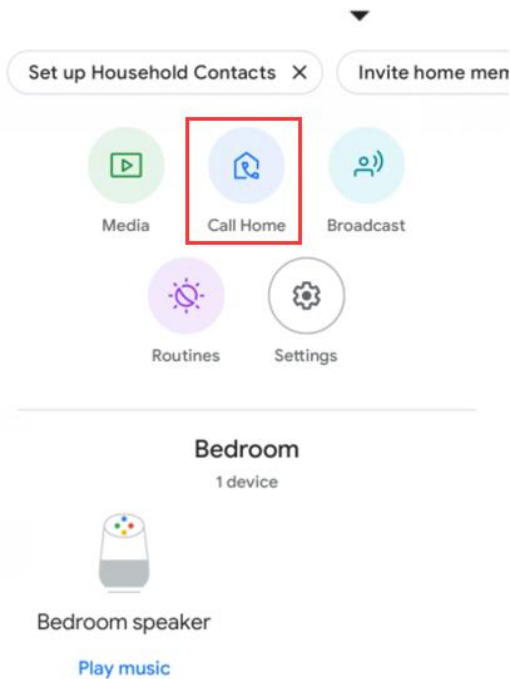
Or

You can open the Google assistant app on your Android smartphone and simply say the command "Make a call to _____ (The name of the speaker you've set up)."

Example: In this case, if the speaker's name was set up as "Bedroom speaker." I will say the command to my phone as "Make a call to my bedroom speaker."
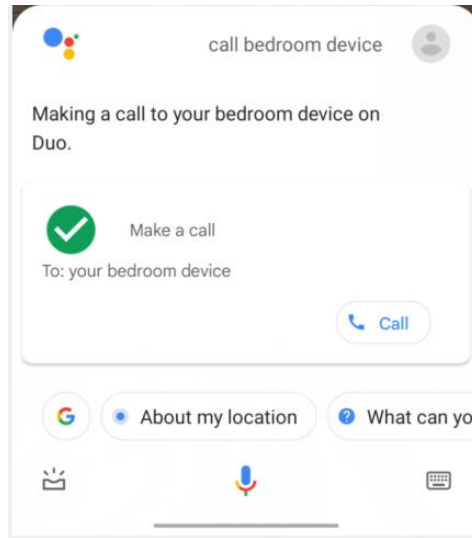
For Apple devices:

The easiest way is to open the Google Home App by finding and tapping on the following icon: . This will bring up the Google Home home screen. As long as everything is installed correctly, and your Google Home is connected to a reliable internet source, you can call your own Google Home by tapping on the following "Call Home" button.
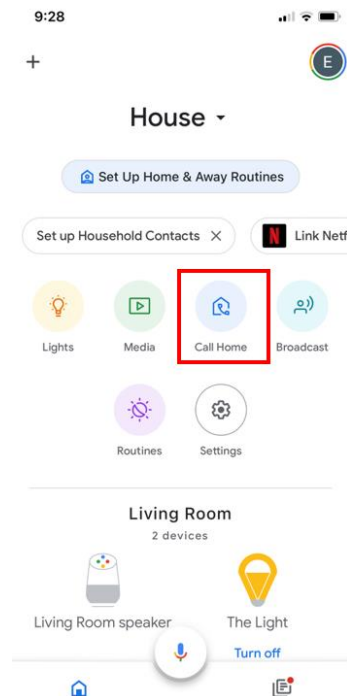
Tapping on the "Call Home" button will open Google Duo and the call to your speaker will take place. Do not be alarmed if this defaults to a video call – your speaker does not have a screen and will not be able to display your face.

This process can be done using voice commands if you utilize the Google Assistant app .

Locate and tap on the Assistant app on your Apple devices. As long as microphone privileges have been granted to your Assistant app, you can give your Google Home voice commands from this first menu.

To call your Google Home Smart Speaker from your Apple device from this first menu, simply phrase your question in the same way you would when speaking to your Google Home. "Hey/Okay Google, call _____ (The name of the speaker you've set up)." For example, if the speaker's name was set up as "Bedroom speaker", one would give the command to the Google Assistant app on their device "Hey Google, call bedroom speaker."

Upon hearing this command, the Google Home Assistant app will confirm and will state that it is calling your speaker using Google Duo. You will then be directed to Google Duo app and your call will be placed.

(No buttons should have to be tapped throughout this process, but if you cannot get the Assistant microphone to activate through voice commands like "Hey Google", locate the microphone button near the center bottom of the screen of the Google Home Assistant app. Tapping on the icon will activate the microphone to begin the process without saying "Hey Google".)

You must download and install both the Google Assistant App and the Google Duo App on your iPhone or iPad for this to work. These apps can be downloaded from the App Store.

6. Can I use the speaker to receive calls? Will the speaker announce the caller?

Yes, you can use the speaker to receive announced calls, but the call has to be made by using Google Duo 📹. By receiving Google Duo calls, both your phone and speaker will receive a notification. You can choose either one to answer the Duo call.

If you want to receive Duo calls from a caregiver, who originally setup the speaker to connect with their smartphone, please have them refer to Question 3 on *how to use my phone to call the speaker while I'm away from home.*

7. Can I make emergency calls from Google Home?

No, unfortunately you cannot make emergency calls with Google Home. However, you can work around this by creating emergency contacts on your phone, so you can call in case of an emergency. Then that person can call 911 for you from their own phone in case you are unable to.

See the next question on how to set your contacts up so you can use the device to call them.

8. How do I upload my contacts into my Google Account so I can call people?

To be able to call your family or friends using Google Home, you first need to add them to your phone or tablet contact list if they are not already on there.
1. Tap the Contact icon on your phone
2. Tap the plus + sign to add a new contact
3. Enter the person's first and last name
4. Tap add phone, then enter the person's phone number
5. Tap Done to finish

By default, recipients will not see your phone number. Instead, they will see Restricted ID, Unknown or No Caller ID.

9. Can I call a rideshare (e.g., Uber, Lyft) with Google Home?

Rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft are currently in the testing phases of implementing classic call-to-order services. Although these services

could take some time to reach the general public, there are various concierge rideshare services for older adults such as Envoy America (limited to Southern California at this time) and Silver Ride that you could call through your Google Home. All you have to do is set up a contact in your contact list that is uploaded onto your Google account. Once this is set up, when you would like to request a ride- all you have to do is say "Hey Google, call _____".

[Disclaimer: Sourcewise is not recommending these services but merely raising awareness that such services do exist].

If you are interested in local public transit services available to older adults in Santa Clara County, please call Sourcewise at (408) 350-3200 and select Option 1 to speak to a Community Resource Specialist.

10. Does my smartphone or tablet need to be on, in order for me to use the Google Home device?

Once the Google Home app has been installed and configured to your home Wi-Fi, your smartphone or tablet does not need to be turned on for you to use the device.

11. Can I use someone else's smartphone or tablet to configure my Google Home Smart Speaker?

If you don't have a smartphone or tablet, you can use a caregiver's smart device (with their consent) to configure your Google Home Smart Speaker. You will still be able to use Google Home after they leave. If you want to make calls using Google Home, make sure that your contacts are entered into their device.

Depending on your device, you may be able to contact your caregiver using Google Home (with your Google Home configured to their phone or tablet). Your caregiver may need to enter their own contact information into their device, in order to do this.

Alternatively, depending on your smart device, you may be able to give the command, "Hey Google, call my number," and after asking you to confirm your caregiver's phone number, Google Home will connect you to your caregiver's mobile device.

12. I have trouble hearing; will I be able to hear the smart speaker or adjust the volume?

There are 10 levels of volume for the Google Home Smart Speaker. The volume level can be adjusted in two ways:

1) The easiest way to change the volume level is to give the voice command "Hey Google, change the volume level to 50 percent". The speaker will hear this command and adjust the volume level.

2) You can also adjust the volume level with your fingers. If you press your finger on top of the speaker and swipe in a clockwise motion, you will see a circle of lights appear on top of the device. Swipe counterclockwise to turn down the volume. You can adjust the speaker to your preferred volume level.

Even when the speaker is set to the lowest volume setting, music will stop playing, but alerts and reminders will still be audible.

13. Is my Google Home speaker compatible with other smart devices (e.g., smart plugs, smart TV, lights, cameras, etc.)? Where can I get these smart devices for the speaker?

Yes, this device is compatible as long as it says "Compatible with Google Assistant" on the product box. You can find these devices in stores or through online shopping. However, these devices are not essential to setup and use the speaker. You can use Google Home without any additional smart devices.

If you need further instructions on how to set up a smart device, please refer to the Google support link below.

https://support.google.com/googlenest/answer/9159862?hl=en

14. Can I pair the Google Home with a 'Smart TV'?

Yes, you can pair the Google Home Smart speaker with eligible Smart TVs. Smart TVs with Chromecast capabilities will be able to connect to your Google Home Smart Speaker. When you are initially setting up the device, there will be sections that deal specifically with pairing eligible devices. As long as the Smart TV is connected to the same Wi-Fi as the Google Home Smart Speaker, they should be able to communicate with each other.

15. What information will I need to share with the device? What will the smart speaker do with this information?

The information that Google will require from you is explicitly stated when you are setting up the device. Address information will be used to identify eligible businesses in your vicinity (e.g., post office and/or grocery store locations). Phone contact information can be shared to use your voice to dial contact phone numbers, but this is optional. Personal information is used to customize your utilization of Google Home more fully.

Please refer to this link for more information: Data security and privacy on devices that work with Assistant – Google Nest Help

16. Does Google Home Speaker record my conversations?

No, Google Home does not record conversations.

You can turn on audio recording settings for interactions that take place using the "Hey Google" keyword phrase, but this is completely optional. These recordings are saved to help engineers improve the functionality of the devices as well as for the device to be able to recognize your voice better, but this is turned off by default – you must turn it on. Conversations are never recorded. You can always mute the microphone on the device by pressing the button located in the back.

Please refer to this link for more information: Data security and privacy on devices that work with Assistant – Google Nest Help

17. Does Google Home need to be plugged in? Does it have a battery?

The Google Home Smart Speaker requires a power outlet connection. Besides this wire, there are no other wires that will need to be connected and there is no battery for this device. You can safely unplug it and move it to a different location that is within reach of your Wi-Fi signal without having to set it up again.
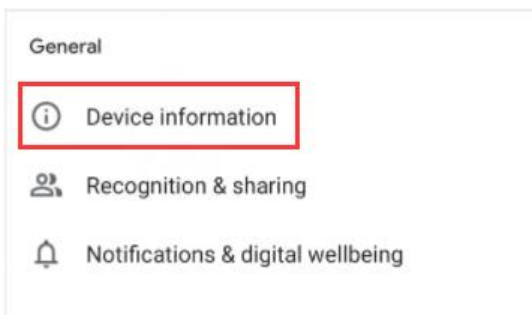
18. Is Google Home wireless?

Google Home uses Wi-Fi and Bluetooth to connect to your smartphone or tablet. No cables are required for this connection. However, the speaker has a power chord that must be plugged into a power outlet in order to operate, because there is no battery.
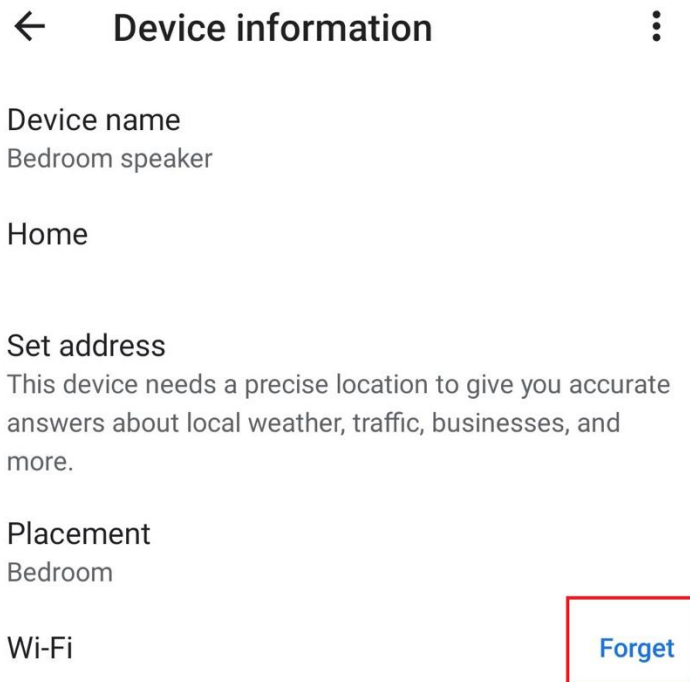
19. How do I change the Wi-Fi that my speaker is connected to?

If your speaker is connected to an existing Wi-Fi network, but you'd like to connect it to a new one, follow the steps below

1) Open the Google Home app .

2) Tap your device.

3) At the top right corner, tap Settings , then tap "Device information".

General

(i) Device information

🙎 Recognition & sharing

🔔 Notifications & digital wellbeing

4) Next to "Wi-Fi," tap "Forget", and you'll return to the Google Home app home screen.

← **Device information**   ⋮

Device name
Bedroom speaker

Home

Set address
This device needs a precise location to give you accurate answers about local weather, traffic, businesses, and more.

Placement
Bedroom

Wi-Fi   Forget

5) Follow the setup instructions to connect your device to a new Wi-Fi network.

If you get an error message that says "could not communicate with your [device]" when you try to "forget your network" or the steps above do not work, you will need to factory reset your device and set it up again. Please refer to "How do I factory reset the speaker?" below.

20. How do I factory reset my speaker?

While the speaker is still plugged into the power outlet, press, and hold onto the "mute" button for 15 seconds. The button is located on the back of the speaker. This is a good way to start over if you fear something was not installed correctly initially. Please be aware that resetting the device will completely wipe all of your previous settings on the device. When this is done, please remove the old instance of the speaker from your Google Home app on your smartphone or tablet.

Bedroom
1 device

Bedroom speaker

Play music
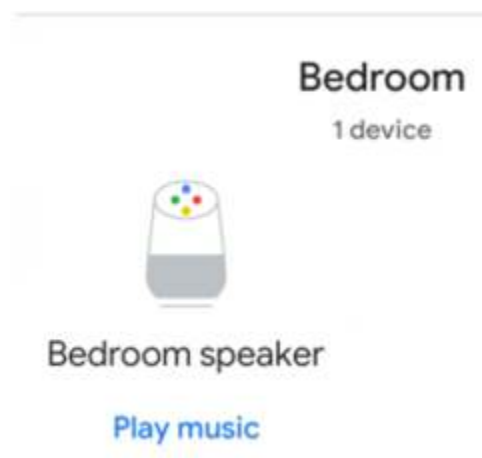
To do this:
1) Tap the speaker device you want to remove.

2) Tap the settings button ⚙ on the top right corner.

3) Tap "Remove Device" and select Remove
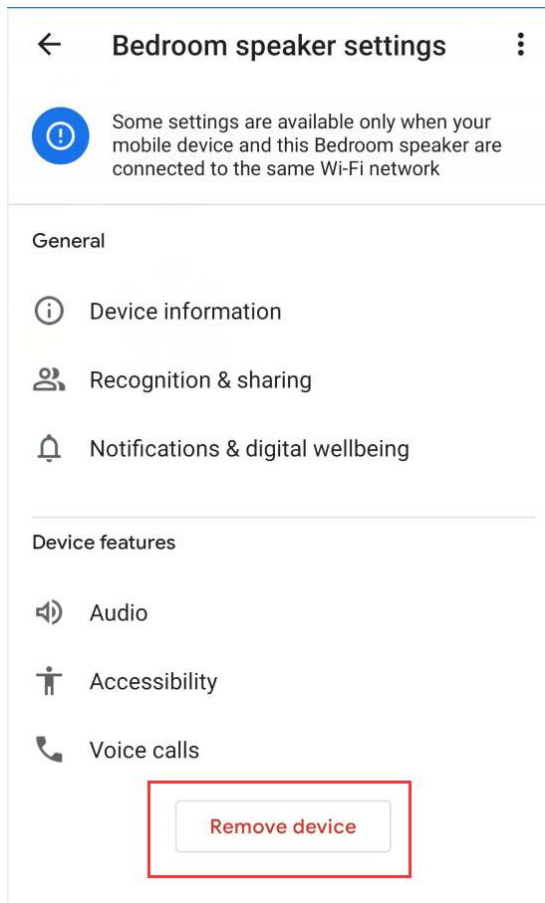
21. When should I do a factory reset of my speaker?

In general, if you suspect something is not functioning properly, you should consider doing a factor reset. For example, if you have tried several times to fix the speaker and you still could not identify what the issues are, we highly recommend a factory reset of the device and reinstall the app on your smartphone or tablet. (Please see above for those instructions).

22. Does the Google Home Smart Speaker turn off when not in use?

No, Google Home will not turn itself off, but it will go into "sleep mode" when not in use. The device will re-activate when it hears the voice command keyword "Hey/Okay Google."

23. Can you manually turn off the microphone?

Yes, there is a mute button located on the back of the speaker that turns off the microphone. When the mic is muted, lights will appear on the top of the speaker, and it will say "the mic is muted." In this mode, the device will not respond to the keyword phrase "Hey Google."

The mic will remain muted until you press the button to turn it on.

24. Can I adjust the microphone sensitivity on Google Home?

The mic sensitivity functionality can be adjusted through the Google Home App . From the home screen of the Assistant, tap on your profile icon

 that can be located at the top right of the screen. This will bring down a long menu. Navigate through (swipe downward all the way to the bottom) the menu until you locate the button that states "Adjust *Hey Google Sensitivity*". Once you tap on the speaker you are trying to adjust – you will be able to make the microphone less sensitive (adjusting to the left) or more sensitive (adjusting to the right) to the key phrase "Hey, Google". This could potentially help diminish the occurrences of false activations.
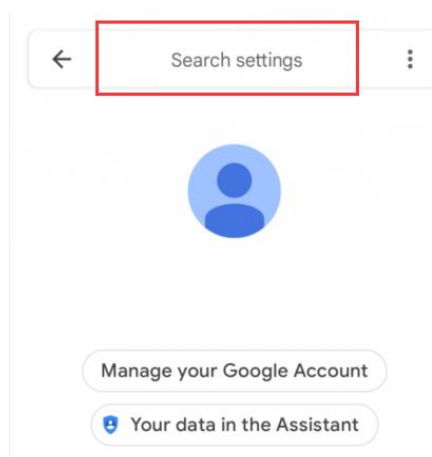
1) Open the Google Home app and tap on your profile icon on the top

   right corner.

2) Choose "Assistant settings".
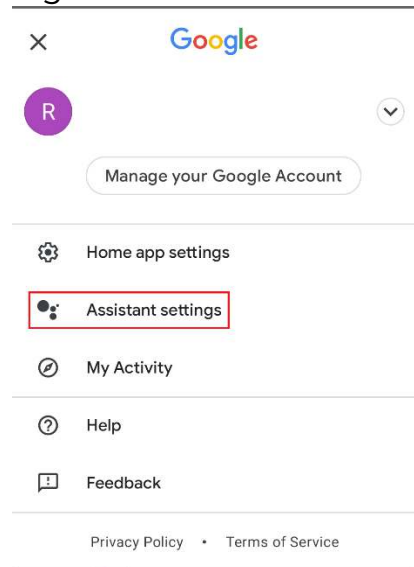
3). On the search bar, type "sensitivity" and tap on the search result:
"Hey Google" sensitivity.

If you are using an iPhone or an iPad, you will have to tap on the three
circles located at the top right of the screen, then select Search to enter
your search.

← sensitivity   ✕

"Hey Google" sensitivity
Adjust Assistant's responsiveness

4) Once you select on the speaker, you will be able to make the microphone either less sensitive (by adjusting to the left) or more sensitive (by adjusting to the right) to the key phrase "Hey, Google." This could potentially help diminish the occurrences of false activations.

25. Is the speaker safe for children to use?

Yes, the Google Home Smart Speaker is safe for children to use. Besides the power cord, there are no other components that could result in harm. There are also parental settings that can be activated and customized within the Google Home and Google Assistant apps.

26. Can I use the speaker to translate?

The Google Home Smart Speaker can be used to translate. Say "Hey Google, translate to <desired language>." The device will respond with "Okay, what would you like to translate" and then it will listen for what you would like to translate.

Google Home also has an Interpreter mode, which can be activated by saying, "Hey Google, <desired language> interpreter." The device will translate a conversation between the configured language and the desired language.
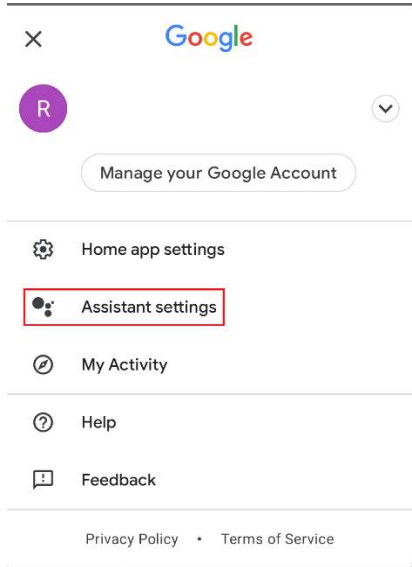
27. How do I listen to jokes or do commands in other languages?

You will have to set a secondary language with the speaker so it can detect a secondary language command.

How to set up a secondary language

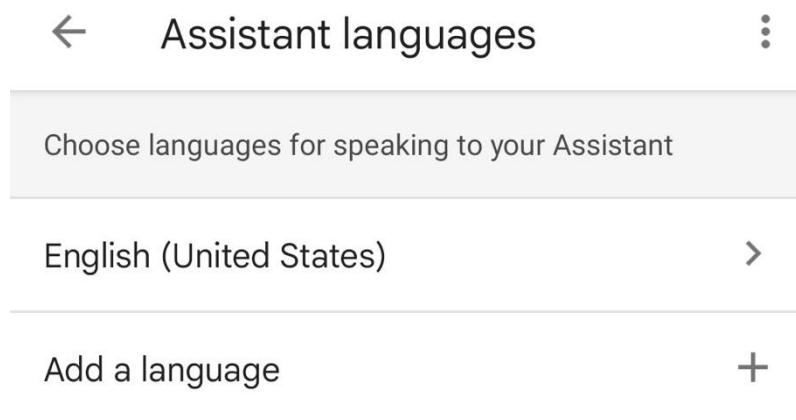1) Open the Google Home App and tap on the User profile icon

2) Tap on "My Assistant settings"

3) Tap on **"Languages"**

4) Tap **"Add a language"** and then select the secondary language you want to use.

 5) Wait for Google to install the language packet onto your phone. Once it is finished installing, you should be able to use that secondary language to give commands to the speaker.

For example, instead of giving the command, "Tell me a joke in Chinese", you would have to say the command in that desired secondary language.

To use other commands specific to that language, you can say, "Hey Google, tell me about the news" in the specific secondary language.

Please Note: The Google Assistant will only allow two (2) languages to be set to your account. If you want to change to a different language, please make sure to go back to step 4 and make the change in the language settings.

28. Why won't my speaker stop listening for commands?

Similar to the way in which you are required to utilize the key phrases "Hey/Okay Google" to activate the speaker's microphone, you often need to give it the command "Google, stop" to let the speaker know that you are done with the current command. This issue most commonly arises when requesting translation.

29. How can I connect via Bluetooth? How can I play Audio books/YouTube music connecting to my phone? How can I make Zoom calls through the speaker microphone?

The speaker will only allow you to play audio books that you own from the Google Play Store. The app is called "Google Play Books & Audiobooks." If you do not own any Google Play Books, but utilize other audio book applications, such as Audible, we recommend using the speaker's Bluetooth mode to cast media from your phone through the speaker.

There are 3 steps to connecting a device to another device via Bluetooth:
1) Activate one device as "discoverable."
2) Locate that device with the second device and
3) Pair the first device to the second device.

(1) To activate the Google Home as a discoverable Bluetooth device, say the command: "Hey Google, activate Bluetooth mode." You then want to search on your smartphone for your Bluetooth settings to connect the two.
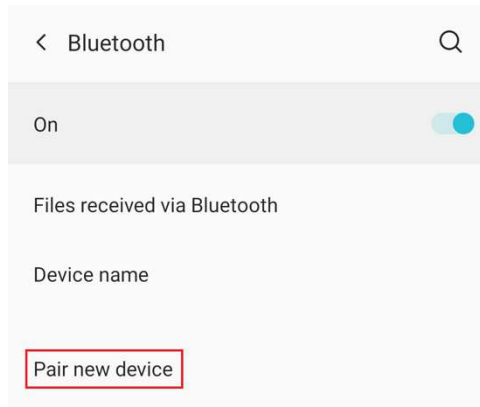
(2) For Android devices:

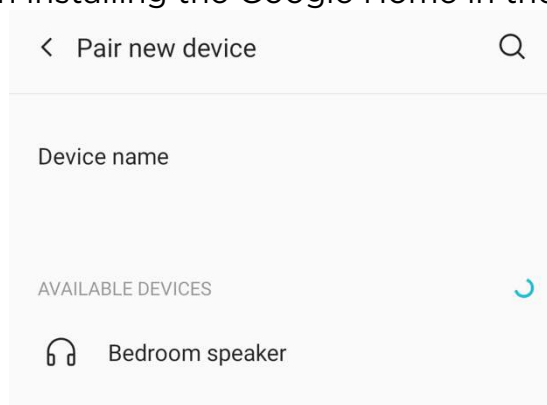On up-to-date Android mobile devices, do the following:

a) Swipe down from the top of the unlocked screen.
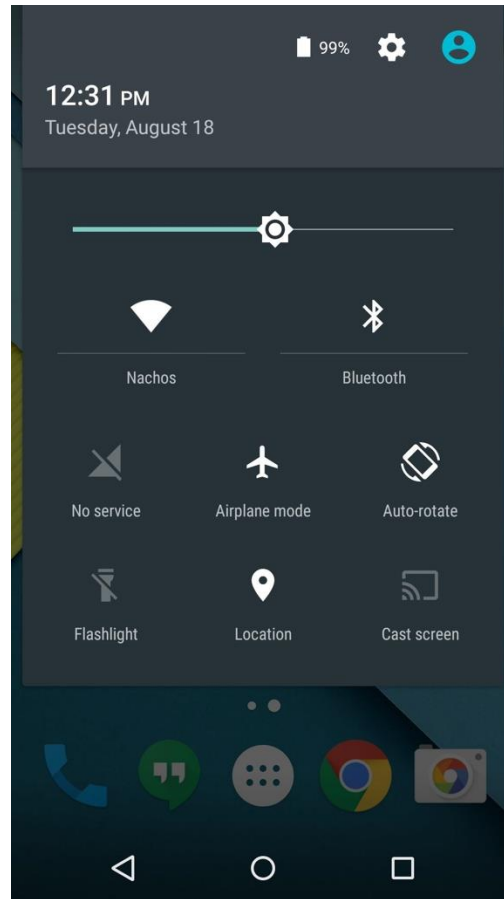
b) Locate this button, ⊗ (the icon is blue when it is on, and grey when it is off).

c) Press and hold your finger onto the button ⊗ , this will bring up a new menu.

d) Make sure your smartphone's Bluetooth is turned on and tap "Pair new device."

e) Locate the new device that displays the name you assigned to your Google Home when installing the Google Home in the app.

f) If you are using an older version of Android, you may have to take a few extra steps to locate the Bluetooth settings through your general settings. Follow any on-screen instructions.

(2) For Apple devices:

On up-to-date Apple mobile devices: this is done by
(a) Using your finger, press and swipe down from the top right corner of the unlocked screen and avoid pressing on any apps.
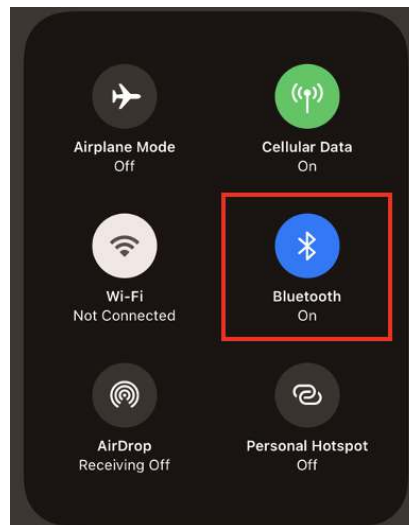
(b)   Locate this Bluetooth button (which is grey when off), tap this button one time to turn on Bluetooth and the button will turn blue.

(c) Press and hold your finger onto the blue button to open an expanded menu selection.

(d)   Locate the same icon and hold down on it again.

(e) This time, a list will appear that is usually blank. Locate the button at the bottom that says, "Bluetooth Settings." This button will take you to the settings. This is where you will be connecting to your speaker.

(f) Search here under the "Other Devices" header for the name you gave your speaker.
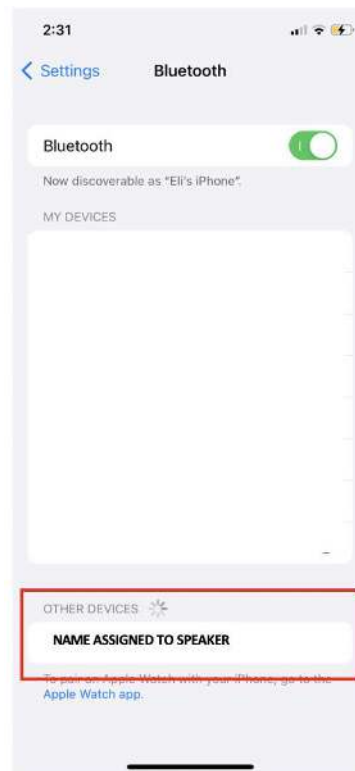
All of these steps may also be done by navigating through your "Settings" app on your phone or tablet. From your home screen, find your Settings

app. Your Settings app has the icon that looks like this [image] . Tap on this button to bring up your full settings.

(g)   From the main settings screen, find and tap on the Bluetooth Settings menu button

(h) From this screen, go back up to step (f) to complete this set up.

(3) Pair both devices.
a. Give your speaker the command "Hey Google, Activate Bluetooth Mode" (lights will appear on the top of the speaker)
b. Access your phone's Bluetooth settings
c. Locate the name that you gave your Google Home and pair the devices by tapping on it with your finger.

Once these are paired – you can disconnect them from each other by saying "Hey Google, Turn Off Bluetooth Mode," or by deactivating Bluetooth on your smartphone by tapping on the Bluetooth button from the swipe down menu (step 2, part a).

This allows users to utilize music streaming services that are not as nicely integrated into the speaker's applications.

This allows users to utilize audio book streaming services other than those found on the Google Play Store. By default, the speaker uses the Google Play store to find a play audiobook. If you are already using this platform – you can just say "Hey Google, play ____ by ____". If you prefer to use Audible, you will have to listen by connecting your mobile device to the speaker. This course of action will result in loss of voice command functionality, but it will still allow you to listen to Audiobooks through the speaker.

This allows users to utilize the device as a microphone/speaker for applications such as Zoom.

Important Note: When done using Bluetooth mode, turn it off by saying to your Google Home the command "Stop Bluetooth Mode." Otherwise, your speaker will continue to broadcast sounds from your mobile device.

30. Do I have to say "Hey, Google" every time I want to speak to the speaker?

The speaker has a mode called continue conversation, which allows the user to give continuous commands after each response from the speaker. However, continued conversation mode does not mean that Google Home will stay awake forever. If the Google Home does not receive a command after a certain amount of time, it will go back into standby mode, and you will have to say "Hey Google" to give it another command.

1) Open the Google Home app . Then, on the Google home menu, tap on your account/profile picture on the top right corner.
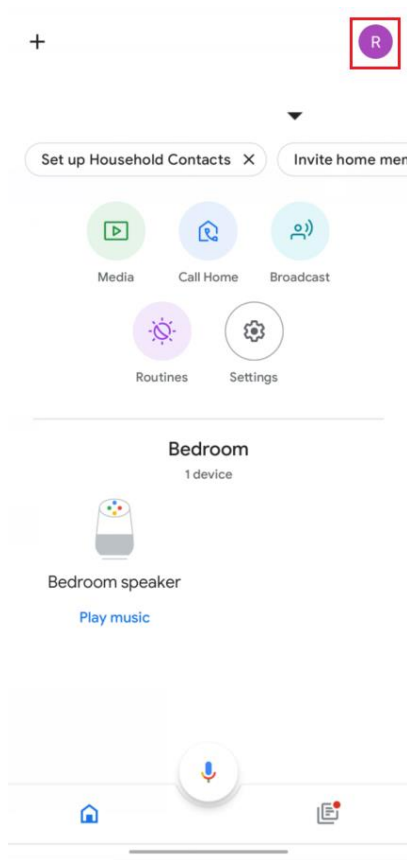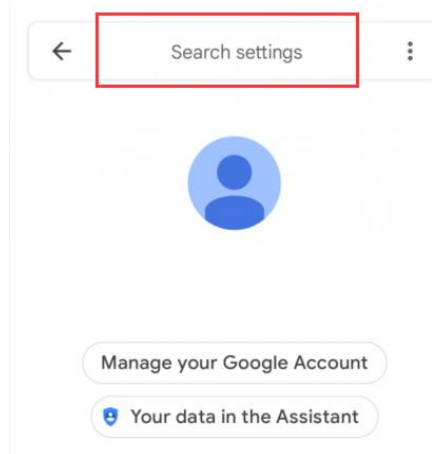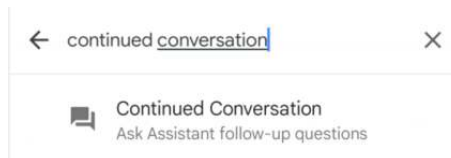
2) Tap on "Assistant settings."
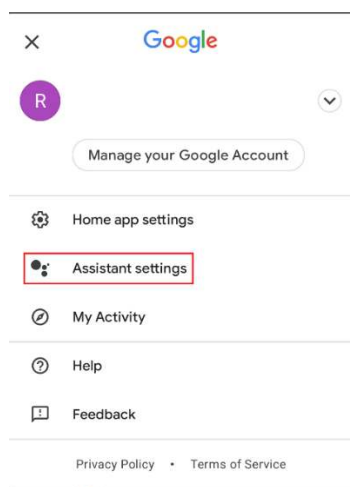
3) In Assistant settings, tap on "Search settings" on the very top. Type and search "Continued Conversations". If you are using an iPhone or an iPad,
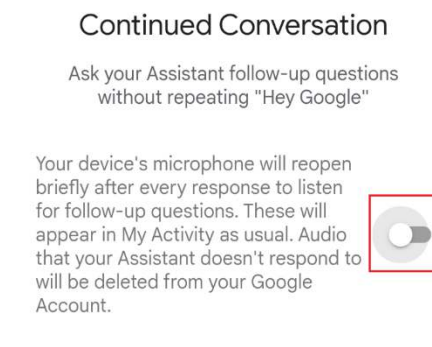
you will have to tap on the three circles located at the top right of the screen, then select Search to enter your search.

4) Under the search result, tap "Continued Conversations".

5) Tap on the button to activate Continued Conversation.

Note: If you want to stop using this feature, please start from step 1) again

and tap this icon on step 4) to turn off Continued conversation.

31. Can I send emails or text through my speaker? Can I dictate emails or texts?

Unfortunately, you cannot send emails or text messages with the speaker. The device does not have the capability to send text or email through voice commands.

32. How do I tell the speaker to set a reminder and notify me on my smartphone?

Note: For Apple devices, you will need to download and install the Google Home assistant app on your device.

To set a reminder on your smartphone through the speaker. You would simply say the command "Hey Google, set up a reminder on my phone." Then it will respond as "Okay. What's the reminder?" You can specify the time by responding "in 3 minutes, 5 minutes, etc." (Please note that reminders are not available in less than 3 minutes, or else it will set up a timer instead). Then it will respond with "Okay. What's the reminder?" Then say the reminder, such as "Remind me to take my medication in 15 minutes". This reminder will show up on your phone's notification.

33. How can I take verbal notes using the speaker and then send it to my phone?

You can start by saying the command, "Hey Google, take notes." It will respond with, "Okay. What do you want to say?" After you said your notes, it will respond "Okay. Saved your notes." Then say the command, **"**Hey Google, send it to my phone." You should receive notifications from Google Assistant .

If you want to send notes about weather, shopping list, movie, translations, after you ask the speaker about specific information, simply wake up the speaker again by saying the command, "Hey Google, send it to my phone."

Please refer to this guide if you do not see any notification on your phone. Or if you need in-depth information on this command: https://support.google.com/googlenest/answer/7530880?hl=en&co=GENIE.Platform%3DAndroid

There are plenty of resources on the internet to help you. If you have a question we did not cover here, search on the internet by typing in your question on your

preferred browser. There are numerous articles as well as videos you can locate on YouTube.