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The BM54 radio unit, fitted to a range of BMW models including the 5 series and the X series, has an inherent fault with its amps, which normally expresses itself after several years. The amps originally hooked into the BM54 share power between themselves rather than using the carâ€™s power, which makes them weaker than they could be â€“ and thereâ€™s often a loss of sound in later life too. A BM54 repair kit is potentially the answer.

In order to use a repair kit yourself, you need to have some decent soldering experience, including the ability to solder accurately in small tight spaces. The repair kit is supplied with pre-prepared wires to make things easier, colour coded for use with the instruction manual (also supplied).

The basic anatomy of the BM54 repair is easy enough to understand. Youâ€™re aiming to remove the two original amps and solder in new ones, with a different power routing so the car fuels the sound rather than the BM54â€™s battery.

The actual process of performing the repair is less simple, which is why a lot of people prefer to buy the kit (essentially two new amps with wires attached) and have professional help with its installation. In general terms it seems that the BM54 repair kit plus installation costs around Â£30 more than simply buying the kit on its own â€“ and for the peace of mind that comes with having someone who knows what they are doing to finish the job, it seems worth it.

It is important to be sure you are identifying the correct BM unit before you instigate potential repairs. There are two common older BM stereo units â€“ the 54 and the 24. The BM54 has better sound (in theory) but also goes wrong more, with the amp problem alluded to above. The 24 rarely experiences problems other than its solder drying out, which may be repaired for half the price of a BM54 repair kit.

Obviously correct diagnosis is important in all cases, though if you choose to replace the amps in your BM54 using a kit, you should in theory solve any existing problems unless they are to do with speakers and connections at the speaker end. So be sure to have a professional diagnosis of the problem before you consider buying the repair kit.

The BM54 repair kit is efficient where the problem lies with the amplifiers. In some cases there is a problem with the processor controlling the unit, in which case a different and more expensive repair is needed.

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Dave Hill (you can get in touch with him at davehill@bm54.com) has been a freelance writer for years now and has interest in writing on various topics. However, he has a knack towards cars, car accessories and the repair of the same. His write ups on BMW radio module repair and a BM54 repair kit are quite informative.

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