



# What is the Internet of Things?

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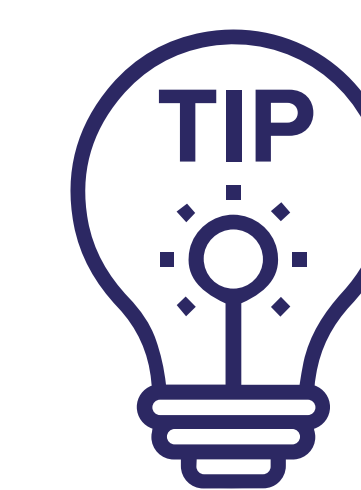


# What is the Internet of Things?

Typically, people only think of computers and mobile phones as devices that connect to the internet. However, over the past few years, internet connectivity has extended to other devices, such as TVs, refrigerators, cars and thermostats. This phenomenon is called the Internet of Things (IoT). It is simply the idea of adding computer processors to 'everyday' items and connecting them to the internet so they can talk to one another. For example, an internet-connected coffee machine can be linked to your alarm clock on your mobile phone so that every morning your coffee is ready for you when you wake up. Or lights and thermostats can automatically turn off when you're not at home to cut down on consumption and thus costs.

The purpose of the Internet of Things is to automate tasks and make our lives more convenient. However, there is one major problem. Manufacturers are under pressure to produce IoT devices and deliver

them to market at an affordable price. This often means security is neglected and important software updates are ignored, leaving them vulnerable to cyberattacks. As more internet-connected (or smart) devices enter the home or workplace, the more entry points there are for cybercriminals to exploit in order to access the entire network. A successful breach could result in an attacker controlling the heat in your home, listening to your conversations or watching you through your smart webcam.



## IoT TOP TIP

**Leaving your IoT network unsecured could be just as dangerous as leaving the doors to your home unlocked. Before you buy an IoT device, check its security features. If it comes with a default password, change it straight away to something more complex. Finally, whenever a software update becomes available on the device itself or via an accompanying app, apply it immediately.**

