



Pioneer AVH-X8790BT
Rs 39,990
www.pioneer-india.in



Android united

Simran Rastogi tests the first Android Auto compatible aftermarket infotainment system to hit the Indian market, the Pioneer AVH-X8790BT. As a bonus, we sample it alongside a full Pioneer audio installation

Android Auto was first introduced in 2014 and as of very recently, Google has made it available in India. It essentially allows your audio system to control your phone functions, from the usual suspects - audio, Bluetooth telephony, messages read-out to even apps. Being a brand new standard, not many manufacturers have jumped on board yet. Mahindra and Maruti-Suzuki lead the way, promising to make the feature available from the factory soon.

In the meantime, Pioneer will offer you their AVH-X8790BT head unit. The specs are impressive - 7-inch LED touchscreen with removable and sliding face plate, in-dash CD/DVD, Bluetooth/USB/SD/HDMI connectivity, in-built DSP, 3 high voltage RCA pre-outs (for front, rear speakers and subwoofer) and a rating of 50Wx4.

In the demo car we received, the head unit was paired with four TS-C600IN 2-way speakers (woofer+tweeter up front, only woofer in the rear) with a TS-WX305T subwoofer mounted in a bass reflex tube in the trunk. Sound quality is very, very good with a clear soundstage created with all set-

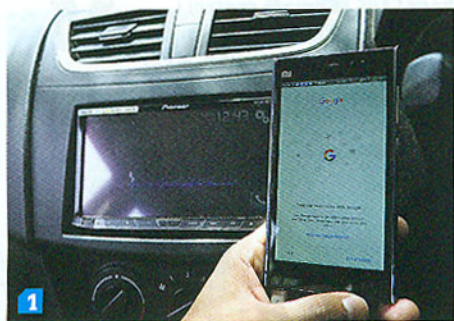
tings stock and with a flat EQ. Tweaking the EQ settings only improved things, opening up the highs (handled by the separate tweeters) really well. The bass remained tight till just above halfway through the volume scale, at which point the vibrations became jarring.

Other than playing Honey Singh songs and triggering nearby car alarms, we were most excited about Android Auto. To begin, you'll need Android 5

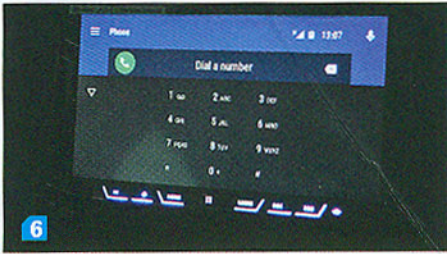
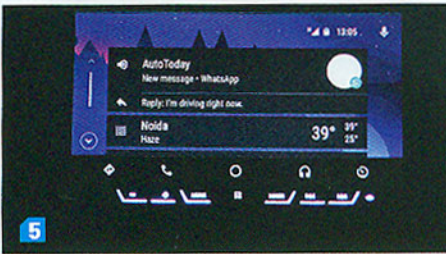


Good emphasis on the mids and highs, with these dust-proof components

SOUND QUALITY IS VERY, VERY GOOD WITH A CLEAR SOUNDSTAGE CREATED WITH ALL SETTINGS STOCK AND WITH A FLAT EQ



1. At first connect, you're prompted for updates and permissions. 2. With Android Auto fired up, your phone is limited to displaying this screen and your notification shade only. 3. Fret not, all relevant info is on the unit's screen, including ongoing navigation instructions. 4. Maps integration is superb, notifications pop up as they would on your phone. 5. One-touch replies are possible for incoming messages. 6. Dial using the on-screen touchpad or with voice commands



or above on your phone, a regular USB cable, the Android Auto app installed and the suite of Google Play services and Google Now to be updated. Once you connect the phone, initial setup is a matter of minutes while Bluetooth permissions and such are sorted. The home screen of the unit should now resemble the lockscreen of your device. It will show up

Google Now cards, weather information, incoming messages and the option to send a standard "I'm driving" reply. Further, you'll have separate full screen Google Maps navigation and Google Now/podcast apps. We found navigation to work just as it would on the phone, which means it's very easy to use. Navigating playlists through Google Now was

an issue as the system would only display a limited list before asking us to park the car to browse lists further - the engine wasn't even running at this point! We're sure it's a bug that will be worked out and overall we love that Android Auto gives us the option to display Google Maps right up front and centre, with voice assistance.