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PHOTOS BY ROB HALLSTROM

General

Living with a K40 2000P Radar Detector

Radar detectors are a lot like religion: Some radar users are zealots, choosing not to start an engine without one. Others have faith part time, for instance just on highways renowned for speed enforcement. Finally, there are the agnostics, unbelievers who blindly follow their own automotive (speeding) path.

I must admit that I fall into the last category, believing that my skill, stealth and shrewd driving tactics would keep me safe from meeting The Man. Unfortunately, these attributes failed to keep me out of trouble, and I added two speeding tickets to my resume in just 8 months.

Why couldn't I avoid the polizei? I asked for guidance of some sort, and then a voice from above provided a sign—actually, it was a call from Editor Brown telling me that the marketing missionaries at K40 Electronics were looking to save souls at *European Car* from driving damnation and simultaneously demonstrate their latest radar detector technology on a non-detector-equipped vehicle.

While most European car readers probably have seen or used a corded radar detector of some sort, what convinced me to try the K40 was its "Dual Undetectable" program (MSRP \$1,700) that includes front- and rear-mounted radar antennas and two pods mounted on the dash to inform the driver of radar and laser signals pointed at the vehicle. I have never liked the look of a cord snaked over the top of my dashboard or a black box suckered to my windshield, so the K40's functional stealth was a welcome feature. The fact that K40 offers a speeding ticket warranty to purchasers of this system was also very persuasive.

After 20 or 30 seconds of soul-searching, I agreed to walk the righteous radar path and offered up my BMW 528i for salvation. Soon I was on my way to Al & Ed's Autosound for installation of K40's 2000P radar detector and DefuserPlus laser band detector and defuser products. With the K40 configuration there are no cords, wires, suction cups, brackets or boxes on the dash. The only one who knows about this detector is you.

Two dime-size pods housing red LED warning lights are the heart of the system, attaching flush to the base of the instrument cluster and visually indicating power on and detected radar signals from the front or rear radar or front laser

signal. The pods have built-in speakers for multiple audible alarms correlating with the various types of popular radar bands and laser guns used by law enforcement today. A small dash-mounted switch turns the system on, chooses highway or city settings and controls the volume. The 2000P and DefuserPlus systems work in harmony using the pods and single control switch. Both components come with all of the accessories required for a complete professional installation.

The key to a good stealth radar detector system is the installation, and there are many variables to be considered, including placement for maximum sensitivity and durability. The technician at Al & Ed's said that its 29 stores in and around Southern California do many K40 Undetectable installs on all types of cars, truck and SUV's and the common denominator is the owner's interest in keeping the components out of sight. The 2000P and DefuserPlus are virtu-



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ally invisible; one would be hard pressed to identify the antennas mounted in the grille or the rear antenna underneath the bumper. Inside, the system's warning lights/alarm speaker pods, using O.E.-grade materials and finishes, blend into the instrument cluster for a factory appearance. It's a slick system that doesn't look out of place in the BMW. K40 goes even further and offers a pod-less "Undetectable" system in which the warning LEDs are integrat-

The kit consists of front- and rear-mounted radar antennas and two pods mounted on the dash to inform the driver of radar and laser signals pointed at the vehicle.



Product Review

ed into the instrument bezel and the warning speaker is hidden in the driver's side air conditioning vent!

The leap of faith was an easy one in the case of the K40. The AI & Ed's installer was familiar with the system and its components and made the install process look easy. Be prepared for an install time of about four hours, and if you

The two antennas are placed hidden under the front grille and underneath the car just ahead of the rear bumper. This is the easy part of the job. The rest is like bloodless surgery. Be prepared to see your car's dash come apart.



choose to watch, be ready for what looks like bloodless surgery. The instrument panel and rear seat bottom are removed to facilitate the wiring of the front and rear sensors to the central pods and control switch.

When all of the pieces are installed and operational, the K40 system functions as advertised, stealthily and completely nondescript. While I don't have reams of data on its operation, I can offer a few un-scientific observations:

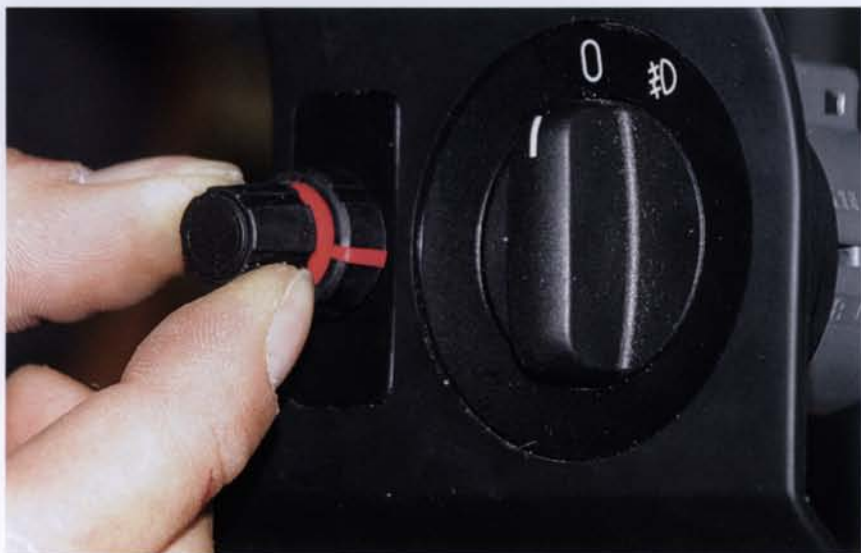
1. Since having the K40 2000P and DefuserPlus installed, I have been ticket free for multiple months and have, I believe, avoided at least five potential radar tickets.

2. My radar faith is getting a little stronger every day.

3. False alarms are the devil incarnate.

Custom radar detectors were once exclusively the domain of the very wealthy yearning for the best radar protection. With the advent of the K40 system and others like it, these systems are more functional, affordable and consequently more popular for the mainstream user. For those seeking empirical data on the K40 2000P and DefuserPlus systems, I suggest taking a look at www.k40.com.

And we'll keep you up to date on my driving record. Let's hope my faith in the K40 is rewarded. ☼



A small knob next to the foglight switch turns the unit on and off, chooses city or highway settings and adjusts the volume.

CONTACT

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