Frequently Asked Questions for BT equipped MY '05 vehicles with BMW Assist

Q: What is Bluetooth wireless technology?

A: Bluetooth technology uses radio frequencies, rather than wires, to connect various electronic devices to each other. Connect your computer, keyboard and mouse; share addresses between your PDC and laptop; upload music from your MP3 player to your wireless headphones. This versatile feature can also wirelessly connect compatible phones to your BMW for hands-free calling. With a Bluetooth portable phone, drivers can make and answer calls, as well as browse and select phone book entries, all by simply using the multi-function steering wheel controls or iDrive.

Q: What is the difference between pairing and connecting?

A: Pairing is a one-time process that must be completed in order to connect your phone to your BMW. The pairing process is dependent on the vehicle model as well as the phone model. 5&6 Series vehicles have a common procedure and the remaining models share another procedure. The paring process is also phone dependent, therefore users should be familiar with the setup, or Bluetooth menus of their phones. For customers using the recommended phones the process is fairly straightforward. Paring with non-compatible phones may not be possible and is not supported. A user manual to describe the pairing procedure is provided.

Once paired, the portable phone will automatically connect to the vehicle at the start of each ignition cycle, provided BT is turned on in the phones settings.   The phone will normally connect within 30 seconds, but it may take up two one or two minutes depending on BT timing.

Q: When are we going to have new phones added to the existing list of compatible phones?

A: Many new phones have been launched to be available for the holiday shopping season. This is a seasonal issue that will occur each Oct-Dec. BMW has evaluated most of the new BT devices and provided the results to marketing. Marketing is currently creating a website, that will be linked to BMWUSA.com. This site should be available shortly. The phone compatibility will be updated by BMW, frequently.

Phones are arranged in the following classifications;

Class 1 phones: phones that are fully supported, tested and have an available cradle for charging and external antenna*. Class 1 phones may have minor known issues.

*BMW Strongly recommends the use of the optional cradle with snap in adapter to minimize exposure to RF signals.

Class 2 phones: Phones that allow a hands-free operation in the car, but have more significant issues (e.g. no phonebook download to the car) and/or do not have an available cradle.

Non-compatible phones: phones that are known to be incompatible or non tested phones.

Additional remarks: To date, Windows CE ® based PDA's and Blackberry devices are not compatible.

Q: Why don't all Bluetooth equipped phones work in my BMW?

A: Their are several BT "flavors" or so-called BT profiles. The BMW system uses the standard BT Hands-free Profile (HFP 1.0) with additional commands implemented on top of the BT standard to transfer phonebook data from the phone to the car. This enables the user to access their phonebook and dial from the MMI (iDrive, MFL, MID). BMW is working with phone suppliers and carriers to implement the additional commands, however this support is not based on business agreements and therefore BMW has little leverage to influence phone suppliers to include this. Phones that do not support the additional commands may or may not pair or connect to the vehicle and will only have partial functionality at best. Because of this, phones that do not support the additional phonebook commands will not work as intended, may present significant issues and are therefore listed as non-compatible phones.

Q: Which phones have a snap in cradle available?

A: Cradles are available for the following phones;
Motorola V600/V535/V551
Siemens S55/S66
Sony Ericsson T610/T616/T637.
Motorola V710 cradle is complete and expected to be available January 2005.

Q: Is there an additional antenna installation required?

A: On all MY 05 cars equipped with BMW Assist the antenna is pre-installed. No additional antenna is required.

Q: How do you get a new Bluetooth passkey card?

A: The BT passkey is printed on a laminated card that is part of the on board literature. This card should be retained for the customer's future reference. The BT passkey is also printed on the Telematics Control Unit (TCU) label. A diagnostics job will be available on the next DIS CD to be released in March 2005 (DIS 40.xx or 41) to read this information.
Before then, if the passkey is lost, the TCU should be removed and the BT passkey read from the label. No TCU's should be replaced or warranted for problems arising from a lost BT passkey card.   A replacement card is not available.

BT passkeys are used on 3 Series, X3, X5 and Z4 models. Because of the two-way pairing process used in the 5 and 6 Series vehicles, they do not require a BT passkey. Model year '06, 7 series will require a BT passkey.

Q: How does the phonebook transfer feature work?

A: When a phone is paired for the first time, the phonebook is uploaded to the TCU. This process may take several minutes and must completed before the phonebook is available for use. Thereafter, the customer can use the phone and phonebook right away while the phonebook is uploaded in the background. Changes that are made to the phonebook prior to connecting the phone to the car will be displayed after the background upload is complete. Changes that are made to the phonebook, while the phone is connected to the car will be displayed after the next connection cycle. (Note: The user can switch the phone, or the car, off and then on, causing the phone to re-connect. This will have the effect of triggering a new phonebook upload). Once the phonebook uploaded is complete, the users changes will be visible. This process may take several minutes.   Phonebook upload speed is improved starting with 3/05 production.

Q: Are there specific areas of the country that have concerns with Bluetooth functioning properly?

A: BT is not location dependent. The BT connection occurs between the phone and the car. All that is required is that supported BT phones are available in a given market.

Q: What is the refresh rate of a Bluetooth phone syncing with the car?

A: The phonebook is uploaded once per connection (i.e. ignition cycle).

Q: Can a customer switch to/from hands-free mode to/ from the portable phone (privacy mode) during a call?

A: Yes, the user can switch to or from privacy mode to hands-free modes or visa-versa. This feature is tested and works with all approved portable phones. Audio switching is accomplished via the phones BT or call menu.