

Given that there are as many objectives in wanting to install cameras as there are options in camera selection, we have taken the approach of first defining the objective. If your objective is on the less elaborate side like just wanting to know what's happening around your home, you might want to take a look at the Blink system (now purchased by Amazon – yes, it was that good, so Amazon bought Blink): Low cost, Ease of Installation, Battery powered, from 1 to 10 cameras, No mandatory subscriptions, Indoor/Outdoor cameras and day to day ease of use.

A battery powered wireless system like Blink relies solely on having Wi-Fi connectivity so obviously like any other wireless system it would not be a great choice for commercial properties that need 24/7 monitored security. If you prefer the more expensive wired cameras that carry installation charges (or do it yourself options: Drilling, running wires in your home, etc.) along with likely monthly monitoring fees, by all means, proceed with that plan. That should give you an even better camera experience than the Blink system. But for the rest of us, let us move on.

Please note that at the time of this writing, there are 4 other “wireless” camera offerings (Arlo, Ring, ReLink and Eufycam-E) with Blink winning many of the comparisons but not all (depending on your particular need). Regardless, whichever one you choose, setup and day to day use as defined below would at least be somewhat similar.

- **Part 1 of Setup:** A Blink system can be purchased with 1 to 5 cameras and comes with a Blink Hub. The hub is a small device that connects to an ethernet port on your modem/router. This hub then communicates with any blink cameras you setup. You then control your Blink system using the app on your smartphone. You will find the app very simple to use if you are at all familiar with any other Smartphone apps. The Hub comes as part of a Camera set typically with 1, 2 or 3 cameras. Once you have the Hub, you can simply purchase extra cameras at any time and add them on as you go. Be aware:
 - There will be older and newer versions of both cameras and hubs likely available whenever you get ready to purchase. The newer units will sport more options and possibly even a better picture so be sure to compare before buying. To date, units have been backwards compatible and while different versions of cameras are supported, the newer camera options may not be supported on an older hub.
 - Both indoor and outdoor cameras work pretty much the same but outdoor cameras are made to handle being hit by the elements, so we suggest indoor cameras stay indoors.
 - Currently each HUB supports up to 10 cameras and that may be a mixture of both indoor and outdoor models.
 - The indoor cameras can simply sit on a shelf or other flat surface but if desired, may also be mounted with a small attachment that comes with the camera.
 - The outdoor cameras have a mounting Snap-on clip as well but it is suggested that you look at 3rd party BLINK mounting options since they are very reasonably priced and provide more solid support as well as flexibility in mounting options.

- **Part 2 of Setup:** is as simple as installing (2) provided AA Lithium batteries and placing the camera facing the area to be monitored. Don't forget, no wires anywhere – just the small rectangular camera itself. You then use the App to name that camera and set any options you might want.
 - System can be enabled to send video clips to your phone when movement is observed and/or view live stream from these cameras.
 - Sensitivity, clip length (5 to 60 seconds) and 2-way voice are just some of the tweaks that can be set for each camera.
 - Batteries last anywhere from 1 to 2 years depending on settings you apply and can be replaced for approximately \$1.50. I replaced batteries in 2 of my cameras at the 16-month mark when I had an indication from the Blink app.
- Blink is compatible with the Alexa voice system and may be used to enable/disable the system, show what the camera sees and even interact with other smart devices in your home (if you have them).
 - For example, in my home, if someone or something moves on my deck between certain hours, Alexa announces “Movement on deck” on my Alexa devices and turns the Deck light on (I use Hue lights). I simply use the Blink app to disable this when the deck is being used.
 - My wife asked me to start enabling the cameras every night so that she can see who was eating her flowers. At this point, I had to add a second hub to control outdoor cameras separately but that worked like a charm.
 - Echo devices that have screens may also be used to view cameras. If I get an alert (or just want to view a camera) when I'm not home, I go into the app and view it. If I want to see a camera view when home, I usually just use an ECHO SHOW unit and tell Alexa, “Show me the back deck” (although I could just use the app as well).

Cost

Now we know that setup is easy. What about Cost?

At the time of this writing (with no sales found today), a Hub and a Camera would cost \$99 or (Hub, 2 Cameras for \$179) or (Hub, 3 Cameras for \$249). I have also purchased a few extra cameras, each time paying \$49. These were added to my existing Hub. Pretty low cost and fuss for some piece of mind.

I realize that this is only the bare minimum information and that you may have questions. If so, please remember to use the Dear Technology Abbey email address (hmtcdearta@gmail.com) to ask for additional information (or any other technical questions you might have).