

DAB+ DIGITAL RADIO

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q. What is DAB+ digital radio?

DAB+ is the most established and widely adopted standard for broadcasting digital radio. It has been adopted across Europe, South Africa, Arab States and planning is currently underway in the Asia-Pacific region.

DAB+ uses an advanced and technically robust transmission system and operates in Australia in VHF Band III. DAB+ uses higher frequencies than analogue radio (e.g. AM/FM) and requires broadcasters to install new transmission equipment and listeners to purchase DAB+ enabled devices.

Q. What are the benefits of listening to DAB+ digital radio?

- More station choice
- Digital sound quality
- Niche formats
- Free-to-air
- On-screen graphics (e.g. song and artist information)
- Weather updates
- No subscription required
- No data usage.

Q. How many extra stations will I receive?

Listeners who tune into DAB+ digital radio can access up to 38 extra DAB+ only stations as well as pop-up stations, in addition to the AM/FM stations that already broadcast in those markets.

Q. What station formats are available on DAB+ digital radio?

DAB+ only stations often have a niche format, catering to a broad range of preferences, including chill, contemporary hits, country, rock, dance, sport, racing, news, talk, childrens, 80's, 90's, jazz and foreign language content.

Q. Where is DAB+ digital radio available?

DAB+ digital radio was launched by all commercial and public service broadcasters in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth in August 2009.

DAB+ digital radio services launched in Hobart in April 2019, Darwin in May 2019, followed by Canberra in July 2019.

Q. Can I receive digital radio?

To check, type your postcode or suburb into the search function on digitalradioplus.com.au.

Q. Will DAB+ digital radio cost anything?

Digital radio is free. Listeners simply need to buy a DAB+ enabled radio to listen.

Q. What should I look for when purchasing a DAB+ digital radio to ensure it will work in Australia?

Only DAB+ digital radios will receive DAB+ digital radio stations broadcast in Australia. When buying a new digital radio, check that the product packaging states that it is a DAB+ digital radio, or look for the blue digital radio cross logo, pictured on the right.



Q. How much will a DAB+ digital radio cost?



Like any product range, digital radio prices vary depending on the features and capabilities.

Entry-level models start from \$24. There are now over 200 DAB+ radio models available.

Q. Where can I buy a new DAB+ digital radio?

More than 800 stores throughout Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Darwin and Canberra stock digital radios including:

- Harvey Norman
- David Jones
- JB Hi-Fi
- Big W
- The Good Guys
- Kmart
- Bing Lee
- Retravision
- Myer

and specialist audio retailers as well as online retailers.

Q. What digital radio models are available?

There are a large selection of models including DAB+ clock radios, with docks, WiFi and DAB+ combinations, HiFi components, micro and mini systems, portable radios, handheld MP3 and MP4 players with DAB+, USBs, and digital radio for your car. Plus, there are digital radios with small screens showcasing DAB+ features such as album art, presenter photos, weather, news and sports results.

Q. Who makes DAB+ digital radios?

Below are just some of the manufacturers making DAB+ digital radios:

- Altronics
- Blaupunkt
- Bose
- JVC Kenwood
- LG
- Panasonic
- Pioneer
- Pure
- Richter
- Ruark
- Sangean
- Sony
- VQ
- Yamaha.

Manufacturers frequently update their range of digital radio products so visit the Digital Radio Plus website to keep track of the DAB+ digital radios available in Australia.

Q. Can I receive AM and FM on digital radio?

DAB+ digital radios come in a range of different models. To ensure your radio receives digital radio services in Australia, it must be DAB+ enabled. Most DAB+ digital radios can also receive analogue FM, and some AM. However, where DAB+ coverage is available, you'll always be able to hear your favourite AM and FM stations simulcast on DAB+ in digital quality sound.

Q. Will AM and FM radio be switched off?

There are no plans at this stage to switch off AM and FM radio services in Australia. As there are an estimated five radio devices per home, listeners must be given time to change their radios before any decision is made to switch off AM/FM services. In addition, planning needs to continue for the switch on of DAB+ services to the regional centres in the rest of Australia.

Q. Is digital radio the same as internet radio?

No, digital radio is broadcast free-to-air over the airwaves via DAB+ technology. Internet-only radio services are streamed over the telecommunications networks and incur a streaming cost which varies depending on the internet service provider package.

Free-to-air broadcast radio stations also stream their current radio stations, plus any new digital services on the industry's RadioApp and stations' apps over the internet as well as broadcast, so the content can be accessed on both DAB+ and streaming platforms.

Q. Will I experience a delay with digital radio?

Generally, latency is a part of digital systems and also applies to digital TV and internet streaming. Approximately 3-4 seconds of latency for DAB+ digital radio is unavoidable, resulting from system implementation delays. There is a trade-off between reducing these delays and the likelihood of errors being transmitted. CRA has worked closely with broadcasters to minimise the delays. Buffering delays may also be experienced in digital receivers; these are not related to the actual DAB+ broadcasts.

Q. Is DAB+ reception available in all suburbs within the seven capital cities covered by DAB+?

Just like AM and FM, digital radio is planned by the Government into specific licence areas.

Generally digital reception is very good, however some postcodes and suburbs covering large regions may contain areas that do not receive optimal reception because of building or terrain shielding. Repeaters have been installed to fill known blackspot areas.

Q. How do I receive digital radio in my car?

Digital radio is available as standard or option in the majority of new vehicles. All leading vehicle manufacturers support DAB+, with most making it available across all models. A range of after-market radios from Alpine, JVC Kenwood, Kogan, Pioneer, Sony and Pure that can be self-installed or professionally fitted are also available for vehicles.

CRA continues to work with the vehicle industry to have DAB+ digital radio factory fitted in as many brands and models as possible.

Q. When will I be able to receive DAB+ digital radio in other areas outside Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Darwin and Canberra?

Commercial Radio Australia has started planning the rollout of DAB+ digital radio to regional Australia.

Commercial radio broadcasters have identified the following priority markets for rollout within the next five years as Newcastle, Dubbo, Albury, Lithgow, Sale, Bathurst, Cooma, Goulburn, Warragul, Sunshine Coast, Cairns, Bundaberg, Mandurah and Murwillumbah.

Q. How do I rescan my digital radio?

It is a good idea to rescan your digital radio from time to time to make sure that you are getting all the DAB+ services in your local area. As each receiver is different, please contact the manufacturer's customer support team if you require further assistance.

Last updated October 2019

