

Product review...



Apple HomeKit with Wemo Smart Plugs and Smart Wall Switches



—*made by Belkin*

For several years I've been installing Belkin Smart Plugs and Smart Wall Switches in our house and adding them to the HomeKit app on our phones. There are many makes and models to choose from. Our president John Connor uses a brand call Kasa, though on our phones the accessories appear to work the same, and the accessories even appear almost identical.

Prices ...



Smart Plug with Thread—\$30



Smart Light Switch with Thread—\$50

These are the two products I'll describe. If you buy directly from Belkin the prices are \$30 for the SmartPlug and \$50 for the Wall Switch. The term "thread" refers to a technology that enables devices to work faster, have fewer points of failure, use less power, and communicate with each other more seamlessly.

When I opened the web site...

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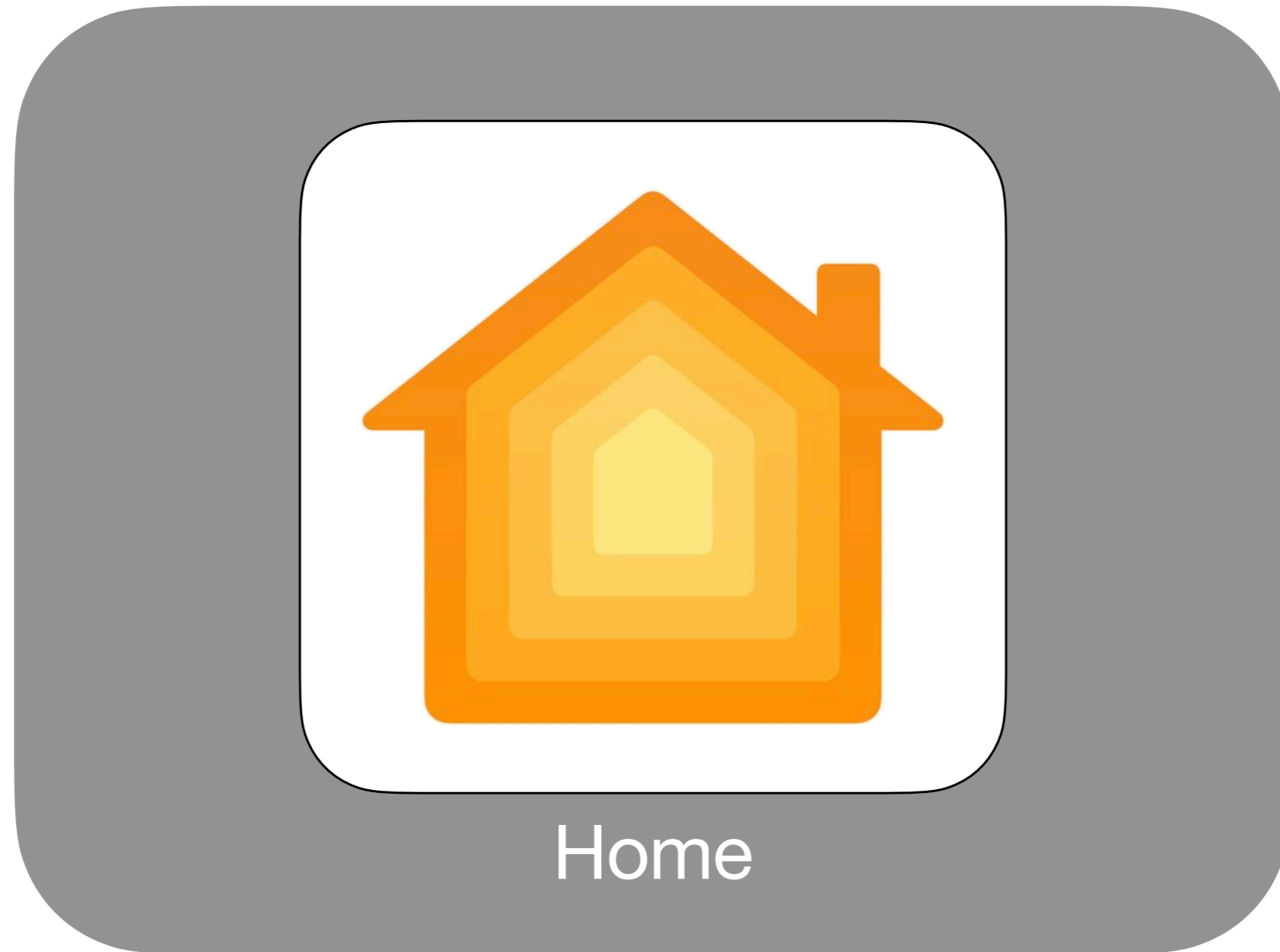
Maybe next time

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Last Thursday when I went to the Belkin web site this pop-up appeared—30% off if you subscribe to receive emails, which is a pretty good discount. You can also shop on Amazon, eBay, and other sites to see where you can get the best deal.

App for iPhone or Mac ...

HomeKit app—the brains of the operation



If you're not already acquainted with Apple HomeKit then you should check it out. HomeKit is a system that lets you control all your home's compatible smart accessories. The app called "Home" is the means by which you can add accessories to HomeKit and control them. The app is probably already on your iPhone or Mac.

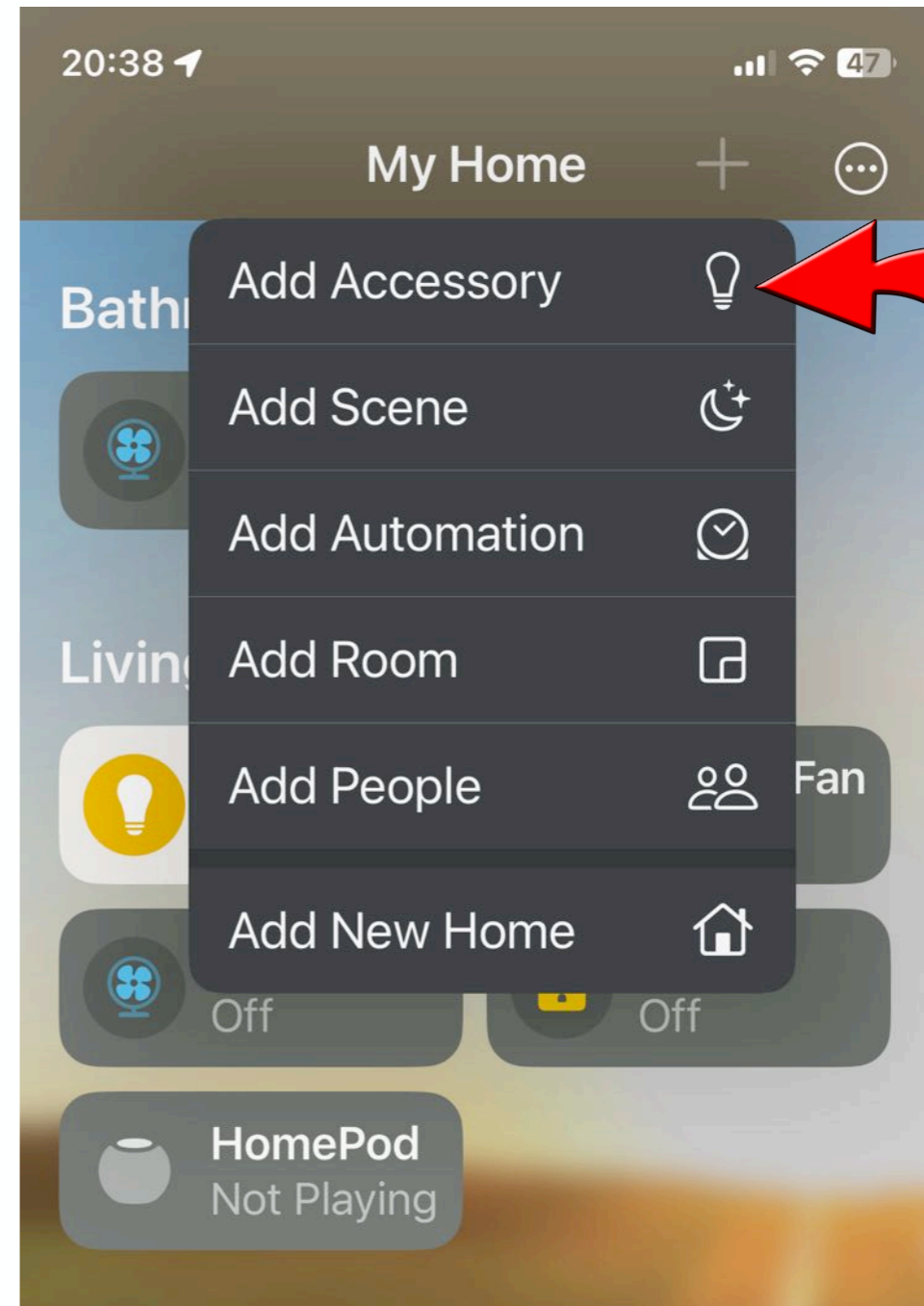
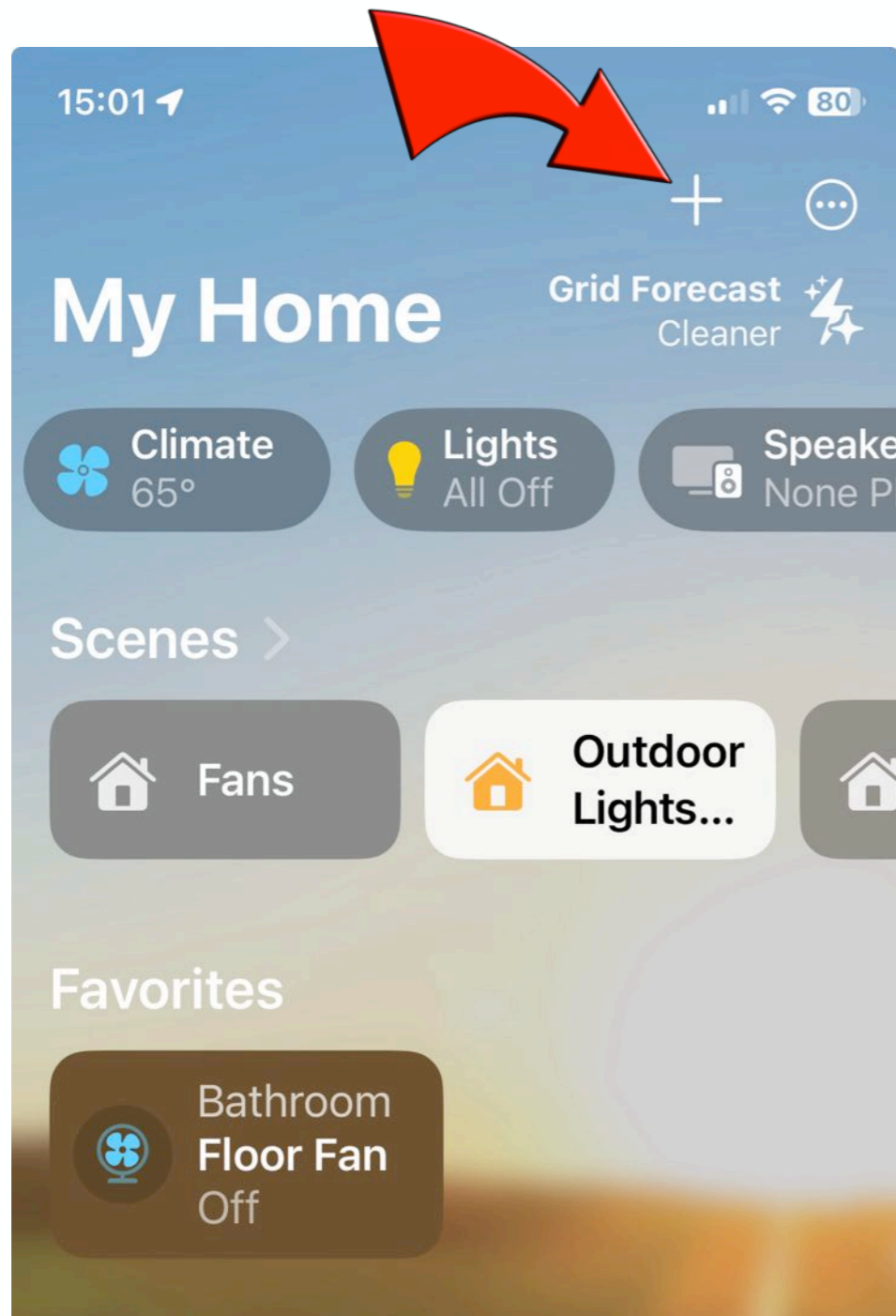
Setup ...

Reset button blinks orange/blue



Setup for the Wemo devices is simple. I'll use the SmartPlug as an example, though the setup for the Wall Switches is similar. Plug in the SmartPlug and hold down the button on the side. It will blink orange while it searches for your WiFi. When it turns blue it's ready to be added to HomeKit.

Setup ...



Open the Home app. Tap the + sign in the upper right. From the menu select Add Accessory. The SmartPlug came with a card with a QR code. The app can use your phone's camera to read the code and automatically add the accessory. It usually takes a minute or so. If you have trouble using the QR code, there is an 8-digit number you can enter manually.

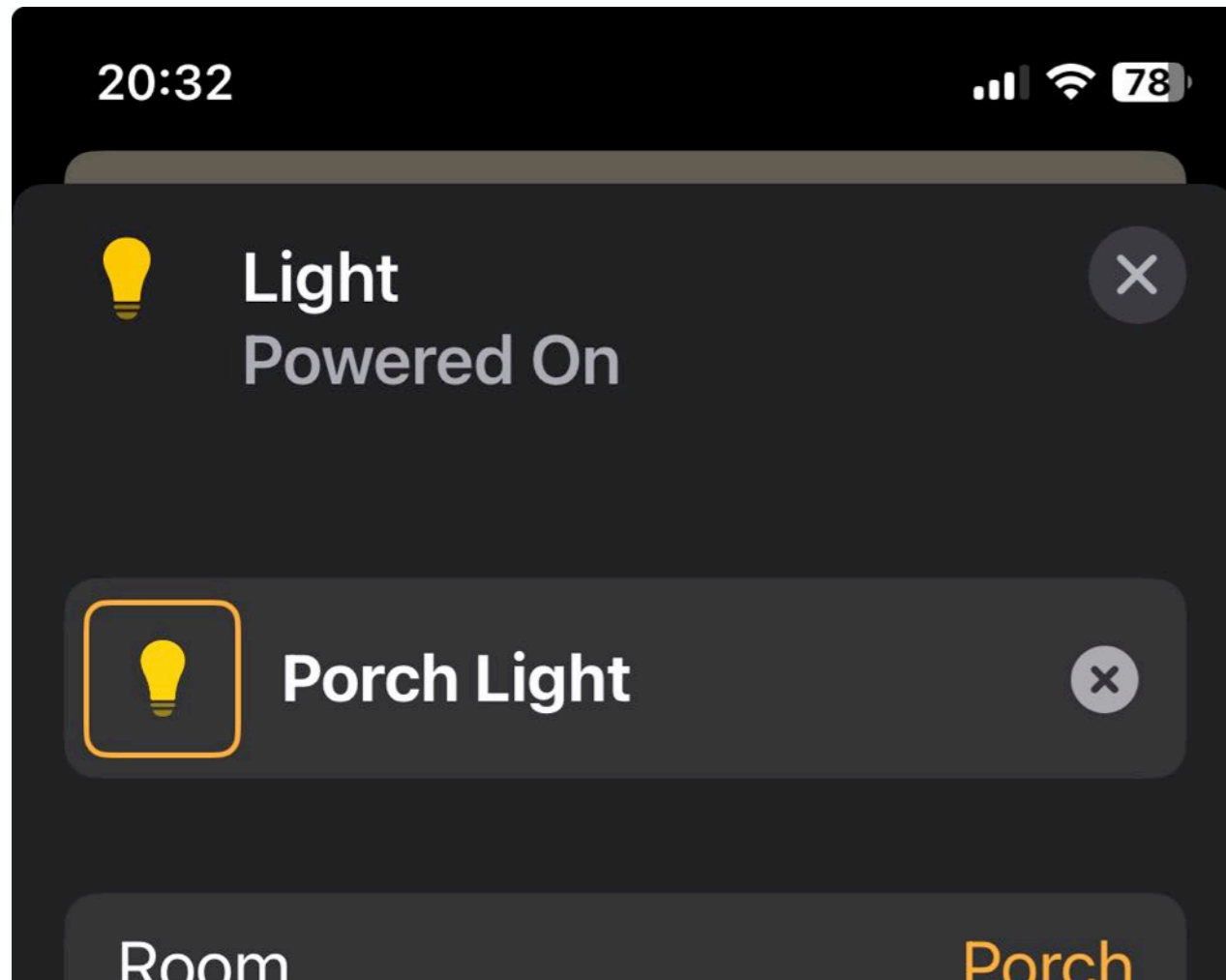
Tip ...

Stick the QR code to the side of the plug



The QR code is unique to that accessory. I suggest you peel it off the card and stick it to the side of the accessory in case you ever need to do a reset.

Accessory Settings ...



- **Name the accessory**
- **Identify the device it controls**
- **Add it to a Room**
- **Add it to a Scene**
- **Set ON/OFF timer**
- **Set ON/OFF by sunrise/sunset**
- **Accepts Siri commands**

Each accessory has its own Settings panel.

You can name the accessory (in this case it's my porch light controlled by a smart wall switch).

You can identify the device the accessory controls, such as a table lamp or a floor fan.

You can add several accessories to a Room or a Scene. (For example, my house has four exterior lights all included in the same scene. I can turn all those lights on/off with a single tap on the scene. Another example is to turn on/off all the lights in a room so you don't have to come home to a dark house.)

You can set up a schedule for an accessory to turn on/off. Users usually set a schedule by the time of day. HomeKit also lets you turn a device on/off according to sunset and sunrise. I have our outdoor lights set to turn on shortly after sunset and turn off just before sunrise. It's a very handy feature as the days get longer.

And you can use Siri to give audible commands to HomeKit such as, "Turn on the living room lights," or "Turn off the floor fan in two hours."



HomeKit also works with compatible...

- **thermostats**
- **deadbolts**
- **smart bulbs**
- **dimmer switches**
- **security cameras**
- **tracking devices**
- **doorbells**
- **speakers**
- **garage door openers**
- **water kettles & coffee makers (?)**

All I've talked about are SmartPlugs and Smart Wall Switches. This list shows other devices you can control using the Home app—anything that is compatible with HomeKit.

The Belkin SmartPlug can operate devices that draw up to 1600 watts, so you could run a space heater on chilly evenings.

I've been looking for a smart electric water kettle that is compatible with HomeKit; so far all I've found are kettles that work with Alexa but none that explicitly say HomeKit.

Links ...

<https://www.belkin.com/products/wemo-smart-home/>

<https://www.tomsguide.com/us/apple-homekit-faq,review-4195.html>

Here are some links to more information. The Belkin link will take you directly to the page with Smart Plugs and Wall Switches. The “Tom’s Guide” web page is a few years old, but it still has good information.