



Parrot move wireless



# Road Testing the Parrot MKi9200 Bluetooth Car Kit

Story by Joanne Jacobs

Ok, I admit it, I'm a phone junkie, and love technology for technology's sake. My husband on the other hand wants nothing more from a phone than a button to answer calls. Consequently I am always on the lookout for clever technology which will keep me enchanted, without bamboozling him, I think I've found it!

We were recently invited to road test the new Parrot MKi9200 Bluetooth Car Kit, and naturally Rob turned the job over to me. The kit is compatible with virtually all Bluetooth enabled phones, and the only one available in Australia which is endorsed for use with the iPhone, so I and my iPhone were very excited to try it out. In order to really evaluate the MKi9200 for use in kit cars, I had it installed in my MX5 (a bribe from Robert, so that I couldn't complain about all his cars!)

## Installation and Set-Up

This isn't your run-of-the-mill DIY system; the manufacturers

recommend it be installed by a professional installer of car audio systems, as the unit is fully wired to control the car's speakers. (In my case the installer came to me at work and it was all up and running within an hour).

The first time I hopped into the car I had to link the Bluetooth- this was a really simple process of activating my phone's Bluetooth and typing in the code number. Now the phone stays in my bag or pocket when I'm driving, I don't have to touch it at all, and I know my phone is now a fully legal hands-free device. The remote control is attached to my steering wheel, but comes

with options for mounting to any surface.

## Making and Answering Calls

Answering calls is as simple as hitting the green button! Safety while driving is important and I can now drive, and answer my calls without taking my hands off the wheel, or my eyes off the road. The display shows all of my contact details for callers in my phonebook.

The call comes through the stereo speakers, and you have control over the volume using your remote, this is particularly important when driving with the roof down, or if you are a little



hard of hearing.

For those who wish to make calls while driving (e.g. check your family's order of food or refreshments as you arrive at the drive-through) the voice-activated dialling is purely plug and play- the system being programmed to "translate" any person's speech, simply press the green button on the remote and speak the name of the person to be called. Alternatively you can search your contact lists and call logs, and choose the number to dial.

## The Remote Control

The control is very simple and intuitive to operate, and as mentioned can be mounted on the steering wheel or any surface you choose. For those with little interest in higher functions; the green button answers calls, while the red button hangs up. Separate buttons are provided to play/pause music, and to allow movement between tracks, and are all clearly marked and easily recognisable (though my husband apparently hasn't found these yet).

All other functions are controlled by the central knob. The menu is activated by depressing the knob and navigated by a simple twist which allows you to scroll through the available options, once you find the desired option another push on the knob selects this function. How simple is that? (And if you get lost, push the red button to go back to the normal screen)

## Listening to Music

For those of us who love our gadgets this is where the Parrot MKi9200 really comes into its own! My installation includes connections for all the major types of music players, with an ipod connection, usb connection, and line in all discretely hidden inside my centre consol. The ipod or mp3 player remains hidden (and on charge), and is once again controlled using the remote control.

For those who don't know

the first thing about mp3 players, there is an upside here. The Parrot MKi9200 also has an SD card slot (you know, the little memory card like you have in your camera), these cards can now hold up to 32Gig of data- so if you get your computer savvy wife/child/grandchild to load some of your favourite tunes onto the card you can listen to 100s of hours of your music in the car- enough for your trek to the next nationals, wherever they may be.

Naturally, when the phone rings music play will be paused as your call comes through the stereo speakers.

## Why the Parrot MKi9200 deserves consideration for your project

Kit cars and convertibles are traditionally small vehicles, with little room in the dash for installing a stereo- and if you do, you run the risk of having it stolen from your open-roofed car when you leave it parked. As this installation controls the amplifiers your stereo can be built into the car- perhaps the boot, or concealed within a secret compartment. The Parrot MKi9200's tiny, discrete screen can easily be removed from its cradle and placed in a pocket when you leave your vehicle, protecting your investment, and removing any temptation- out of sight, out of mind.

I really would suggest that those contemplating adding a stereo to a build take a good look at the Parrot MKi9200, it is a departure from the norm, but serves so many functions in a very neat package, which fits easily into any car interior.

## In Summary

This is a sophisticated device, which is perfect for both the techno junkie and technophobe alike; easy to operate, but with lots of nifty features for those who want to use them. I love the fact the installation is neat and very discrete and that the



screen is easily removed for security.

I was really impressed to discover that when I use the sat nav app on my iphone the instructions are broadcast over the stereo too (beats the pitiful speakers in the average gps system). Now, if I could only view my iphone screen I'd have a fully functioning gps system as well, and that would be just about perfect!

As a final note... if my husband can use this (without complaint) anyone can!

The Parrot MKi9200 retails for \$498.99 (Incl. GST). Any enquires should be directed to the Australian distributor Strike [www.strike.com.au](http://www.strike.com.au) or phone 1300 792 044

