

# Car infotainment

# Car infotainment



**Almost all cars now have infotainment systems – from affordable hatchbacks to top-end luxury cars.**

Once the preserve of high-end and luxury cars, infotainment systems are now available in almost every model of car on sale. These all-in-one setups usually incorporate several different digital functions into one unit, granting you access to information and entertainment services while you're on the move.

# Car infotainment

Traditionally, the only electrical device slotted into your car's dashboard was nothing more than a radio and a CD player – maybe a satellite navigation system, if you'd really splashed out. However, as our desire for in-car gadgets has increased, car manufacturers have been happy to oblige.



# Car infotainment

As these systems have become more all-encompassing and complex, they have started to provide information to the driver, as well as entertainment. Hence, the term 'infotainment' was born.



# Car infotainment



**Bluetooth phone connectivity** – this allows your phone to connect wirelessly to your car. Bluetooth supports several different functions including hands-free calling with the audio going through the car's built-in speaker and microphone, or messaging with your texts being read out via the infotainment system

# Car infotainment

**Pairing your phone to the car**

# Car infotainment

**Smartphone mirroring** – think of smartphone mirroring as a much more advanced version of Bluetooth that allows you to access certain apps from your smartphone through your car's infotainment screen.

The most common mirroring systems are Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. You can now access sat-nav directions from your Google Maps app, for example, without needing a system built into your car.



# Car infotainment



**Entertainment** – there's a huge choice of options when it comes to accessing entertainment through your car's system. This can include using a music streaming service via your smartphone, or playing MP3 files from an external storage device.

Some advanced infotainment systems include television, movie and video game services, but these are normally reserved for passengers or when in park for safety reasons.

# Car infotainment

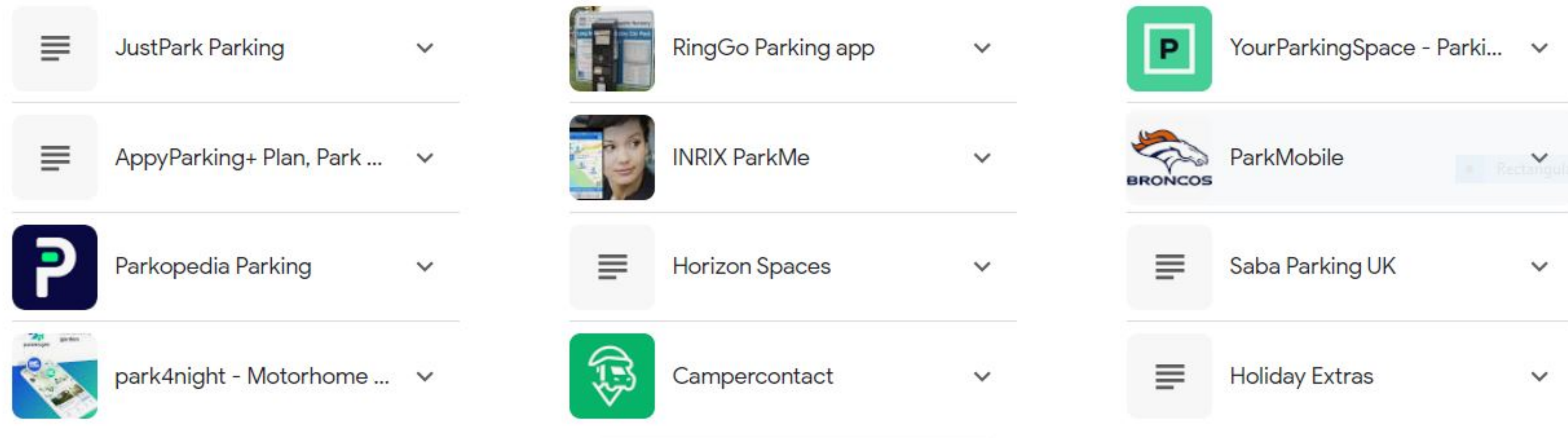


**Car functions** – modern cars have lots of functions that can be accessed electronically, and the infotainment system is usually where you interact with them.

This can include selecting and editing the car's driving modes, accessing performance or efficiency information, or even opening boot lids or glove boxes on some models.

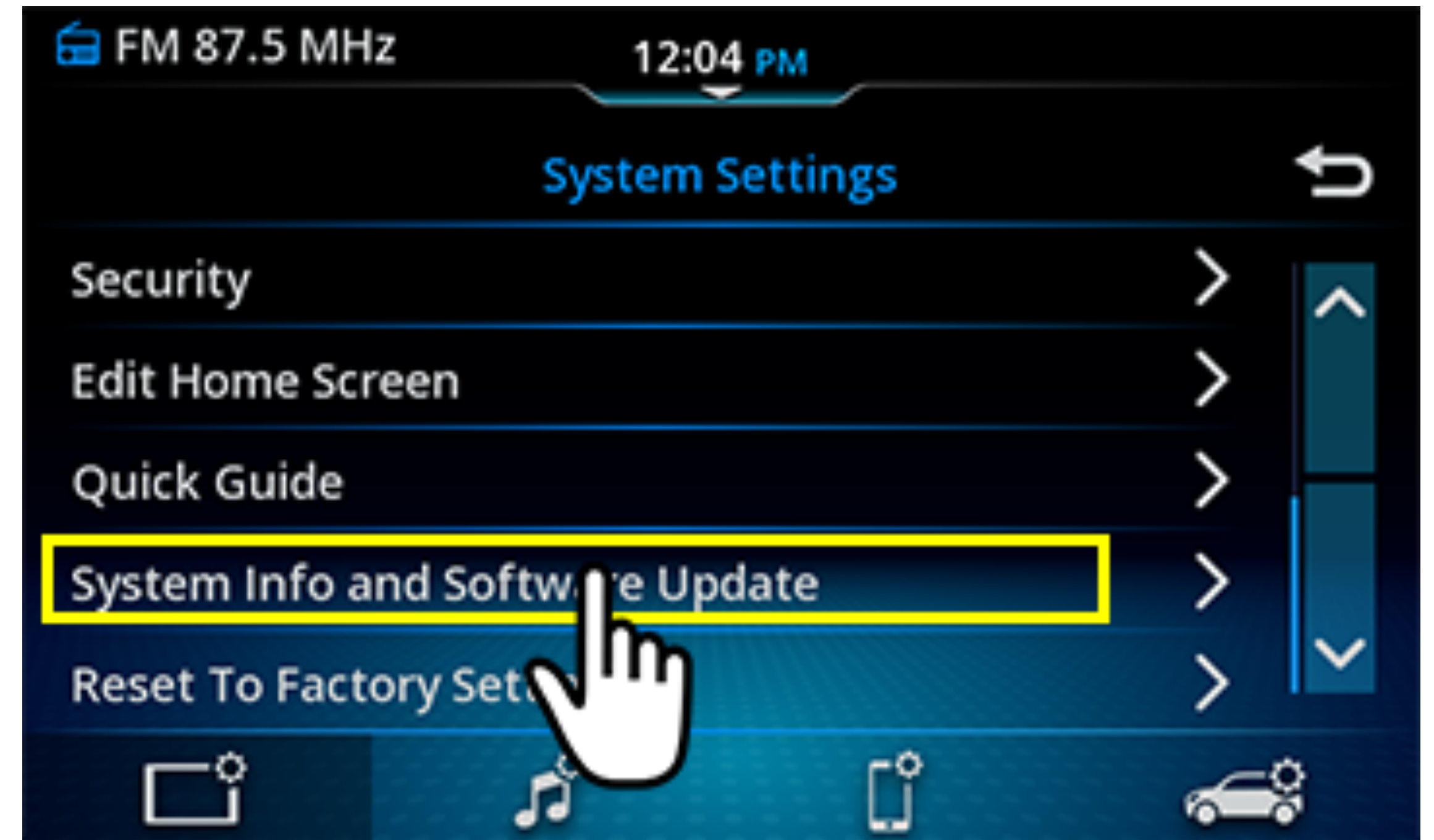
# Car infotainment

**Digital services** – as infotainment has become more popular, several adjacent services have appeared to feed convenient information directly to the car's screen. This can include systems to find you a parking space or a charging point if you're driving a plug-in vehicle, or services that can find nearby restaurants and even book you a table



# Car infotainment

Some infotainment systems include the ability to be upgraded over time, either with better performance or with added functionality. The traditional way these upgrades were distributed would involve the carmaker plugging a laptop into your car at the same time as you got it serviced.



# Car infotainment



The latest infotainment systems, however, utilise what are called ‘over-the-air’ (OTA) updates. These are similar to the apps on your phone, which get periodic updates downloaded and installed over the internet. Tesla is well known for using OTA updates and has, in the past, added games and extra functions via an online update.

# Car infotainment

**Common infotainment brand names include:**

**Audi – Connect**

**BMW – iDrive**

**Ford – SYNC**

**Mercedes – MBUX**

**Peugeot – i-Cockpit**

**Tesla – Infotainment System**

**Vauxhall – IntelliLink**

**Volkswagen – Composition/Discover**

**Car play**