

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Vehicle head unit as PC audio receiver](#)

datguy.dev - March 30, 2019, 4:31 pm

Greetings,

I was wanting to change up my PC audio setup for something more compact; yet cheap. Previously, I was using a Kenwood home theatre setup and the receiver was just too big it was hard to find a good place to put it with limited space. But I didn't want to just buy something off the shelf so instead I used my [old car head unit](#) (\$20) as a receiver for my PC. Being a car audio guy, running a head unit outside a vehicle is a very common practice for testing etc. However, I modelled and [google.com/file/d/1e-LovEV0X3Zr07gC5F3RMVjvWLUJSILC/view?usp=sharing](#) 3D printed brackets which can be used to mount the unit under my desk. Now that I know this works, I'm going to try and get something with a fold down screen and surround sound.

The only noteworthy aspects to this project are:

- 1) You connect the power constant (usually yellow) and power switched (usually red) together. They go to the 12v source or adapter. Then obviously ground to source ground. To get the unit power on, you may have to a power button on the unit itself...
- 2) Running the power switched wire through a physical switch will allow you to turn off the unit. Meanwhile, the power constant wire will retain the settings.
- 3) I tried various 12v DC power adapters/rectifiers to find what was the minimum current my unit would run off and be stable. The ratings were not listed on the unit or the manual. I settled on a 1.5A adapter. I cranked the volume and left it for 30 minutes. It has been stable since. So you don't really need a computer PSU or anything that powerful for a basic head unit.

For \$20 ... it's not a bad option for a cheap audio receiver. I think I paid \$60 back in the day.

webdev77 - April 1, 2019, 4:19 am

I've seen people build these into tables and desks before. It's a pretty cool project for anyone that has an extra head unit around.

For finding the power rating, measuring the current draw would be the easiest way to find the legit needs. Just hook it up to a bench supply and add 10-20% above what max draw is. What you did is just the less convenient way of achieving the same answer.

NERO - April 1, 2019, 4:44 am

Pretty neat, I remember when i had a range rover which was amped but i wanted to fit a non-compatible double din radio, Some cursing and looking at wiring diagrams later it was working, I rather enjoyed watching netflix on long drives (i had a firestick plugged into the HDMI then used mobile data (Unlimited internet) to run the network)

Best thing iv done in awhile

datguy.dev - April 1, 2019, 1:44 pm

(Apr 1, 2019 04:19 AM)webdev77 Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) I've seen people build these into tables and desks before. It's a pretty cool project for anyone that has an extra head unit around.

For finding the power rating, measuring the current draw would be the easiest way to find the legit needs. Just hook it up to a bench supply and add 10-20% above what max draw is. What you did is just the less convenient way of achieving the same answer.

Not everything has to be soldered to NASA specs... So I just plugged in all the 12v adapters I had lying around and alligator clipped the wires into the DC barrel jack for testing. I didn't really care to fully test anything. Just wanted it to work. Let me have my lazy moments alright? ?