

Duh, It's A Car Stereo!

Pretty self-explanatory isn't it? It's a stereo system in a car, you say. Whoa, hold your horses, it's not that simple. Although some people like to put home stereos in their cars and vans (out of dire need for some sounds), sometimes it just doesn't work. Yeah, maybe before it could've worked just fine, all you needed was radio and a cassette player (or 8 tracks, for the inner dinosaur in you) so sure, lug those big box speakers into the back seat and you'll be blaring down the highway. But nowadays there are things like cd players and mp3 players and your popup LCD panels and all that techie knickknack you'd think they'd like to build a home theater system right smack on the console of your van. If you don't know anything about these things but would like to have some sounds in your car anyway, here are some things to know about a car stereo.

As mentioned above, at first units and speakers from home audio systems and professional markets were just simply installed into vehicles. However, they were not well suited to the extremes of temperature and vibration which are a normal part of the environment of an automobile. Car stereo enthusiasts were not satisfied with the sound quality of regular car sound systems, and with the advent of the CD player, they really had to start modifying some of these home stereos in order to work well in a car environment and voila!, now we have the modern car stereo.

If you have a new car, first hand bought, say from about 90 to present, chances are you already have a "factory" car stereo in your car. It means the car manufacturer already included a car stereo system in your car, unless specified in the car model but most often this is the case. Some car manufacturers make their own car stereos, like BMW which includes a pretty decent car stereo package head unit and speakers. It is a standard which comes with all their cars (which isn't surprising considering that BMW is included in the league of "luxury car manufacturers"). Or like Mercedes Benz or Volkswagen, they use car stereo systems from a German audio manufacturer called Blaupunkt.

A standard car stereo (also called a head unit) usually includes an auto-reverse tape deck, a cd player and sometimes the optional changer - a device which automatically changes the cd in play. On newer car models, the car stereo can also play mp3s and other digital audio file types like WMA and AAC, whether on a cd or a memory device which can be hooked up to the head unit.

The car stereo head unit is connected to several speakers. Older car models usually just had one speaker mounted underneath the dashboard, pointing through perforations towards the front windshield. The standard for car stereo nowadays is a pair of "tweeters" (used to bring out high treble) on the driver side/front passenger side dashboard, a pair of normal "mid" speakers on both doors, sometimes even the backseat passenger doors if it's a large car and larger speakers capable of bringing out low ends at the back portion of the backseats.

Your car stereo is probably ok as it is, as car manufacturers ensure that the audio products that come with their cars can handle most driver's listening

demands. But if you think that what you have isn't enough, you can always
CUSTOMIZE.