

Best Home Security Systems of 2025

We surveyed over 11,000 security system, security camera, and video doorbell owners to find the best options for your money

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The best home security systems work reliably and are easy to set up and use. Photo: Getty Images

Choosing a home security system is anything but simple. You have to decide whether you want to install it yourself or hire a professional, what security cameras and sensors you want, and if it's worth paying a monthly subscription for professional monitoring or camera video storage.

On top of that, the vast majority of home security systems look almost interchangeable, using similar sensors, monitoring services, and (often confusing) pricing strategies. Despite appearances, though, your experience can vary drastically depending on the brand you choose.

Home security systems differ in ways you can't see, such as the reliability of their sensors and their tech support services. These differences came to light in our first-ever survey on home security systems owned by more than 11,000 Consumer Reports members. We used those results to create our first home security system satisfaction ratings. (For more info on how we created the ratings, see our methodology.)

Below you'll find the top four home security system brands for each of two categories: professionally monitored systems, and systems you monitor yourself.

Some brands, such as Ring and SimpliSafe, allow you to choose whether you want professional monitoring and, as a result. These brands appear in both categories, with slightly different scores. The survey results also include data on systems that are only composed of security cameras and/or video doorbells and lack common alarm system hardware (such as door/window sensors and sirens).

The results below show overall satisfaction ratings and scores for three individual attributes: value for price paid, pricing transparency, and tech support. Members also rated other attributes of their systems, such as how reliable the alarms and sensors were, how helpful alerts or notifications were, and—for professionally monitored systems—satisfaction with the monitoring service. To see all of these scores, check out our home security system satisfaction ratings.

If you need help understanding what to look for in a system, see our in-depth home security system buying guide.

Best Professionally Monitored Home Security Systems

These systems require a monthly fee for professional monitoring services, with some even requiring a multi-year service contract. These contracts will often help subsidize the cost of the system hardware and may include professional installation.



SimpliSafe

Overall Satisfaction Score



- Contract requirement:** No
- Subscription fee for self-monitoring:** No
- Cellular backup service:** Yes, with subscription
- Security camera storage:** Requires a subscription

SimpliSafe offers a DIY home security system that you can purchase at retail or directly from SimpliSafe, and then install yourself. It's available in various starter kits for homes big and small, but you can also build a custom bundle on SimpliSafe's website with the sensors and components you want. Professional installation is also available for an additional fee starting at \$125.

SimpliSafe systems can be used with or without professional monitoring. The brand's ratings as a self-monitored system can be found further down, but as a professionally monitored system, SimpliSafe receives excellent scores for ease of use, ease of setup, helpfulness of its alerts, pricing transparency, value for price paid, professional monitoring, app functionality, and its ability to easily expand your system with more sensors, cameras, or other components. It also receives very good scores for tech support, reliability of its alarm and sensors, the quality or reliability of its wireless connectivity (this includes whether sensors go offline and how well devices in the system stay connected to WiFi), and satisfaction with security camera performance.

The system works with CR-tested SimpliSafe security cameras, the SimpliSafe Doorbell Pro SS3 video doorbell, and the brand's smart lock. Additional contact sensors and motion sensors for the system cost \$15 and \$35, respectively.

It's worth noting that you can self-monitor the SimpliSafe system without a subscription. (See details below.) Your features will be quite limited, but you will be able to remotely arm/disarm the system from the SimpliSafe app and receive notifications when the alarm is triggered.

SimpliSafe makes things confusing by offering five different subscription plans for its security system. The Self-Monitoring with Camera Recordings plan (\$10 per month) adds 30 days of cloud video storage for up to 10 cameras and scheduled arming of the system. The Standard Monitoring plan (\$22 per month) lacks many of the features of the Self-Monitoring plan but adds professional monitoring and cellular backup. The Core plan (\$32 per month) gives you all the features of both the Self-Monitoring and Standard Monitoring plans, plus video alarm verification, voice control via Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant, and access to homeowner's insurance discounts.

The final two plans build on the Core plan. They're only for customers who purchase SimpliSafe's Outdoor Camera Series 2 and want their system to have Active Guard Outdoor Protection, where SimpliSafe monitoring agents check your cameras when they detect motion and will actively attempt to deter intruders.

The Pro plan provides this service overnight (from 8 pm to 6 am local time) for \$50 per month, while the Pro Plus plan provides this service 24/7 for \$80 per month.

Ring

Overall Satisfaction Score



Contract requirement: No

Subscription fee for self-monitoring: Yes, if you want to control and monitor it remotely

Cellular backup service: Yes, with subscription

Security camera storage: Requires a subscription

Ring offers two different DIY security systems: Ring Alarm (2nd generation) and Ring Alarm Pro. Both can be installed yourself and are widely sold at retail in starter kits of various sizes. The Pro system doubles as a mesh home WiFi router that can be expanded with Eero WiFi router nodes. Professional installation is available for these systems through an outside company for an additional fee starting at \$160.

Ring systems can be used with or without professional monitoring, and ratings for self-monitored systems from this brand can be seen further down. In our ratings for professionally monitored systems, Ring receives high scores across the board, with top scores specifically for ease of use, ease of setup, and the ability to easily expand the system with additional sensors, cameras, or other components. Ring Alarm systems work with CR-tested Ring security cameras, Ring video doorbells, and other smart home devices like Schlage Encode smart locks and Honeywell Home smart thermostats. For a full list, see the Works With Ring webpage.

You can technically self-monitor Ring Alarm systems for free, but all that means is you can arm/disarm them from the keypad and the siren will go off when the system is triggered. However, you won't receive smartphone alerts when the alarm goes off or be able to remotely arm/disarm the system from the Ring app. For that functionality, you will need a Ring Home subscription.

Ring offers three tiers of Ring Home subscriptions and two add-on service subscriptions. The Ring Home Basic subscription (\$5 per month or \$50 per year) is mainly for video storage for one camera or doorbell, but it also enables smartphone alerts for Ring Alarm systems. The Ring Home Standard subscription (\$10 per month or \$100 per year) adds the ability to arm/disarm the system from the Ring app, cellular backup service for the alarm system, and cloud video storage and other features for all cameras and doorbells in your home. The Ring Home Premium subscription (\$20 per month or \$200

per year) adds SOS Emergency Response buttons in the Ring app, 24/7 video recording, AI-powered video search, and two features for Ring Alarm Pro: backup internet service and local video storage on a microSD card (yes, you have to pay to store the footage locally).

Finally, Ring offers two add-on services on top of the Ring Home Standard and Premium plans. One is a professional monitoring service for \$10 per month, and the other is a virtual security guard service for \$99 per month.

Digital Security Controls (DSC)

Overall Satisfaction Score



Digital Security Controls differs slightly from the other brands on this list. The company doesn't offer its own complete home security system and service. Instead, it manufactures home security system hardware that it sells to home security dealers, which offer it as their home security system. Some examples include Safe and Sound Security and The Slomin's Shield. Even ADT used to sell DSC hardware, but it now uses its own equipment.

Because DSC only provides the hardware, it's possible to own a DSC system that uses software or monitoring services from different companies. For example, you could get a DSC system that uses an Alarm.com smartphone app or ADT professional monitoring. As a result, our ratings for DSC are an amalgamation of experiences with many different apps and monitoring services.

In our survey, DSC received very good scores on almost all the attributes we asked about. The exceptions are DSC's midlevel scores for the helpfulness of its alerts and the ability to expand the system. We also couldn't give DSC scores for camera satisfaction or app functionality, as there were too few DSC users in the sample whose system included those components.

Frontpoint

Overall Satisfaction Score



Contract requirement: Yes, with three years of professional monitoring

Cellular backup service: Yes, with subscription

Security camera storage: Store footage for free with a microSD card.

Frontpoint offers a contract-based DIY home security system. That means the company will sell you its equipment at a significant discount in exchange for you paying a monthly monitoring service fee for three years. Frontpoint only lists one service plan on its website for \$50 per month, but there are cheaper options if you call the company (more on that below). Being a DIY system, you set up the Frontpoint system yourself, but the company also offers professional installation through an outside company starting at \$99.

In our survey, Frontpoint received excellent scores for ease of setup, ease of use, and the ability to expand the system. It also received very good scores for tech support, alarm/sensor reliability, the reliability and quality of its wireless connectivity, helpfulness of alerts, pricing transparency, professional monitoring, and app functionality. However,

it only received a midlevel score on value for the price paid.

Frontpoint only details one monitoring plan on its website, the Ultimate Monitoring Plan for \$50 per month, but there is also a \$30 per month version of the plan for customers who buy the equipment outright at full price. Both plans are identical, and you need one of them to enable features like remote smartphone app control; security camera analytics and live streaming; panic button emergency response; email and text alerts; and smart home integrations for lights, locks, and thermostats.

However, there is also a \$45 per month plan for discounted equipment that forgoes security camera functionality and smart home integrations. And last but not least, there is a \$15 per month plan that is only for Frontpoint security cameras.

Bottom line: You'll save money if you buy the equipment outright and go for the \$30 per month plan.

For example, the basic Frontpoint Essential Home Security System bundle costs \$69 with a three-year contract or \$387 at full price. If you buy the discounted hardware, you'll spend \$1,869 with the \$50 per month plan, or \$1,689 with the \$45 per month plan, after three years.

If you buy the hardware at full price, you'll spend \$1,467 after three years.

Best Self-Monitored Home Security Systems

You can monitor all of these security systems yourself from your smartphone. Most allow you to do this for free, but some systems still require a subscription fee to control them from their smartphone apps and receive alerts when the alarm goes off. Ring and SimpliSafe appear again in this category with different scores, as both brands' systems can be used with or without monitoring services.

Eufy

Overall Satisfaction Score

72



Value for Price Paid



Pricing Transparency



Tech Support

Contract requirement: No

Subscription fee for self-monitoring: No

Cellular backup service: No

Security camera storage: Store footage for free using internal memory or a microSD card, depending on the camera.

Eufy primarily sells home security cameras, but the company does offer one DIY home security system bundle. Many of Eufy's security camera kits can also be outfitted with alarm sensors that you can buy separately. Notably, the company does not offer professional installation services.

In our survey, Eufy receives near top-level scores on almost every attribute we rate, from ease of setup to tech support. The one exception is pricing transparency, where it receives top-level marks. The system works with CR-tested Eufy security cameras, video doorbells, and smart locks. Additional contact sensors and motion sensors for the system cost \$30 each.

You can self-monitor Eufy's alarm system and get full functionality from its security cameras without a subscription. Eufy offers

subscriptions for emergency response services, professional monitoring, and optional cloud video storage, but they aren't required to use the system.

SimpliSafe

Overall Satisfaction Score

66



Value for Price Paid



Pricing Transparency



Tech Support

Contract requirement: No

Subscription fee for self-monitoring: No

Cellular backup service: Yes, with subscription

Security camera storage: Requires a subscription

SimpliSafe offers a DIY home security system that you can install yourself and purchase at retail or directly from SimpliSafe. It's available in various starter kits for homes big and small, but you can also build a custom bundle on SimpliSafe's website with the sensors and components you want. Professional installation is also available for an additional fee starting at \$125.

You can see ratings for professionally monitored SimpliSafe systems above. In our ratings of self-monitored systems, SimpliSafe received very good scores for every attribute except satisfaction with camera performance, where it still gets a midrange score. The system works with CR-tested SimpliSafe security cameras, the SimpliSafe Doorbell Pro SS3 video doorbell, and the brand's smart lock. Additional contact sensors and motion sensors for the system cost \$15 and \$35, respectively.

You can self-monitor the SimpliSafe system without a subscription. Your features will be quite limited, but you will be able to remotely arm/disarm the system from the SimpliSafe app and receive notifications when the alarm is triggered.

SimpliSafe offers five different subscription plans for its security system, which you will need to consider if you want features like security camera storage, cellular backup service, or voice control via Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant.

Ring

Overall Satisfaction Score

65



Value for Price Paid



Pricing Transparency



Tech Support

Contract requirement: No

Subscription fee for self-monitoring: Yes, if you want to control and monitor it remotely

Cellular backup service: Yes, with subscription

Security camera storage: Requires a subscription

Ring offers two different DIY security systems: Ring Alarm (2nd generation) and Ring Alarm Pro. Both can be installed yourself and are widely sold at retail in starter kits of various sizes. The Pro system doubles as a mesh home WiFi router that can be expanded with Eero WiFi

router nodes. Professional installation is available for these systems through an outside company for an additional fee starting at \$160.

Ratings for professionally monitored Ring systems are above, but in our ratings of self-monitored systems, Ring receives very good scores for every survey attribute, from ease of use and ease of setup to value for price paid. Ring Alarm systems work with CR-tested Ring security cameras, Ring video doorbells, and other smart home devices like Schlage Encode smart locks and Honeywell Home smart thermostats. For a full list, see the Works With Ring webpage.

You can technically self-monitor Ring Alarm systems for free, but all that means is you can arm/disarm them from the keypad and the siren will go off when the system is triggered. However, you won't receive smartphone alerts when the alarm goes off or be able to remotely arm/disarm the system from the Ring app. For that functionality, you will need a Ring Home subscription.

Ring offers three tiers of Ring Home subscriptions and two add-on service subscriptions. You will need these subscriptions for features like security camera storage, cellular backup service, and emergency response services.

Wyze

Overall Satisfaction Score



Contract requirement: No

Subscription fee for self-monitoring: No, but only for security cameras

Cellular backup service: No

Security camera storage: Some Wyze cameras offer free storage on a microSD card, but most require a subscription.

As a self-monitored system, Wyze is a bit confusing. You can self-monitor Wyze security cameras and video doorbells, but you can't self-monitor the Wyze DIY alarm system. That system is heavily tied to a subscription, so much so that the company markets them as one product called Wyze Home Monitoring.

If you buy the Wyze Home Monitoring starter kit at retail, you can technically set it up without the subscription and receive alerts for the

individual sensors. But you won't be able to arm the system or have the siren go off in the event of a break-in.

The Wyze Home Monitoring service costs \$10 per month or \$100 per year. If you opt for the annual plan, Wyze will give you a free system hub and 28 percent off all sensors when you purchase a system from their website.

In our survey, Wyze received a favorable Overall Score. It gets an excellent score for value for price paid and very good scores for satisfaction with camera performance, pricing transparency, ease of setup, ease of use, and the ability to expand the system with more sensors and accessories. It also receives midlevel scores for alarm/sensor reliability, helpfulness of alerts, tech support, quality of its wireless connectivity (this includes whether sensors go offline and how well devices in the system stay connected to WiFi), and app functionality.

How We Evaluate Home Security Systems

We surveyed more than 11,000 CR members who own home security cameras and alarm systems to understand their experiences owning these products.

The survey covered 12 attributes of owning a system. They are: value for price paid, tech support, alarm/sensor reliability, quality of wireless connectivity, ease of use, camera satisfaction, helpfulness of alerts, pricing transparency, ease of setup, app functionality, the ability to expand the system, and (for those with professionally monitored systems) satisfaction with the professional monitoring service.

Each of these attributes was scored on a scale from "completely dissatisfied" to "completely satisfied." Members whose systems did not include a particular attribute—cameras or an integrated app, for instance—could say "not applicable" for those attributes.

Consumer Reports previously evaluated home security systems at our test labs, rather than by surveying our members. We decided to switch to a survey-based evaluation to better gauge what it's really like to use these systems. In particular, the survey allows us to rate the systems on thousands of real users' experiences with factors like tech support, price transparency, and their interactions with the monitoring services.

CR's ratings include more than a dozen major companies' systems. However, the survey did not generate enough responses to create statistically meaningful scores for several brands that had previously been included in our ratings. The brands that no longer appear include Abode, Cove, Ecobee, Kangaroo, and Roku.