

Upgrading a car radio (for a Toyota Corolla)

by **abizar** on December 15, 2007

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intro: Upgrading a car radio (for a Toyota Corolla)

A step-by-step guide to replacing the factory cassette radio in a Corolla with a mp3- WMA- CD player and radio.

Select the replacement audio. You can obtain CD player with mp3 and WMA from Walmart for \$89. The most important features are the ability to play mp3 and WMA format files burnt on a CD but also from a *USB drive* (thumb drive or removable hard drive). Also has an aux port for mp3 players like the iPod. This was way better in price features than anything else out there.

These instructions were originally posted by me on <http://www.wikihow.com/Update-a-Toyota-Corolla-Car-Radio>.

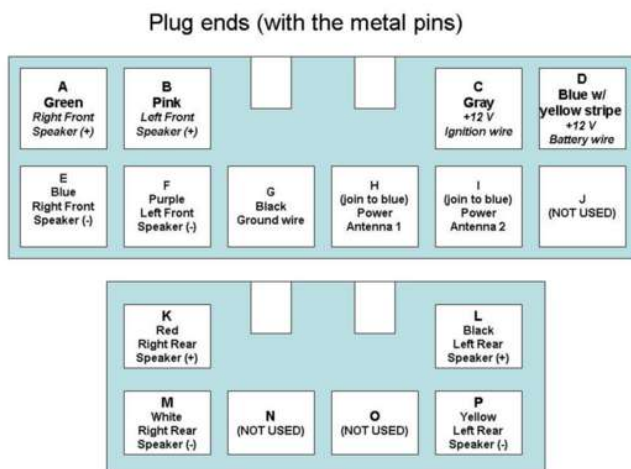


step 1: Preparing the wiring harness

Get a wiring harness or adapter that will allow the car radio wiring to plug into the back of the new radio. These can be found at Walmart for \$4.99. Make sure that the plug is compatible with your car (check the list on the back of the box).

Have shown the back of the new radio - the black set of pins is where the included black plug will go to. The free wires on the black plug provided with the new audio system will be connected to an adapter that will plug into the car wiring.

For the Toyota Corolla 1995 wagon, the wiring diagram is as shown below. Your car may differ substantially from this.



step 2: Connecting the wires

Connect the wires from the plug that came with the new radio to the wiring harness adapter that you purchased separately. Twist the correct wires together and then solder them (or use wire nuts if you don't have soldering equipment). Cover the exposed wire with electrician's tape or heat seal tape. Attached is another table on how you connect your Toyota wiring adapter to the radio plug. Please, do remember that your radio and car will differ a bit.



Abizar Lakdawalla

P in	Function	Toyota color	New Radio color
A	Speaker - Right Front (+)	Green	Gray
B	Speaker - Left Front (+)	Pink	White
C	+12 V Ignition Wire	Gray	Red
D	+12 V Battery Wire	Blue w/ yellow line	Yellow
E	Speaker - Right Front (-)	Blue	Gray w/ Black line
F	Speaker - Left Front (-)	Purple	White w/ Black line
G	Ground wire	Black	Black
H	Power antenna Wire 1		Blue (join H and I wires to the single blue)
I	Power antenna Wire 2		
J	NOT USED		
K	Speaker - Right Rear (+)	Red	Purple
L	Speaker - Left Rear (+)	Black	Green
M	Speaker - Right Rear (-)	White	Purple w/ Black line
N	NOT USED		
O	NOT USED		
P	Speaker - Left Rear (-)	Yellow	Green w/ Black line

White plugs will attach to the car wiring

Got wiring adaptors for 89-97 Toyota Corolla's from Walmart for \$5.

Plug that came with the radio



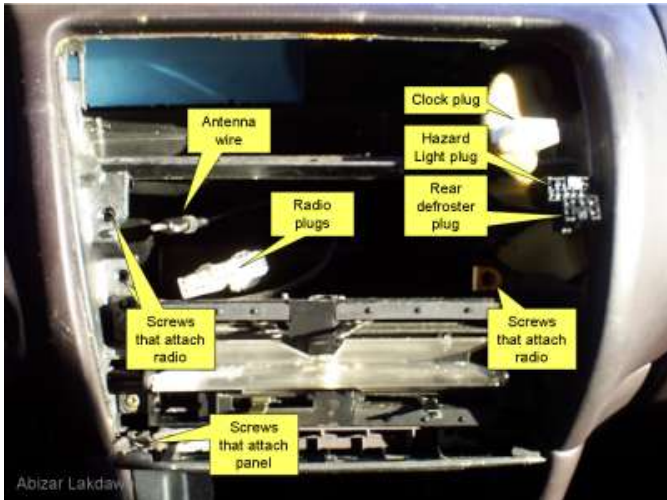
step 3: Removing the old radio

Remove the factory installed radio (the instructions apply only for Corollas from 95-98). Remove the two screws below the panel. Have shown a picture with the location of these screws. Remove the control knobs for the AC and the fan, etc. These come off pretty easily with a gentle pull. Use a thin blade (metal spatula) to probe approximately 2/3rd of the way up and try to pry the sides out. The metal blade will disengage the clip on each side. Took a bit of gentle effort but it did pop out. The location of these clips is just below the vents. Lift the panel up, reach under it to carefully remove the plugs on the right hand side that connect the defroster, the clock and the hazard flasher. The plugs can be removed by squeezing a release tab on the plug and then gently pulling them apart. Remove the radio - two pairs of screws on each side of the radio hold it in place. Remove these (and hold onto them because you will need them later on) and then slide the radio out.



step 4: Pull out and disconnect the old radio

Pull the radio out towards you. Remove the antenna wire from the back of the radio. Remove the pair of wiring harness plugs that go to the back of the radio by pressing the release tab on the plugs. Remove the radio.

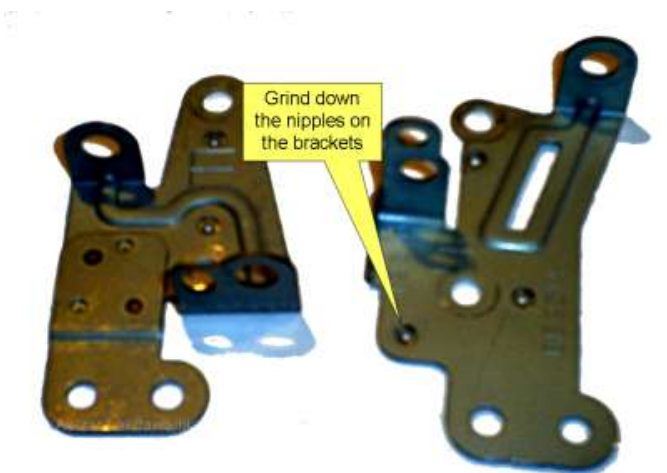


step 5: Transfer the side brackets from the old radio to the new.

The sides of the radio has mounting brackets. Remove these from the factory radio. Make sure that you mark which one goes to the left of the radio and which one to the right.

The walmart radio comes with multiple holes on it's side - some of which aligned with the mounting bracket. If you try to attach these, tiny metal studs on the brackets will interfere with the attachment, so grind them down with a dremel tool or file. Screw in the left bracket on the left side of the radio and the right bracket on the right.

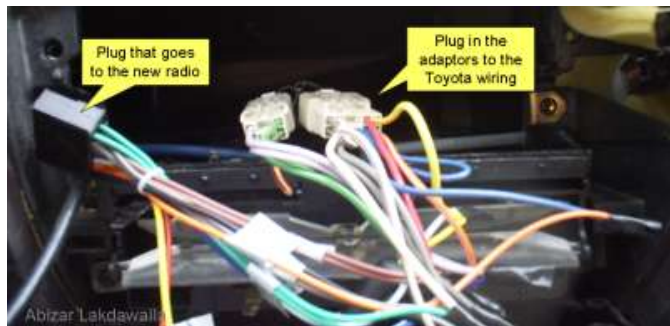
In the images below, the black bezel has not been taken from the radio.



step 6: Connecting the wiring harnesses

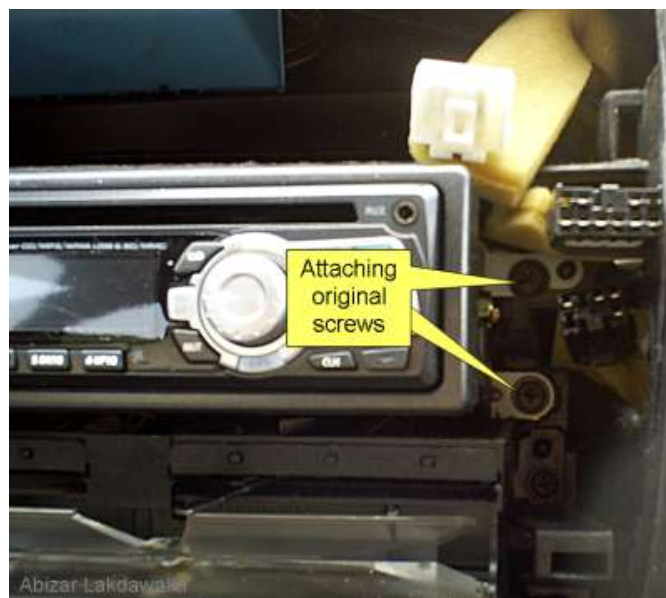
Get the wiring harness that you had prepared and plug the white ends of the harness into the wiring harness that you had removed from the back of the old factory radio and that is still poking out where you had left it. Connect the black end into the back of the new radio. Also connect the antenna wire into the back of the radio (large round hole).

Test the plugged in radio to make sure it works and you can hear sound through the speakers. See if the radio lights (LED's come on - that is power is getting to the radio, see if you can hear sound from all 4 speakers by playing with the balance and fade knobs (that is all 4 speakers are connected correctly) and see if you can tune to FM and AM stations (confirming that the antenna is connected).



step 7: Slide in the new radio

Slide in the radio till the side brackets are aligned with the mounting holes and attach the radio with the original screws used to attach the factory radio.



step 8: Finish by attaching panels and knobs

Test the radio one more time just to be sure. Now attach the central panel that you had removed by a) placing it in approximate position, b) attaching the three plugs to the panel, and c) lightly tapping into place at the location where the clips are. Once you have the panel in place, attach the two bottom screws. Attach the knobs and the AC switch, ... and that's it.



Related Instructables



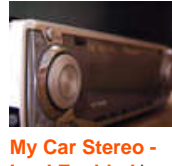
Add an auxiliary (MP3/Ipod) input to your car's stock radio by aka_bigred



Invisible MP3 Player for Cars by reid



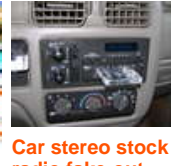
Aux cable installation for a Cabasse Auditorium 6CD system - fitted in Renault cars by billytkid



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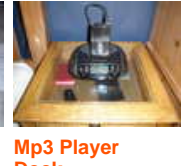
How to convert Real Audio streamings to MP3 files by isacco



Car stereo stock radio fake-out by scottredd



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Mp3 Player Dock Speakers/Charger clock by Lancealator



Comments

9 comments [Add Comment](#)



Derinsleep says:

LUCKY!!!!
here the cheapest radio we found was runnin \$150

Jul 5, 2008. 12:19 AM [REPLY](#)



Derinsleep says:

we bought one,we put it,but our stock BLAUPUNKT radio turned on even when there is no +REM signal,but our Pioneer did not.Half an hour to the mechanic,and that solved the problem.He just tied +REM to the 12V cable.

Aug 21, 2008. 12:47 AM [REPLY](#)



Ko0LaiD says:

my wires were so jacked up so i re-did alot of it. for the sub's, speakers, power, amp-power, ground, EVERYTHING.

Jul 28, 2008. 8:23 PM [REPLY](#)



BuangAyam says:

That's awesome man, I've been thinking about this a while now but I just don't know how to do it..Now that you have posted the instructions and step by step guide, it will now be easy for me..Tnx dude.
Auto Body Parts

Mar 12, 2008. 12:04 AM [REPLY](#)



bduffman says:

Jan 24, 2008. 5:45 AM [REPLY](#)

haha wat i love is in one pic u have a aus corolla and in another u have like a usa one hahaha wats the go there and its not mirror eather look at the sterio says fm 1021 and on the 1st pic look at the on off and heated signs its all right also lol lol he stuffed up some were here and pulled some pic off the net



eight says:
WOW.

Jan 10, 2008. 6:10 PM [REPLY](#)

Where were you 12 months ago.
I drove my **1991 Toyota Corolla Seca** around for 3 months without a dash after my Saturday afternoon install stalled.
You have gone to a terrific effort. Labelling pin-outs, listing bits, adding pictures.
I can attest to a sterling job my friend.
By the way, I mixed up the Green wire (blue stripe.)
I must have inserted 10 blade fuses before I realised I had screwed up.

My system is un-F**king-believable for the tiny cost.
I used a similar MP3 player to yours.
It has a quad channel 50w RMS output (200w all up)

It came with a sleeve and brackets for free.

For Speakers:

FRONT: 6" - 150W RMS - 3 way (Not PMPO) round speakers in the doors
(Unwound windows make awesome bass ports)
and

REAR: 9"x6" - 200W - 3 way Oval speakers on a custom deck.

A Toyota Corolla Seca is a lift back.

So I constructed my deck with 2x layers (glued & screwed) of 12mm (1/2") MDF then chamfered apertures because I mounted speakers underneath.
I covered the deck (Both Sides) in Automotive Charcoal coloured carpet.

The "boot or trunk" space becomes the bass enclosure for the 3 ways and although it is reasonably sealed the bits that are open, become a collective bass port.

I don't need a sub woofer as I got all the Q values right along with the cabinet volume.

I used Monster Cable to get the sound to the speakers.
The cost was under AUD200 (about US\$175) all up.

You will not find a better EL-CHEAPO install, giving a better sound.
I put my nuts on that.

Thanks for a great instructable !!



tarvid says:

Dec 27, 2007. 3:02 PM [REPLY](#)

I bought this radio to put in my wife's 1997 Corolla and ran into a few issues.

- 1) in step 3 there were four clips (not two) and a narrow device (5/16") could be inserted into the socket to release the clip.
- 2) the Scosche adapter purchased from Walmart had a different color code, take the time to make your own
- 3) the radio came with a removable piece on the leading edge which had to be removed to mate with the Toyota panel
- 4) her Corolla was never designed for a CD playlet, the cavity is too shallow. The radio fit after removing some ductwork which does alter airflow
- 5) I bought a battery powered Weller soldering iron for the job - it sucks. Not enough heat to solder properly.
- 6) I resorted to a Ronson butane micro torch. It flared, belched and general made this an interesting adventure.

But I would not have attempted this excellent adventure without this howto.

Thanks



namsu22 says:

Dec 17, 2007. 10:22 PM [REPLY](#)

THANK YOU SO MUCH!! i have been looking all over the internet for a step by step instruction, this is perfect its about 1 am where i am right now, but tomorrow imma try out your instructions and see if it works, looks really thorough great job man. thanks so much!!!

(i got an account just so i could say thank you!)



GorillazMiko says:

Dec 15, 2007. 9:31 PM [REPLY](#)

smart!
looks complicated.