

Ready2Talk

Ford Transit Vans 2016 (and newer) missing AUX Input Socket

Problem: No AUX input on some Ford Transit Van models

In 2016, we started receiving calls from some customers that their new Ford Transit Vans were missing the standard 3.5mm AUX Input socket but they still came with a USB. Without the AUX input socket they were unable to connect their Ready2Talk PA systems as they could with other makes and years of vehicles in their fleet.

The Reason:

The main reason Ford has eliminated the AUX input socket is, they think that their customers only want to connect and play music from their phones via Bluetooth not through wires. That could be a valid point, however they aren't taking into account that there are other uses for their vans, like tourism where the AUX input is still an essential item.

Ford offers three models of stereos in Transit Vans, two models come with both the 3.5mm AUX input and USB sockets, where the top model (the Sync 3 with Sat Nav) only comes with USB. Naturally, you would think there's an easy way to connect your PA system into the USB? Unfortunately, the USB input socket transfers data not audio and although you can find USB to 3.5mm adaptors online, those are only usable with computers that have the internal software to support the digital to analogue conversion.

The Solutions:

After exhaustive research with both Ford and with the aftermarket car stereo accessory manufacturers, at this point (Jan. 2017) there is no adaptor cable available that will facilitate a direct addition of the 3.5mm AUX input socket into the Sync 3 stereos. In the future, if there becomes a direct connect solution, we will update this bulletin and stock the item on our website.

Solution #1

Currently, the simplest solution is to add an aftermarket "AUX input" using a FM Modulator. This is a bit of a blast from the past to when most stereos didn't come with CD players... remember that? Although older, this option is well proven and relatively inexpensive.

We make the "TAK" (Transit AUX Kit) that includes all the parts and cables to be as plug and play as possible. <http://ready2talkpa.com/product/tva-transit-van-aux-upgrade-kit/> It requires only minor installation and without any permanent modifications so not to void the warranty. Once installed, you will have a high quality AUX input that can be used for connecting your Ready2Talk PA system or any 3.5mm audio device such as an iPhone / iPad for music.

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Solution #2

If you rent or short term lease your vans... again no problem! Although we don't normally suggest the use of "Wireless FM Modulators" as most are pretty cheesy domestic units that won't stand up to daily commercial use, our FM 1012 rechargeable portable FM Mod works really well even in high signal areas like San Francisco. Because the FM 1012 uses micro USB to charge its battery, just leave it connected to the dash mounted USB socket in front of the drink tray, connect your PA 5 Portable system and you are Ready2Talk! This is a great temporary option and they're low cost.

How about Bluetooth? Good question.

At Ready2Talk we continue to develop technology based on our customer's needs and requests and with the missing AUX input problem, one solution is connecting through Bluetooth. To date, the biggest stumbling block is the speed of BT processing. When playing music there is no time reference but when you talk... if there is any delay... in the circuitry... you will experience a lag... before your voice comes out the speakers. This is caused by the speed or slowness of the BT circuitry in the stereos. Some are better than others, but it's not yet fast enough to be reliable.

E.g. ever notice the awkward delay while having a phone conversation on BT? Drive you nuts? It's even worse when you are directly talking in the vehicle and then listening to your own voice half a second later.

Last Words:

The customer is King, so we suggest to make sure that your Ford dealer is very aware of your discontent and requirement of the missing 3.5mm AUX input socket and hopefully enough Ford owners will relay the message to Ford for them to solve the problem. At this point... they just aren't aware of the issue. **Please Let Ford Know!**

I hope this Fleet Management Best Practices sheet has helped answer your questions about your New Transit Van and saved you a ton of research time?

If you have any comments or questions about this topic or have another solution that we haven't talked about, please give us a call. 1 888 724-5351

Cheers, The Ready2Talk Team