

VAG-COM/VCDS for Dummies

A quick reference guide for Audi A5/S5 owners

Version 1.0, November 2008



This quick reference guide is intended to serve as just that and is not intended to be an authoritative document. It was based on a compilation I'd made for my own reference and the intention in sharing it is to offer an aid for first-time VAG-Com/VCDS users, and to pull together useful information distributed around the Internet into one document.

Data compiled here is sourced wholly from the A5 Owners Club forum (www.a5oc.com) and has been provided by a number of contributors, most notably Aerodave and Loc, amongst others – you know who you are – thanks!

All screen-shots are property of Ross Tech Inc.

WARNING! The processes described in this document have the effect of changing the behaviour of the electronic control systems of your car and can have a catastrophic effect if not performed correctly. If you feel you lack the competence/confidence to perform these operations, **DO NOT DO SO** and ask for expert advice.

VAG-COM/VCDS for Dummies

Always record original values before making any modifications!



www.ross-tech.com

Requisite cable and software details as below. Software can be downloaded free of charge from the Ross Tech website – the required HEX-USB+CAN interface cable can be purchased from the site at a price of \$349. Effectively, the cable acts as the licence agreement and proof of purchase/ownership guarantees user support from Ross Tech.

The Current version is: Release 805.1 Data Version 20081017
Universal Installer for all HEX, KEY, and MicroCAN series interfaces, and for all versions of Windows, from 98 through Vista
 Digitally signed self-installing .EXE file ~3.6 MB
However, if you're using a "low-tech" interface, in other words anything other than a HEX, KEY or Micro-CAN series interface, Click here for our download archives page where you'll find older versions for "dumb" interfaces.

VCDS (VAG-COM Diagnostic System) License with HEX-USB+CAN Interface

The professional's interface you need to turn any PC with an available USB Port into a powerful diagnostic tool for VW, Audi, Seat or Skoda automobiles.



Features:

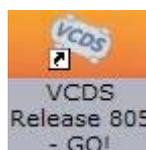
- Works with **all** diagnostic-capable VW/Audi cars in model years 1990 through 2008, even the latest models which require a [direct CAN connection for diagnostics](#)
- Acts as a "dongle" -- Activation for the full-function version of VAG-COM is built in! Use VAG-COM on any suitable PC, no activation codes required.

For more details, see our [HEX-USB+CAN technical page](#).
(page opens in a new window)

Download and install current version of software and USB driver for cables (further installation instructions on Ross Tech website)

Ensure Ross-Tech cable connected to diag. port and PC, and that MMI is switched on.

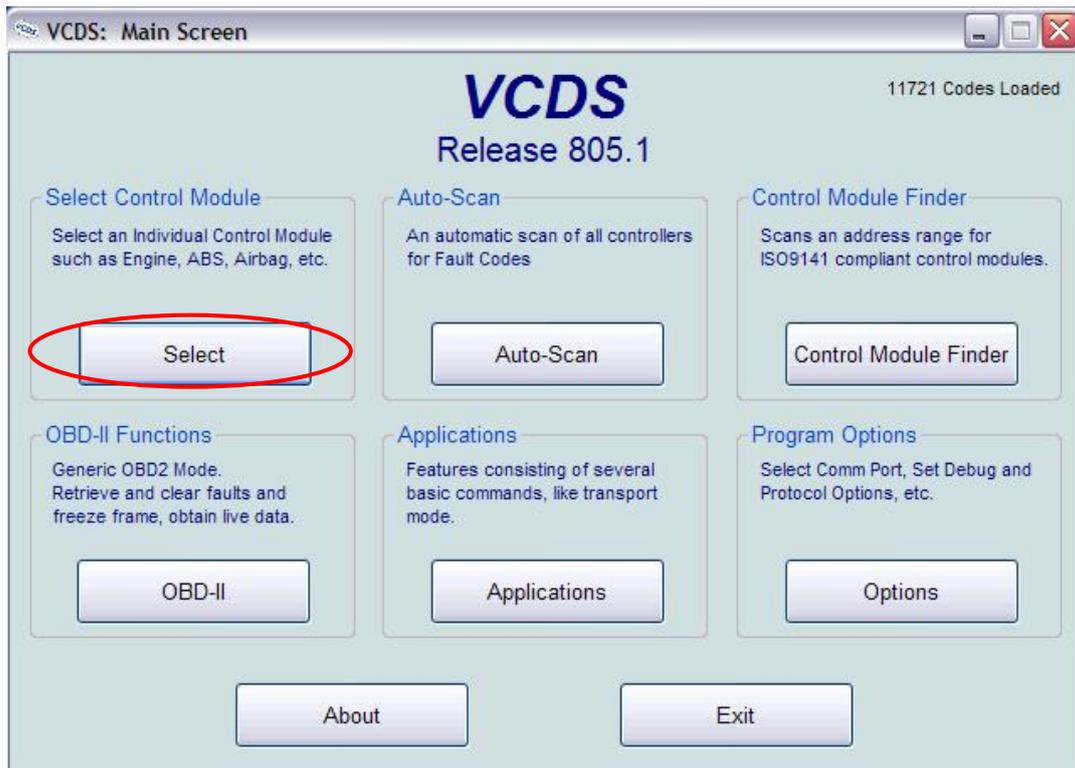
Open VCDS application and then refer to the instructions on the following pages.



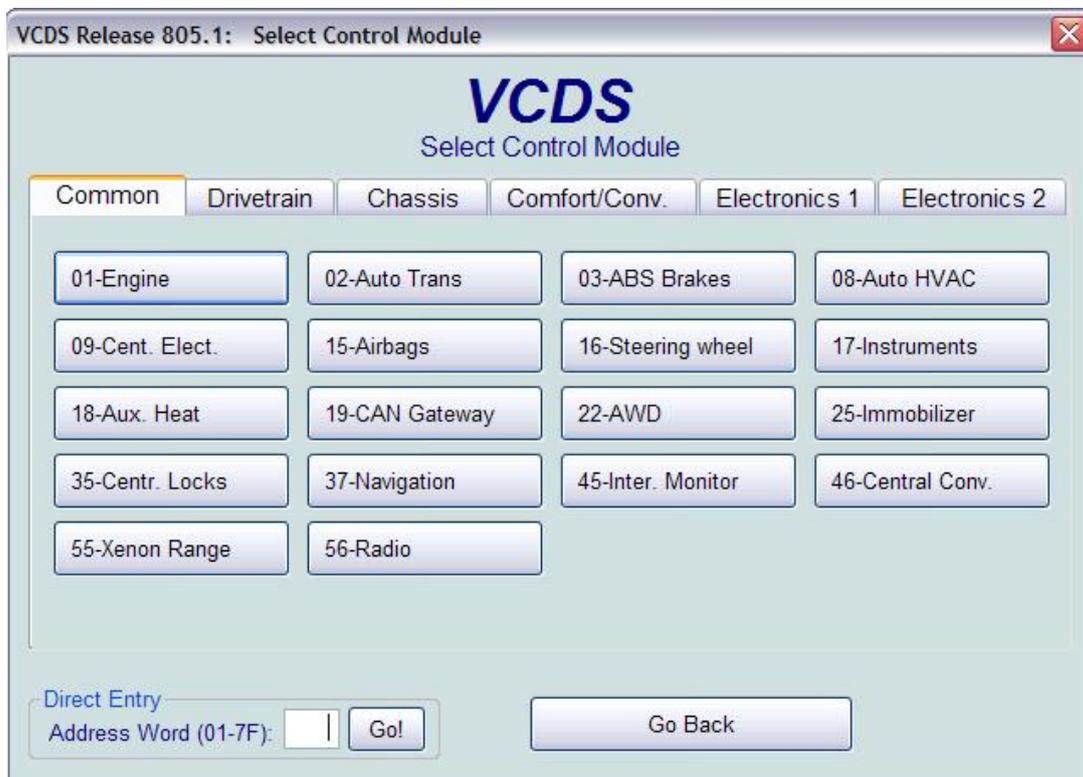
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You'll see the following 'home screen' displayed:



'Select' Control module button (top left, above) and you will see a display of all the control modules available for interrogation/adaptation (see below).



This is the gateway to a number of behaviour modifications, see following pages.

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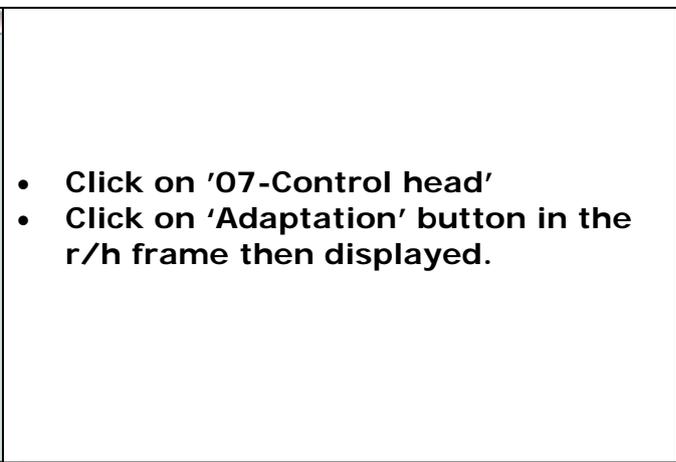
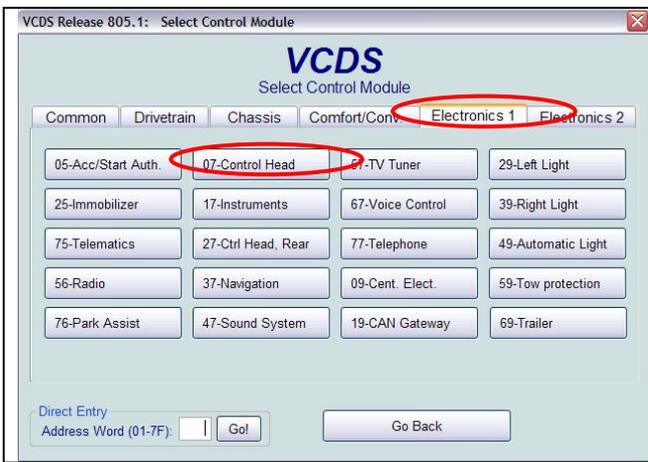
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1) Enable MMI 'hidden menu'

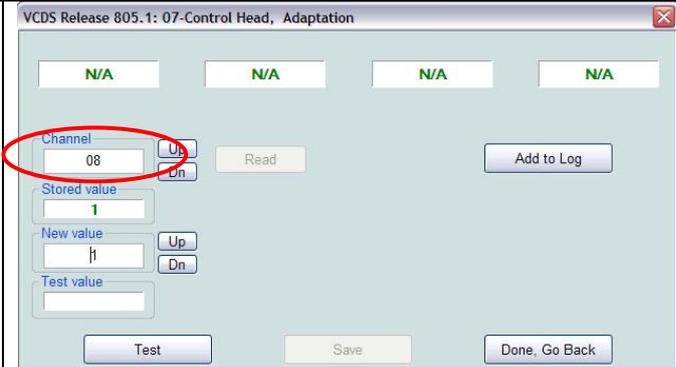
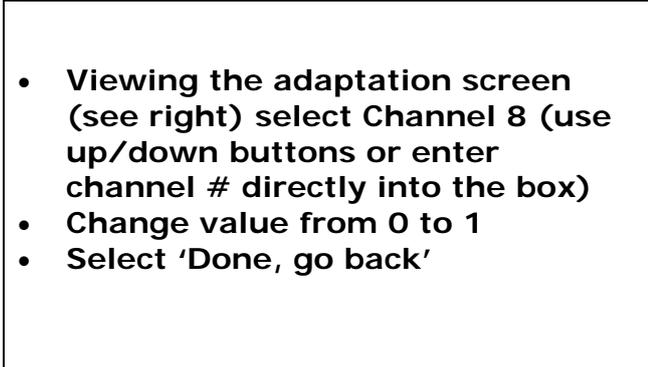
The 'full' MMI system possesses a hidden set-up menu which allows you access to the ability to adjust MMI screen display timing preferences, visible options, etc. For example, on some cars, the 'electronic dipstick' functionality is present on the car (sensor installed) but not enabled in MMI. Most cars also have an on-board battery-level meter which is disabled as default. Both these functions can be enabled via the hidden menu.

This menu can be accessed by holding down the 'SETUP' button on your console and then also pressing and holding the 'CAR' button for approximately five seconds. You should then see the green MMI set-up menu displayed. If this doesn't happen, it could be because you need to enable the functionality in the Control Head module. This is simple and can be done thus:

- From the home screen, select 'Electronics 1' tab as shown below left



- Click on '07-Control head'
- Click on 'Adaptation' button in the r/h frame then displayed.



- Viewing the adaptation screen (see right) select Channel 8 (use up/down buttons or enter channel # directly into the box)
- Change value from 0 to 1
- Select 'Done, go back'

You will then be able to access the hidden menu and perform functions like those on the next page.

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Battery and oil level in MMI 'CAR' menu:

Although the sensor information is available in many cars for either of these settings, it is disabled by default in some. Via the hidden menu described above you can enable these CAR menu entries.

From the hidden menu front page, scroll down to 'DIAG SETTINGS' (third-to-last option, see top right) and then from the list displayed, select 'Car Menüs Maske' (right, middle).

You'll see a list of MMI menu options with check-boxes alongside (bottom right). Enable the settings you require by selecting the relevant check-box and then finally click to 'Accept Changes'.



Note: You *may* need to restart MMI/car before changes take effect.

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Daytime running lights behaviour

Daytime running lights behave differently in different markets; for example the front LED light strips that accompany Xenon lights turn off or dim in some markets when signaling direction.

Changing Central Electronics 09, Submodule 0 (Master Cent. Elec. box, rather than a slave module), Byte 3 (fourth from the left), Bit 7 (first bit from the left in the binary representation, bottom check box in the VAG-COM long coding helper for Byte 3) is the key. If set to 1, setting it to 0 makes the DRLs stay on when signaling.

Two simple mods (LED DRLs to remain on whilst signaling and tail-lamps as DRLs) are illustrated below and on the next page.

Byte 03 (fourth box from the left)

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value (original)	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Value (modified)	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1

Toggle

Bit 0 – n/a

Bit 1 – n/a

Bit 2 - LEDs remain at full brightness with parking lights

Bit 3 – n/a

Bit 4 – turns off DRLs when checked

Bit 5 – n/a

Bit 6 – n/a

Bit 7 – Turn off LED-strip DRLs with indicators

Some people also like to have tail-lights acting as DRLs (i.e., permanently on) – this can be achieved by modifying Byte 02, Bit 7, as below. As you can also see below, modifying Byte 02 can deliver a variety of combinations of lighting as DRLs (permanently on)

Byte 02 (third box from the left)

Bit	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Value (original)	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Value (modified)	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0

Toggle

Bit 0 – n/a

Bit 1 – Front side markers as DRL

Bit 2 - Headlights as DRL

Bit 3 – Front fog lights as DRL

Bit 4 – LED strip as DRL

Bit 5 – n/a

Bit 6 – Side markers as DRL

Bit 7 – Tail-lights as DRL

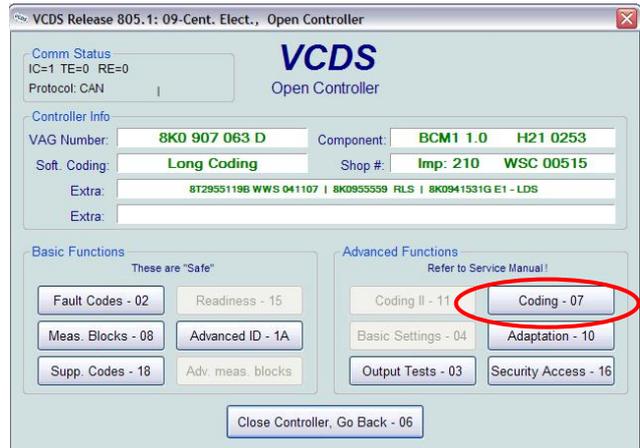
On the next page, you'll see what this looks like in practice.

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Open '09-Cent. Elect' controller as shown right.

Click on 'Coding-07' button.



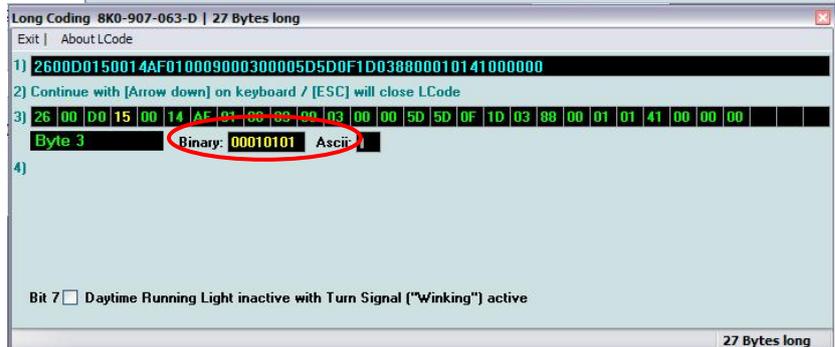
You'll see the screen to the right displayed. Using the drop-down box (circled, right), select first option as shown ('0 - 8K0 907....')

Click on 'long coding helper'.

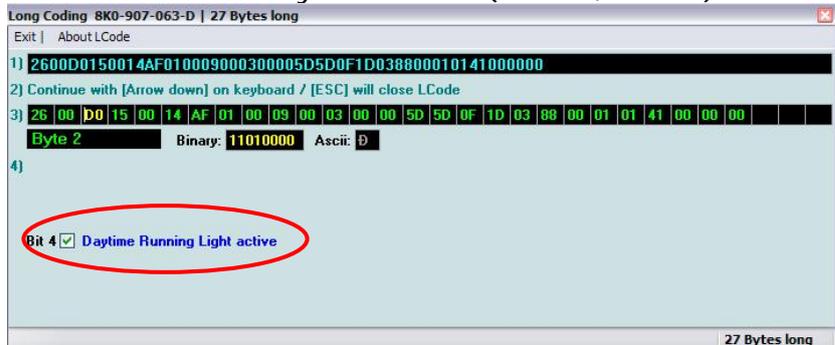


You'll see the display on the right, indicating (in row 3) the Hex values of all the bytes in that code string. The Binary data for each byte is displayed below. Using your arrow or tab keys, you can move between the different bytes according to the function you wish to modify (see previous page).

For some commonly-used functions, Ross Tech provide check-boxes to simplify the modification process – examples of these are shown in the two examples to the right. Checking/unchecking these has the same effect as modifying the binary values.



Individual bits can be toggled (1/0) by changing the value directly in the box (circled, above).

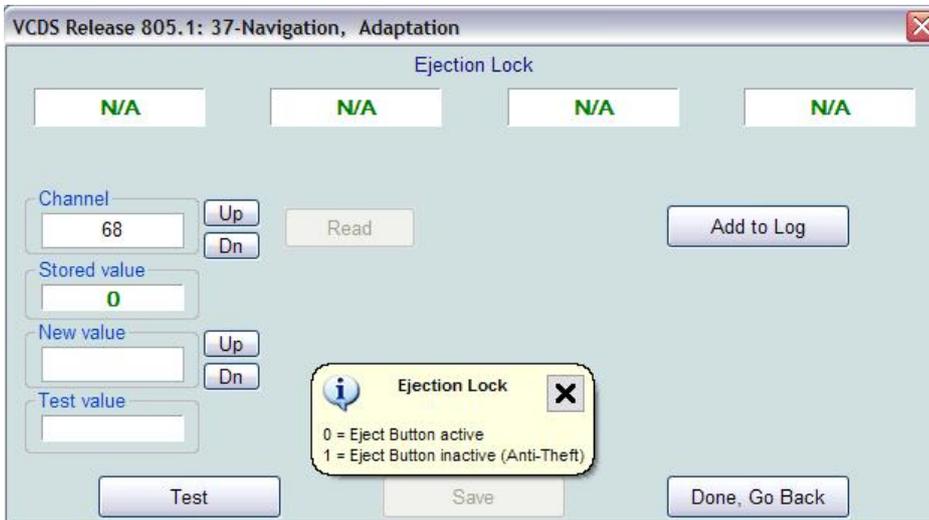


Once a value has been modified, it is necessary to select the next/previous byte using arrow or tab keys and or press 'Esc' or click on the 'Exit' button, otherwise the changes you make won't be committed.

To commit changes, click 'Transfer coding' and then 'Do it' and the changes will be made.

Some other popular modifications

DVD navigation eject lock: Ross-Tech reports that by adjusting channel 068 in the Navigation module you can lock the DVD navigation eject button (anti-theft), 0 = button active, 1 = button inactive (see below).



Adaptive cruise control default distance: In cars with adaptive cruise control the default distance (1 to 4) can be changed from the CAR menu. If this menu option is hidden in your car, apparently you can enable it with VAG-COM. From the Auto distance regulation module 13, Adaptation, Channel 7, change 0 to 1, Save.

Removing seat belt chime: It's possible to enable/disable this from VAG-COM: Instruments 17, Coding, Long coding helper, Seat belt warning active/inactive, Transfer coding, Do it!.

Convenience opening of windows: In some markets the ability to open and close windows with the keyfob (by holding down lock/unlock key) is disabled. Enable this functionality by going to Cent. Conv. 46, Coding, Long Coding Helper, clicking Comfort Operation: Remote Control active, then Transfer coding, Do it!.

Phone voice control: Cars without full speech dialogue system, but a phone-prep or an Audi Bluetooth phone, come standard with phone speech control. However, it is not enabled or fully enabled in all markets. In the U.S. it is fully disabled in some other markets it is set in limited mode that only allows saving and selecting of voice tags, not actual speech dialogue with the phone.

This behaviour can be modified with VAG-COM by editing module Telephone (77), Coding, and changing the second last digit in Software coding, options are e.g.: 0 disabled, 2 English UK, 9 allow only voice tags. So if you have it set to 9, changing it to 2 would enable phone-related speech dialogue which you can try out by saying HELP. There are a few different languages built in also.