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## Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Romel Aranas - 2009/04/27 00:25

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Does anyone know where I can get a copy made of my ignition key for my 96 RT? I only got one when I bought the bike, and I have never been able to find anyplace that could make a copy.

Thanks,  
Romel

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Paul Wilson - 2009/04/27 10:28

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When I bought my 98'RT it came with only one key.  
So I bought two blanks from the dealership, and had them cut at the local hardware store.  
No problems.

PaulW

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Romel Aranas - 2009/04/28 00:01

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I've asked at Home Depot, Walmart and Sears and none of them could do it. By "local" hardware store, do you mean something like an Ace Hardware?

Thanks,  
Romel

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Tim Colburn - 2009/04/28 08:24

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First, you need the key blanks from the dealer. They're not the standard types you find at your local store.

Second, note that these key blanks are steel, not brass. So some hardware store key machines might have a tough time with them. You may have better results by going to a locksmith's shop (like Elmer's, out here in South Chicago Heights).

Tim C.  
Park Forest, IL

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Romel Aranas - 2009/04/29 01:42

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I already have a blank from the dealer. I'm going to try Ace Hardware and then a locksmith.

Thanks for the help, guys.

Romel

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Joe Sjoström - 2009/05/03 15:09

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Hi Romel,

Key duplication can be a tough problem. I've had keys copied at hardware stores and locksmiths on a BMW key blank but I got the best results by sending my key to Bob's BMW for duplication.

As Tim points out, BMW keys are steel, whereas normal household and padlock keys are brass, which is softer. Some hardware stores don't like to cut steel keys because steel accelerates the wear on their key-cutter machines.

Bullis Lock Co., 4350 W. Addison St., Chicago, (suggested by Seymour Goldberg) has a brass ILCO brand key blank that works in the ignition of my 1995 model K1100LT. The brass key that Bullis made for me works, but I have to apply just a hair of extra force to push it into my ignition slot and, once inserted, a hair of extra force to turn it.

Even if you find a hardware store willing to cut your steel key blank, the resulting new key may not work properly if the notches on your BMW key have sharp angles like the letters "V" or "W". The hardware stores and locksmiths that made duplicates on my steel blanks made keys with slightly rounded notches, like the bottom of the letter "U". Those keys consequently didn't work.

Bullis did okay on the keys they made for me, but in my opinion the best solution is to send your key to Bob's BMW. They have the proper blanks and the proper cutting equipment, and made the best-working duplications for me.

Check their website for details. It helps to contact them by phone prior to sending anything to them. And you should send your key via high-security mail like "registered," with return receipt requested. You don't want to lose that thing, right?

Turn-around was about a week. The price was more than a hardware store but not by much.

Good luck,  
Joe Sjoström

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Tim Colburn - 2009/05/04 08:33

Hey, if you're going to go through all that trouble (and be unable to ride for a week!) why not call around to a local BMW dealer to find one who can make a copy, or ask your local where they get their keys made? Just saying...  
--Tim C.

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Joe Sjoström - 2009/05/04 09:18

Good point Tim. And in fact, the neighborhood hardware stores have worked for some guys' keys.

My problem is that the notches in my key are cut with sharp angles like the letter "V" or "M" however the copies that hardware stores and locksmiths made on my steel blanks had rounded notches that just didn't work; that is, I could insert the key into the ignition or luggage lock slots but could not turn it. Bullis locksmith up on Addison Street did okay though.

I bought some steel key blanks from Chicago BMW but they couldn't offer any advice on where to have duplicates made. That was 2 years ago; maybe they have a better system now.

Cheers,  
Joe

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Larry Scalzitti - 2009/05/04 15:18

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I got a blank from my BMW motorcycle dealer and then went to the nearby BMW auto dealer - who cut a new spare key for me.

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## Re:Making an ignition key copy

Posted by Joe Sjoström - 2009/05/04 17:02

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A BMW car dealer!! Dang, I never thought of that!

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