

Welcome to Peake Tool School, where our goal is to familiarize you with the basic functions of your BMW's diagnostic systems, and with what we believe is the best scan tool for most BMW owners.

The Basics:

A "Peake Tool" is the common name for a scan tool made by Peake Research Corporation. Peake Tools are hand-held, Non-OBDII, BMW-Specific (this is explained below) code readers. They are affordable, accurate, and extremely easy to use. Peake Tools read the same diagnostic codes that the dealership and technicians rely on. The tools are available in versions for engine and airbag codes, and work on BMWs and Minis only.

Peake Research Corp. designates these tools as "R5 Tools", as all their scan tool model names begin with R5:

- R5-FCX3 reads BMW engine codes
- R5-SRS reads BMW airbag codes
- R5-EMX reads Mini engine codes

Peake Research has been a trusted manufacturer of BMW-specific scan tools for the do-it-yourselfer for twenty years.

Why a Peake Tool is a great choice for BMW owners:

Very simply, when your BMW detects a problem, it warns you with a "Check Engine" or "Service Engine Soon" light. You can determine what the problem is by plugging in a scan tool and reading the trouble codes your car is reporting.

For any given problem, your BMW generates two different types of fault codes. One type was programmed by BMW to specifically coordinate with your particular car. The other type is a "generic" version of the code that is vague enough to apply to any vehicle built after 1996. This generic code, called OBDII, is intended to allow state inspection facilities to monitor emissions-related problems present on any type of car they are certifying. The BMW-Specific code is what dealers and technicians use for actual diagnosis.

Scan tools from Peake Research read the BMW-Specific codes, not the generic OBDII codes, giving you the ability to see the same trouble codes the dealer relies on for diagnosis. Generic codes and code readers can yield less accurate and potentially misleading information. Additionally, many BMW Specific codes are simply not represented at all by the generic language. Therefore, basing your diagnostic decisions on the factory-programmed codes is the best option for BMW owners.

It is important not to confuse these factory-programmed codes with the 'manufacturer specific' OBDII codes that generic tools read. Many generic tools claim to read 'manufacturer specific' codes, which are simply an extended range of codes that are beyond the basic set used for inspection. These are completely different than the BMW factory codes as described above.

How a Peake Tool is used:

Peake Tools are extremely easy to operate and require no special training or understanding of auto mechanics. The tool is 100% self-contained in a very small cylinder. There are no external interfaces, computers, or additional software. You simply plug the tool into the appropriate port (one of two possible locations that vary by model year), turn the car's key to the 'on' position, and begin your scan or reset. There are only two buttons on the tool – one to select the function (labeled 'Select'), one to operate within that function (labeled 'Go'). The instructions are so basic that they are printed directly on the tool.

The included instruction manual contains a number of 'code tables' that correspond to specific vehicles. When you use the Peake Tool, it begins by reporting to you which table corresponds to your car. It will then give you any current, historical, or 'pending' codes the car is storing or reporting. Open the manual, find your table, and then find your codes. You can then erase the codes, thereby resetting the warning light.

Peake Tool FAQ:

Simple Yes or No answers – Do Peake Tools:

Read factory-programmed, BMW Specific codes: Yes
Read the same codes the dealer sees: Yes
Read generic and misleading OBDII codes: No
Reset oil service and inspection reminders: Yes
Include everything you need to read and reset codes: Yes
Include a code manual with definitions: Yes
Come with a 90 day warranty: Yes
Fit in your glove box: Yes
Program or otherwise disrupt your car's electronics: No
Come from a company with twenty years of trusted service: Yes
Have the honor of being featured in Bentley manuals: Yes
Require a laptop: No
Give the most accurate clues to start repairs with: Yes
Cost about what you'd pay a dealer to run one diagnostic test: Yes
Work better for BMWs than a generic tool: Yes
Work with Non-U.S. spec BMWs: Yes
Work with Diesel BMWs: Yes
Work with Mins: Yes
Just plug in and read codes without any hassles: Yes

Class dismissed!