

[BIZ & IT](#) [TECH](#) [SCIENCE](#)

[POLICY](#) [CARS](#)

[SUBSCRIPTIONS](#)

[SIGN  
IN](#)

[GAMING & CULTURE](#) [FORUMS](#)

*MWAHAHAH —*

# Unprompted, creepy laughter from Alexa is freaking out Echo users [Updated]

Amazon knows about the bug and is working to fix it.

**VALENTINA PALLADINO** - 3/7/2018, 2:00 PM



217

Don't be alarmed! Your Alexa-enabled device may lapse into a sudden fit of giggles, but Amazon is aware of the problem. Recent reports detail a quirky bug that has Amazon's virtual assistant

Alexa laughing for no apparent reason, scaring the daylights out of unsuspecting users.

---

### FURTHER READING

Guidemaster: Everything Amazon's Alexa can do, plus the best skills to enable

---

According to a *Bloomberg report*, Amazon is aware of the issue and is working to fix it. The news comes a few days after users took to social media to share their stories of strange laughter coming from their Echo devices. Some claim Alexa laughed in response to unrelated or misunderstood commands, while others claim Alexa simply laughed out of the blue.

It's not uncommon for Echo devices to hear sounds and mistake them for a user's wake word. Amazon's smart speakers can be programmed to respond to a few words: "Alexa" is the most common, but other options like "Echo" and "Amazon" are available as well. These bouts of laughter could be a byproduct of Echo devices mistakenly hearing their wake words.

But reported situations of unprompted laughter in silent homes are obviously quite creepy. Some users have

resorted to unplugging their Echo devices to ensure that Alexa cannot interject anything, ominous or not.

While my Echo device has lit up and responded to random noises in my home a few times, I've never experienced the laughing issue. When asked, "Alexa, how do you laugh?" my Echo replied, "Sure, I can laugh—tee hee!"

It's always worth checking the History section of the Alexa mobile app in situations like this. Since Echo devices are always listening for their wake words, they record and save clips to the cloud every time they hear something that they think Alexa needs to respond to. Users can review and delete these clips at any time in the Alexa app's History section.

**Update (8:26am ET March 8):**

An Amazon representative provided the following statement to Ars, explaining that Alexa's unprompted laughter was caused by an incorrectly heard phrase.

In rare circumstances, Alexa can mistakenly hear the phrase "Alexa, laugh." We are changing

that phrase to be “Alexa, can you laugh?” which is less likely to have false positives, and we are disabling the short utterance “Alexa, laugh.” We are also changing Alexa’s response from simply laughter to “Sure, I can laugh” followed by laughter.

---

**VALENTINA  
PALLADINO**

Valentina is the Associate Reviewer for Ars Technica, covering all gadgets with a focus on mobile devices and wearables. She has a soft spot for Chromebooks.

**TWITTER**  
[@valentalucia](#)

---

READER COMMENTS **217** SHARE THIS STORY

[← PREVIOUS STORY](#)

[NEXT STORY →](#)

## Related Stories

## Today on Ars

[RSS FEEDS](#)

[VIEW MOBILE SITE](#)

[ABOUT US](#)

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

[STAFF](#)

[ADVERTISE WITH US](#)

[REPRINTS](#)

## NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Join the Ars Orbital Transmission mailing list to get weekly updates delivered to your inbox.

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

CNMN Collection

WIRED Media Group

Use of this Site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#) (effective 1/2/14) and [Privacy Policy](#) (effective 1/2/14), and [Ars Technica Addendum](#) (effective 5/17/2012). [View our Affiliate Link Policy](#). Your [California Privacy Rights](#). The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Condé Nast.