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ROBOT VACUUMS

IROBOT'S NEW SOFTWARE UPDATE IS WORTH IT—HERE'S WHY

Soon you won't ever need to pick up after your robot vacuum again



Written by [Jonathan Chan](#), senior manager of lab operations with a decade of experience testing products.
Updated June 21, 2022

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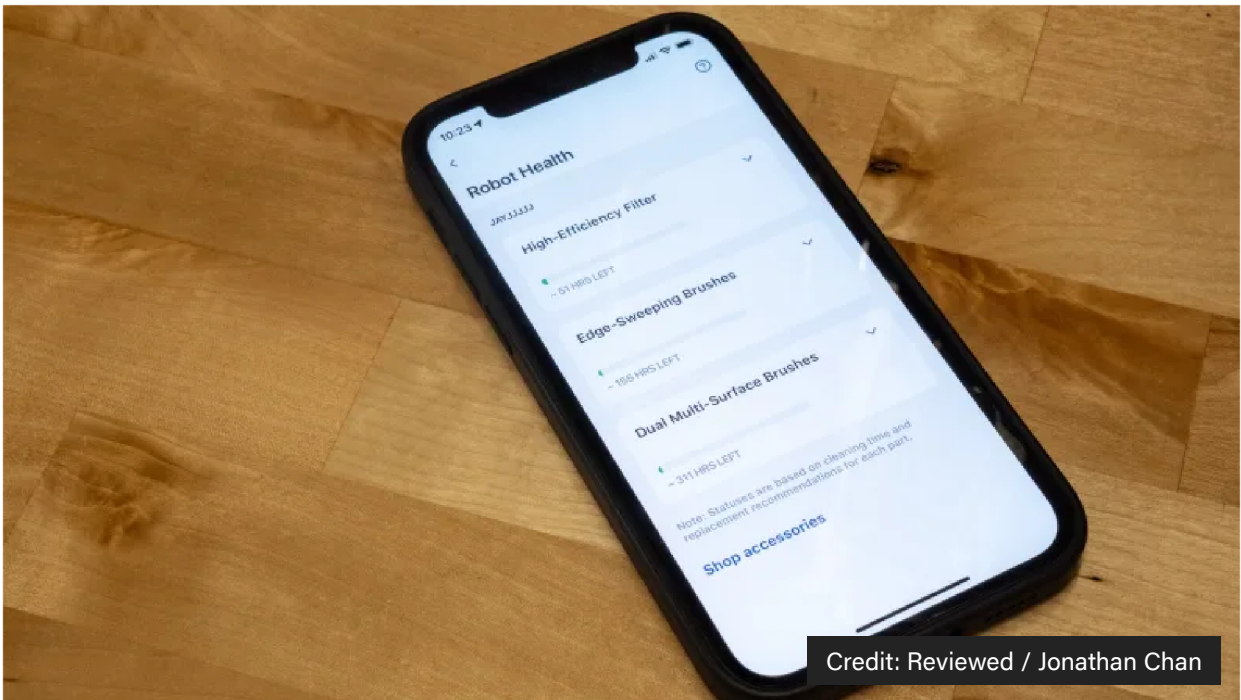
Get ready because iRobot **robot vacuums** are gaining new intelligence features to better clean your floors. The popular robot vacuum brand has just released its new iRobot OS upgraded software, which builds upon the AI-powered smarts already offered with iRobot's **Genius Home Intelligence** smart app (like object recognition and navigation features).

The iRobot OS update boasts an increase in the number of recognized objects, the repertoire of voice commands with smart assistants like Alexa, Siri, and Google Assistant, and improved personalized cleaning suggestions.

Of all the features the new iRobot OS brings to the table, the improvements to navigation are the most important. A robot vacuum that gets stuck or makes a bigger mess than it cleans up is not worth its salt.

We decided to put iRobot OS's mettle to the test. Here's how it went.

About the new iRobot OS features



Credit: Reviewed / Jonathan Chan

The iRobot app provides plenty of useful information like when you should replace brushes and filters.

The iRobot OS is a free update to the existing Genius Home Intelligence on both iOS and Android. Any iRobot vacuum that connects to Wi-Fi will see some improved functionality. This includes better object recognition and an improved list of Alexa and Google Assistant voice commands.

Voice control is one of the features that sets iRobot robot vacuums apart from the rest. With roughly 600 voice commands for Alexa, Google Assistant, and Siri, using the new iRobot OS, your automatic floor cleaner can target specific rooms and areas like “clean around the couch” or “under the coffee table.”

However, the full benefits can only be felt by owners of an **iRobot Roomba j7+**, which achieved some of the highest scores on our robot vacuum obstacle course when we tested it in our lab here at Reviewed.

One of the reasons why is that the j7+ has a forward-facing camera that can recognize objects and the programming to figure out how to get around them without causing a scene. The new iRobot OS allows the vacuum to detect up to 80 common household objects, including socks, shoes, and **dog droppings**.

The new iRobot OS includes other pet-friendly features like “Pet Lock” and “Keep Out Zones.” These in-app features can stop the iRobot robot vacuum from cleaning around water and food bowls, as well as make intelligent cleaning suggestions and schedules for when your dog may be shedding more than normal.

How we tested iRobot's new OS



Credit: Reviewed / Jonathan Chan

We put the new-and-improved object avoidance to the test.

First, we put the object recognition and avoidance to the test. We made another obstacle course consisting of a sweater, **headphones**, a power cord, and socks.

Again, the j7+ acquitted itself well. Before the iRobot OS update, the j7+ would run over power cords and wires, and now we are starting to think that picking up before your robot vacuum cleans will be a thing of the past.

The old **guarantee** to never go over pet droppings remains. We **tested this a while back** using fake animal droppings we made from fudge, chunky peanut butter, and powdered sugar.

We found the results very encouraging. The j7+ avoided the (fake) poo marvelously, even better than its competitors.

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Is upgrading to the new iRobot OS worth it?

Yes, it makes cleaning the floor so much easier



We put the guaranteed avoidance of (fake) pet droppings to the test.

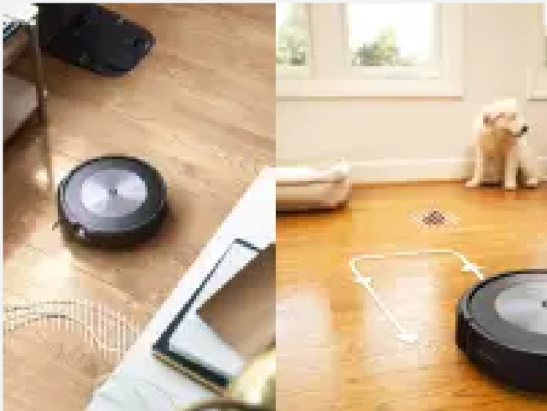
The update is free, so if you already own a current-generation Roomba robot vacuum, it is definitely worth it. You can check to see if your software is completely up-to-date in the *Notifications* section of the iRobot app. If you are running an older version of the app, download the update right away so you can access iRobot’s new smart features.

If you’re on the fence about purchasing a new Roomba, that question is a little more complicated. The **best iRobot Roomba** to buy for your home depends on your cleaning needs. Pet owners should definitely consider the j7+, because it may save you a ton of headache in the future.

Based on our testing, we think that any household with children will benefit from getting a robot vacuum with the iRobot OS update.

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