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AUSTRALIA'S MONTHLY VIDEO BUYER'S GUIDE

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HIFI

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR SOUND ADVICE



SPECIAL CAR STEREO ISSUE!

- WIN A PAIR OF MORDAUNT-SHORT SPEAKERS
- CAR STEREO INSTALLATION FEATURE

• FURNISHING FOR BETTER SOUND

WE REVIEW

- AIWA CT-Z5500
- EUROVOX MCC 8280E CAR UNIT
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- EIDETIC GB16 POWER AMPLIFIER
- MARANTZ CP 430 PORTABLE CASSETTE PLAYER



P R E C I S I O N

Kenwood & Commodore

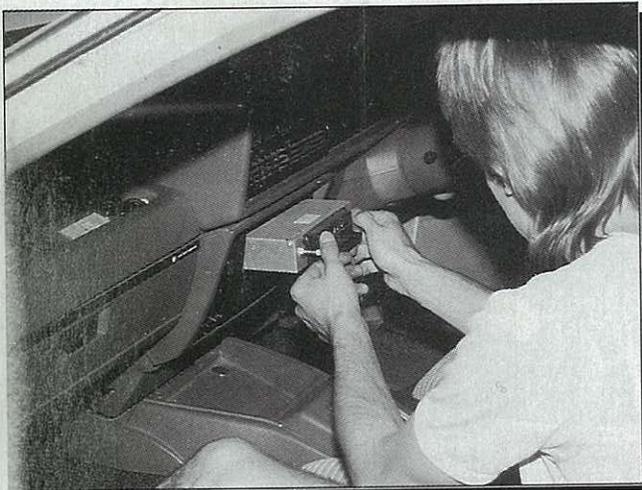
by Don Norris

If you happen to be thinking about installing a sound system in your car, the chances are that you aren't planning to put in much more than a radio/cassette unit and a pair of speakers. In the trade these are known as bread-and-butter jobs and they account for the vast majority of all car sound system installations.

As a rule a job like this one is finished in just a few hours. You drop your car off, go do a bit of shopping and return to find that *voilà*, you now have a great sounding stereo system. The job looks simple: replace the cassette deck, whack a couple of speakers in the door or the back deck, and Bob's your uncle.

However, all is not necessarily as it seems. In fact, even a basic installation like this one in our Commodore, involves an impressive number of steps between the selection of the equipment and that moment of truth when you pop in your first cassette.

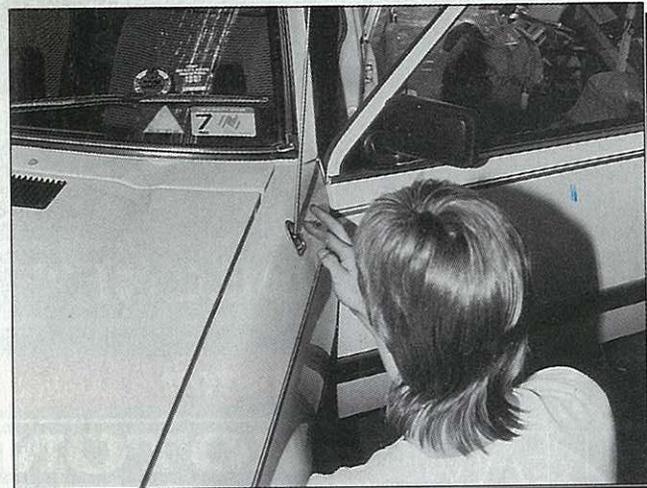
In the following pages we'll follow Precision Installations' veteran fitter, Ashley Burrell as he installs a Kenwood KRC-434 and four speakers in our Commodore. Simple as this job was, we can't show you every step (we counted more than 60!). What you'll see instead are the important stages in the process. ■



Out with the old. Ashley begins by removing the original front end.



With the old radio out of the way, Ashley carefully enlarges the hole in the dash so that it will accept the KRC-434's 'cradle.'



And since we're putting in a unit as capable as the KRC-434, we decide to maximise the tuner section's performance by replacing the stock antenna.



The next step is to begin the painstaking process of connecting the cradle (left) to the wiring harness of the car and to the front and rear speaker cables. Many an amateur installer has destroyed an expensive signal source at this stage of the game by making a disastrous misconnection!

INSTALLATIONS:



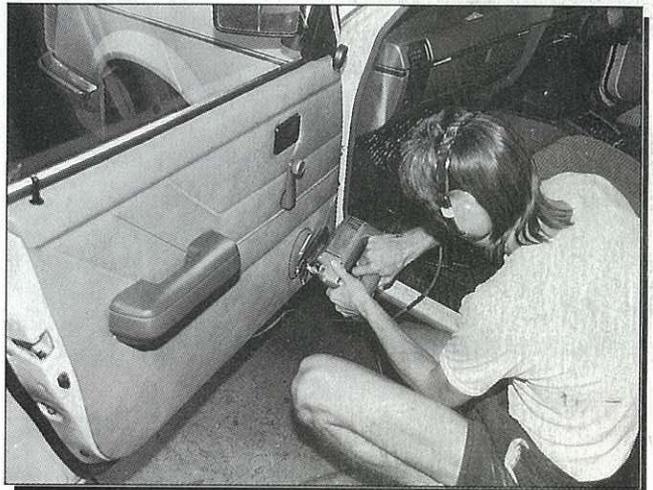
With the wires properly connected and secured, the cradle is ready for fitting to the dash.



Before he can insert the KRC-434, Ashley must fix a support strap to the back of the cradle. A secure mounting is particularly important because the Kenwood is one of those units that is designed to be removed from the dash whenever the car is left unattended. (A carry handle is incorporated into the KRC-434's front panel.)



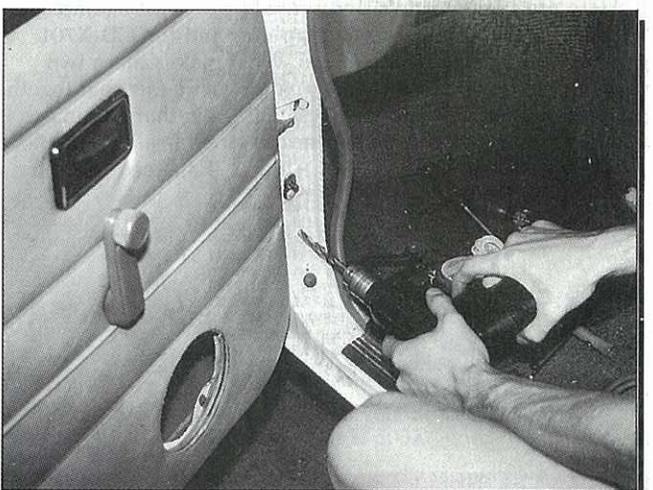
To take advantage of the KRC-434's four speaker system capability, we've decided to mount a pair of Kenwood's KFC-1371 speakers in the front doors' kick panels. Ashley gets the ball rolling by marking out the speaker position with a template.



Here is where long experience, a good eye and steady hands pay off. Ashley follows the template outline with a jig saw.



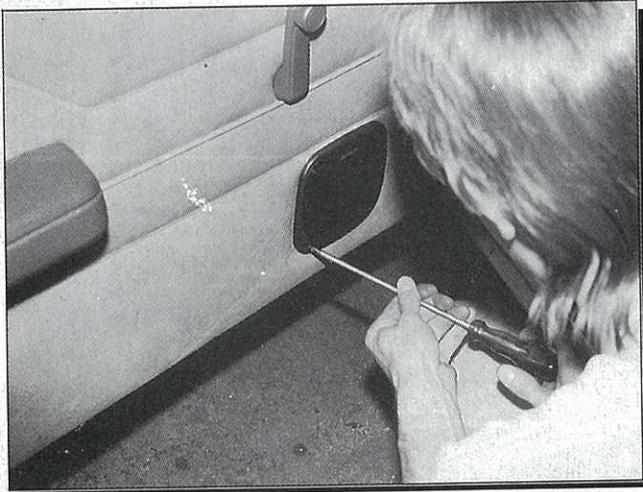
A place for everything and everything in its place: the KRC-434 looking like standard equipment.



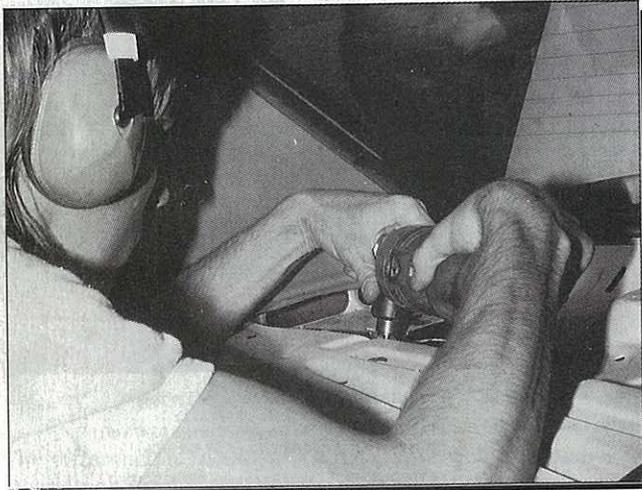
To get the speaker cable from the door to the KRC-434, it is necessary to drill a hole in both the door and the front pillar. The first grommited hole is larger than the second to permit the cable slack to move into the door cavity when the door is shut.

Precision Installations . . .

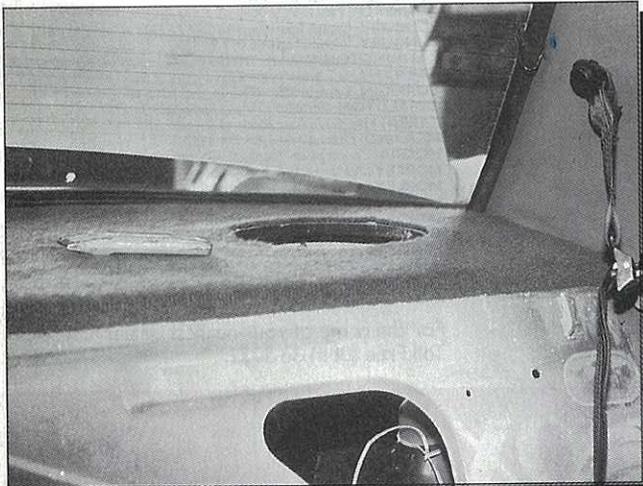
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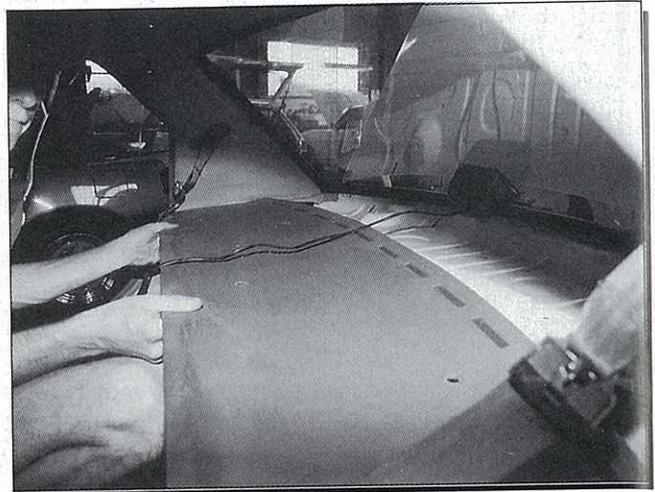
The cable is in place and the KFC-1371 is connected. All that remains is for Ashley to secure the speaker to the kick panel and then press on the protective grille.



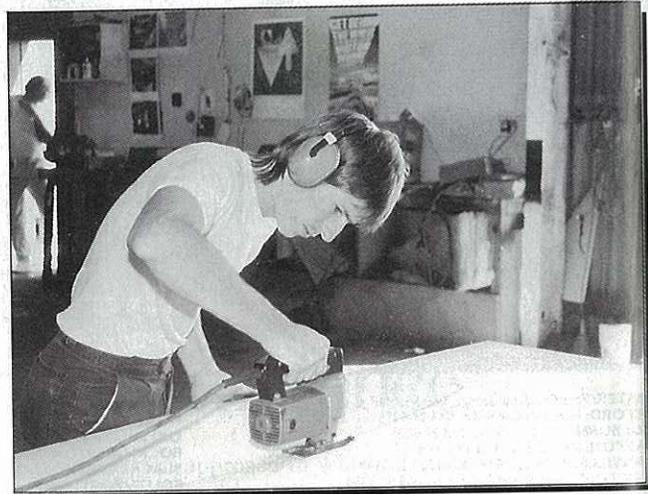
Professional installers have both the experience and the tools to do a job properly. Here Ashley uses a nibbler to get the right size hole in the steel frame on which the parcel shelf rests. Ashley maintains that the bass sound will suffer if speaker touches metal rather than wood.



Only a couple of steps remain. Here the new parcel shelf panel is shown *in situ*, waiting for the KFC-6988s to be bolted into place.



The KFC-6988 speakers require a space 257 mm x 169 mm. So the rear parcel shelf is the obvious location. However, before Ashley can cut any holes he has to remove the stock parcel shelf covering. The thin fibreboard isn't substantial enough for the massive Kenwood 6 x 9s.



Using the parcel shelf cover as a template, Ashley creates a new cover from heavy particle board.



The seat has been replaced, the cables are secured and of course, the KFC-6988s are installed. Our humble Commodore sounds like a million bucks! ■