

Fine upgrade in 5 Series BMW

Ultimate Sound



► With the Ultimate series specially for BMW, Eton presents probably the finest car speakers worldwide. Here we tell their story.

Who exactly got the idea we don't know, but last year the news hit like a bomb that Eton was planning an absolute stunner under their vehicle-specific Upgrade Audio brand: Vehicle-specific speakers in high-end quality! While there are now car speakers from all the brands that hold themselves for noteworthy, these are mostly in the same price and performance category. Only very few have several lines for a single vehicle brand and even then it ends in the upper segment. Nobody has dared to really do genuine high-end, with everything that was possible. Except Eton. Granted they had it relatively easy in

that the universal high-end speakers had already been developed and were on the shelf. At Eton they are called Graphit. These are manufactured in Germany, and most of the components also bear the 'Made in Germany' label. Now it's of course not enough to stick these speakers into vehicle baskets, because on closer inspection nothing fits: neither cones nor drives and so on. The choice of vehicle brand fell on BMW as Eton have had a lot of experience here and the Bavarian carmakers also produce at least some quantity. The word 'Premium' is moreover no stranger to BMW drivers.

**BMW speakers without compromise:
Ultimate from Eton**

So Eton set out to work on this. At the beginning it was decided to equip all the speakers with super-stable aluminum die-cast baskets: a rocky road, yet that way and no other is how it should be for high-end. This demanded considerable investment in new production tools before the development department could get to grips with the technology. For BMW three different 10-cm baskets are required in the doors. A suitable center speaker must also of course be provided. Sepa-



The BMW doors have space for one of the three 10-cm mid-range speakers

Convenient music listening via Bluetooth is of course also possible in the BMW



Despite its size the Ultimate tweeter fits in the mirror triangle

rate tweeters must fit into the mirror triangles and coaxial versions have also been developed. The absolute cream of the crop turned out to be the underseat woofer typical for BMW in a special flat 20-cm format. Here the developers went the whole hog and added a driver with high-grade neodymium and extra large 64-mm voice coil — unique in the market. For the drive they naturally went for in-house power amps: in this case a Stealth 7.1 DSP and a small Mini 300.2. Our BMW of the F11 series is a special vehicle with a kind of special history. In the development of a vehicle-specific speaker it would be no bad idea to have the corresponding

The Ultimate woofer and mid-range speakers feature aluminum die-cast baskets and neodymium drivers — all of top quality





The Eton cable kit with 20 mm² power cable is easily adequate for the installed amplifiers



vehicle. But at Eton nobody had a suitable BMW! Then at exactly the right time along came Florian, the proud owner of our model in the photo. You see Florian is located in Neu-Ulm like Eton and they know each other from the neighborhood. In addition, it is helpful that Florian is a real HiFi enthusiast, who naturally is happy to put his car at the service of good sound. Konstantin Schuller is responsible for the installation, even though this is a rather unspectacular matter with precisely matching components. Konstantin generated power by using PPC 20 cable kits and installed the amplifier in the trunk behind the side panel. The front doors were given a layer of insulation; there isn't much more to say. The signal processor required a bit more attention, with a 12 dB separation for the door systems. As Florian did not want

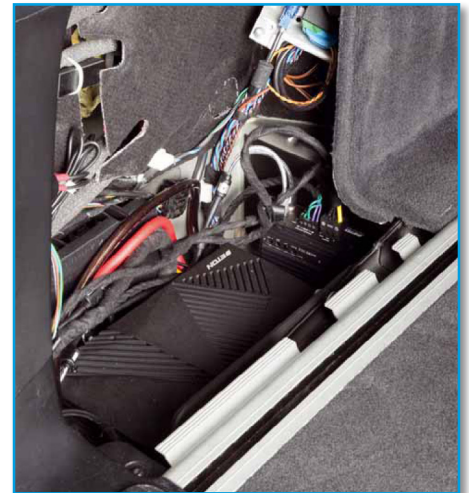
to do without rear seats entertainment in his car, the Mini 300.2 was added for the rear doors. Audio purists do not really need it. There was also one sound stage that doesn't work according to the egotistical SQ rules. There are two stages: one for the driver and one for the front passenger so that both are able to enjoy the Ultimate sound.

Soundcheck

Our impression of the sound then confirmed the sound staging orientation with the centre straight ahead. Tonally, the system delivers a wonderfully fine balance that is anything but boring. The reason is that the highs are not particularly subdued, but are allowed to spread out in the BMW interior. On the one hand this ensures a variety of detail resolution and crisp dynamics alike. This definitely adds to the fun factor. This is also ensured by the powerful bass range. The underseat woofers produce so much deep bass that you don't miss the cabinet subwoofer. The great class of the Ultimate speakers is again demonstrated by the reproduction of vocals and instruments, which we liked very much. The detail and dedication with which the music is played here is really of the very highest level.

Summary

Eton's Upgrade Ultimate components may seem expensive at first glance, but they also make for a very special sound experience. We then land at 3,500 euros excluding installation, which can only be regarded as an excellent investment.



There is enough space in the side panel for the Stealth and Mini



Like all Upgrade Audio BMW Ultimate speakers, the Center speaker has also borrowed from the Graphit series

BMW 5 F11

Price	about 3.420 Euro
Installation	Eton, Neu-Ulm
Hotline	info@eton-caraudio.com
Internet	www.eton-caraudio.com

Summary

Sound quality	70 %	1,0	■■■■■
Bass	14 %	1,0	■■■■■
Neutrality	14 %	1,0	■■■■■
Transparency	14 %	0,5	■■■■■
Soundstaging	14 %	1,5	■■■■■
Dynamics	14 %	1,0	■■■■■
Practice	30 %	1,0	■■■■■
Installation	15 %	1,0	■■■■■
Equipment	7,5 %	1,0	■■■■■
Handling	7,5 %	1,0	■■■■■

Components

Headunit	original	0 Euros
	Eton PCC 20	70 Euros
Amps	Eton Stealth 7.1 DSP	800 Euros
	Eton Micro 120.2	160 Euros
Front-speaker		
	Eton UG BMW 10 W U	500 Euros
Rear-speaker		
	Eton UG BMW 10 W U	500 Euros
Unnderseat-woofer		
	2 x UG BMW 20 SUB U	1.140 Euros
Center	Eton UG BMW 10 CN U	250 Euros

BMW 5 F11

Top-Class 1,0

CAR & HiFi 4/25

Price/performance: very good

"Fine sound with the Ultimate series upgrade."