BMW’s iDrive has been further enhanced to be more intuitive than ever. Now, with BMW’s recent addition of 6 highly innovative programmable memory keys for the X5, 5 and 6 Series iDrive (also available on the 1 and 3 Series), BMW further advances ease of operation.

BMW’s leadership in the equipping of its cars with an expansive offering of innovative luxury features demanded leadership in championing functionality, as well. iDrive addresses the need to control BMW’s extensive array of features while complementing BMW’s desire for maintaining a clean, uncluttered, purposeful and handsome dash and console.

BMW has led the way in revolutionizing cabin ergonomics with the unifying iDrive control concept - a concept that has been copied by many BMW competitors.

iDrive - Philosophy

BMW, in developing iDrive, pursued the goal of creating an innovative way for a driver to take full advantage of a BMW’s many capabilities. It was important to provide an intuitive and interactive method of control without distracting the driver’s attention from the road.

As always, the BMW focus is the road. Thus, the objective of BMW’s control philosophy is to separate the driving functions from the iDrive-controlled comfort and convenience functions.

Driving functions such as ignition, stop/start and control switches are located closest to the steering wheel. Controls for amenities managed by iDrive such as climate control, entertainment and navigation are positioned in the center console within reach of driver and front-seat passenger.

The manipulation of most comfort features can be directed through the iDrive control that both welcomes the hand and responds intuitively with all the comfort functions subdivided in a simple hierarchical manner. For the most commonly used features such as specific radio stations, phone numbers and navigation addresses, the 6 programmable memory keys provide added convenience.

iDrive - How it works

BMW iDrive combines the functions of a large array of switches and knobs through a single centrally located iDrive controller to offer a tremendous level of vehicle customization.

The easily gripped controller and high-resolution iDrive monitor provide a highly efficient interface for organizing functions. Navigation of the iDrive system is accomplished by turning, pushing or pressing the controller. The function selected or choice options available are presented on the iDrive monitor dash display.

The single iDrive controller organizes functions under five menu items:
- Climate (activated by pushing the controller to the left)
- Communication (activated by pushing the controller up)
- Navigation (activated by pushing the controller to the right)
- Entertainment (activated by pushing the controller down)
- i menu (activated by pushing down on the controller)

The operations controlled by each of the five menu items are:
- Climate
  - Vent settings
  - Seat heater distribution
  - Automatic programs
  - Parked car ventilation
- Communication
  - Telephone
  - BMW Assist
  - TeleService
- Navigation or onboard information
  - Navigation system
  - 8-function Onboard Computer
- Entertainment
  - Radio
  - CD player and CD changer
  - HD Radio
  - Satellite Radio
  - External audio device
- i menu
  - Switching off Control Display
  - Tone and display settings
  - Settings for traffic information
  - Display of maintenance intervals
  - Deadlines for legally mandated inspections
  - Settings for telephone

Operating principles

To activate iDrive control, press the controller down to open the i menu or move in the direction of the desired function as displayed on the iDrive screen and press down.

Accessing and adjusting a function for a menu item:
- Turn the controller, the highlight moves
- Menu items shown in white can be selected by highlighting
Activating menu item:
• Press the controller
• New menu items are displayed or the function is carried out

Changing between fields:
• Briefly move the controller left, right, forward or back
• Release controller
• Active field appears lighter

Adjusting settings:
• Turn controller
• Graphic display, numerical value or text displays can be changed
• Changing of field confirms action

Navigating the i functions
To best appreciate the power of iDrive to tailor the driving experience to personal taste, it is helpful to understand the drill-down logic of the i menu.

When pressing the controller down on i, the display header offers the choices of DISPLAY OFF, INFO SOURCES AND SETTINGS.

The following are the list of functions under each i menu heading. The driver, using iDrive can drill down through these menus to get to specific functions.

DISPLAY OFF turns off display

INFO SOURCES provides the driver access to:
• Traffic information
• Travel information
• Service
  • Service requirements
  • Check control messages

SETTINGS provides driver access to:
• Audio
  • Treble/Base
  • Balance/Fader
  • Speed/Volume
  • Equalizer
  • Surround settings
  • Reset
• Display settings
  • Brightness
  • Head-up Display
• Steering wheel buttons
  • Navigation voice instructions
  • Air recirculation On/Off
  • Mute On/Off
  • Monitor On/Off
  • Night vision
  • Telephone list
  • Next entertainment source
• Vehicle/Tires
  • Lighting
    • Pathway Lighting
    • Triple turn signal
    • Daytime running lights
  • Door locks
    • Central locking
      • Unlock button all doors
      • Last seat position deactivated
      • Relock door – if not opened
      • Lock after driving
    • Tailgate
      • Opening angle
    • Confirmation
      • Flash when locking
      • Flash when unlocking
      • Acoustic confirmation when locking
      • Acoustic confirmation when unlocking
  • TPM
    • Reset
  • Maneuvering aids
    • View selection
      • Camera view: full screen (X5 only)
      • Camera view: main window (X5 only)
      • PDC in main window only
    • Settings
      • Pathway lines (X5 only)
      • Obstacle marking (X5 only)
      • Turning lines (X5 only)
      • Camera panning (X5 only)
• Language/Units
  • Languages
    • English US
    • Francais
    • Espanol
  • Navigating voice instructions
    • Units
      • Consumption
      • Distance
      • Pressure
      • Temperature
• Time/Date
• Traffic info settings
  (This function includes AUTO, which provides automatic selection of the traffic info station with the strongest signal.)
• BMW services
  • Service status
  • Options
  • Emergency call
  • Concierge
  • Roadside assistance
  • BMW customer relations
• Bluetooth
  • Settings
    • Bluetooth communication activate
• Unlock rear menu
  • Rear enabled

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Handy navigation tips

For greater ease of operation, it is helpful to understand iDrive logic. For each function, for example “Audio”, there exists a list sub-functions such as Treble/Base, Balance/Fader, Speed/Volume, Equalizer, Surround settings and Reset.

When drilling down in the “Audio” menu, iDrive will skip the choice of functions and go directly to the last selected function such as Balance/Fader. To get back to the choices, the controller must be moved forward to display all of the “Audio” choices.

For any function, when the desire is to move back up to the start menu, press the console located MENU button to the rear of the controller. This will cause the system to retreat through sub-functions back up the menu tree.

When located in any of the 4 main menu areas - Climate, Communication, Entertainment, Navigation - a driver can “jump” to any of the other menus by pushing and holding the iDrive controller for a couple of seconds towards the direction for that Menu (left for Climate, up for Communication, right for Navigation and down for Entertainment)

Example: If you are in the Navigation Menu and want to go to the Communication Menu, simply push the iDrive controller up for approximately 1 second and it will “jump” to communication.

6 Programmable Memory Keys

To one degree or another, people are creatures of habit. BMW’s iDrive for the X5, 5, and 6 Series (1 & 3 Series option) accommodates the human tendency to repeatedly use the same preferences with 6 highly convenient programmable memory keys. In other words, iDrive provides 6 short cuts located in the center console to simplify operation and control.

iDrive’s programmable memory keys can be programmed to activate a specific function e.g. retrieve telephone numbers, tune in a specific radio station or calculate a programmed navigation route. Memory keys are touch sensitive. When lightly brushed, a pop-up displays on the iDrive screen showing what is programmed on each key.

Accompanying the 6 programmable keys are two hard keys that control AM/FM and Mode Selection to enhance ease of audio system operation.

Programmable keys dedicated to a specific function benefit the driver with the ability to specifically tailor the control array to his or her preference.

Voice Command

A feature affording added convenience that accompanies iDrive is Voice Command. With the ability to recognize thousands of words, Voice Command translates stated messages into system directions.

Voice Command offers the significant benefit of freeing the hands thereby allowing the driver to better focus on driving responsibilities and not diverting his or her attention from the road.

Simply press the Voice Command button on the steering wheel and speak after the tone. This feature allows the driver to jump between menus. If the driver wants to know what Voice Command options are available in that menu, the driver can simply say “Options” and the system will read back the available options. An example of a typical situation, where this is very helpful occurs when a navigation route is active and the driver needs that information, but has made a phone call by going into the telephone numbers list. In order to “jump” back to the navigation screen without removing the driver’s hands from the steering wheel, the driver can press the Voice Command button and, after the tone, simply say “Map” or “Navigation”. This will return the display to the directions.

Voice Command serves as an effective command interface for a number of functions including:
  - Phone system
  - Address book
  - GPS Navigation
  - Audio system
  - Climate Control
  - Short Message System (SMS)

Important points when selling iDrive with 6 Programmable Memory Keys

1. **iDrive lets the driver personalize** creature comforts to individual preference
2. **Clean uncluttered interior** lines result from iDrive organization of functions
3. **6 innovative Programmable Memory Keys** provide for immediate access to frequently used functions
4. **A simple touch** activates each of the touch sensitive 6 Programmable Memory Keys
5. **Voice Command** frees the hands to focus on driving responsibilities and not divert attention from the road. Allows driver to easily jump between menus.
6. **Hard keys** control AM/FM and Mode Selection to enhance ease of audio system operation. Hard keys also provide for adjustment and individualization of ventilation distribution