

CLASSIC DRIVER

New BMW 3-Series Coupé



BMW's all new 3 Series Coupé range goes on sale in the UK on 23 September 2006. Two models will be available at launch, and the third generation of the company's compact coupé marks the introduction of the first ever twin-turbo petrol-powered engine in a production BMW.

From the front, side and rear, the car is clearly related to other 3 Series models. Key highlights in exterior design are the kidney grilles and restyled headlamps, while at the rear, the broad rear lights use horizontal light rods with bright LED illumination to accentuate the low, wide appearance of the the car.

Another change from the other models in the 3 Series range is the use of lightweight materials in the body construction in the Coupé. While all 3 Series models use Tailored Blanks that increase panel thickness where structural rigidity is needed, and reduce thickness where it's not, the Coupé variant also uses plastics in its construction. As a result of the lightweight plastic front wings used on the 3 Series Coupé the new car is an average 10kgs lighter than the Saloon variant.

The all-new Coupé bodyshell clothes the twin-turbo 3.0-litre engine in the new BMW 335i SE that develops 306hp and 400Nm of torque between 1,300 - 5,000rpm that will let the 335i SE Coupé accelerate from zero to 62mph in 5.5 seconds and travel on to an electronically-limited top speed of 155mph. This level of performance is made possible by two turbochargers, each supplying compressed air to three cylinders each.



BMW's all new high-precision Direct Injection system also aids these high levels of performance while also benefiting economy. Piezo injectors, located centrally in the combustion chamber between the inlet and exhaust valves, deliver atomised fuel in a conical burst into the chamber to ensure a smooth, efficient burn.

At the launch in September, the new 325i SE Coupé will form the entry point to the range. Delivering 218hp and 250Nm of torque from its 2.5-litre in-line six-cylinder engine, zero to 62mph is achieved in 6.9 seconds and the top speed is 153mph.

All new BMW 3 Series Coupé models come with a close ratio six-speed manual gearbox as standard, although BMW's new automatic gearbox is an option. The company claims that it offers a 40 per cent improvement in

the response time to throttle inputs and a gear-shift time nearly half that of a conventional automatic transmission. Whenever a driver wants to take control of gear changes a pair of selection paddles located behind the steering wheel can be used to change gears.



Other engine derivatives start production in September to broaden the 3 Series Coupé range. The new BMW 330i Coupé will develop 272hp from its normally-aspirated 3.0-litre six cylinder engine that, like the smaller engined 325i Coupé, uses magnesium alloy in its engine construction. Acceleration to 62mph is dispatched from standstill in 6.1 seconds with an electronically limited top speed of 155mph. The 330i Coupé still delivers 32.1mpg on the combined cycle.

At the same time as the 330i, the new BMW 330d Coupé will start production, offering 231hp and 500Nm of torque. Performance and economy are both top priorities for the diesel-powered Coupé, with the car posting a zero to 62mph time of 6.6 seconds while still delivering 43.5mpg on the combined cycle.

Details of the future entry-point BMW 320i and 320d Coupé models will be announced at a later date.

Text - Classic Driver

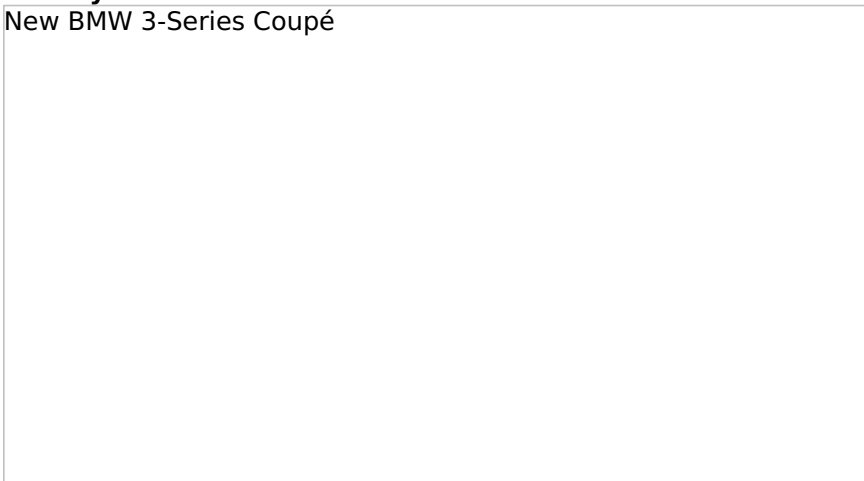
Photos - BMW

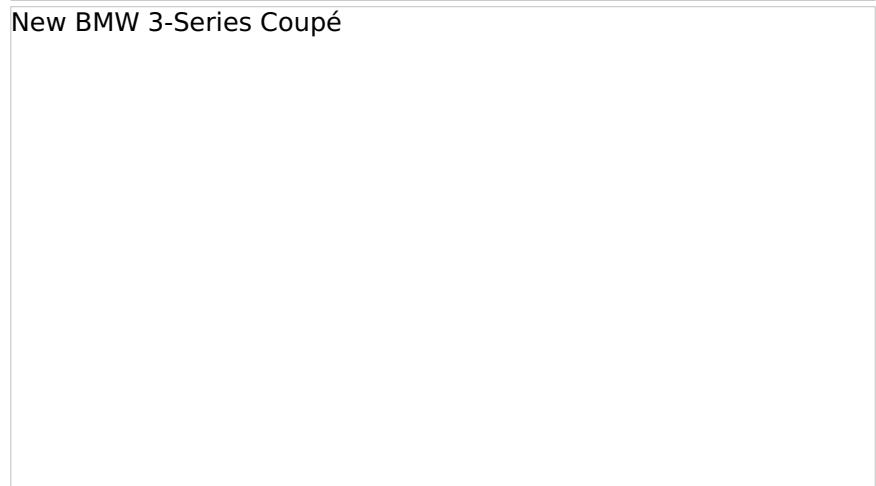
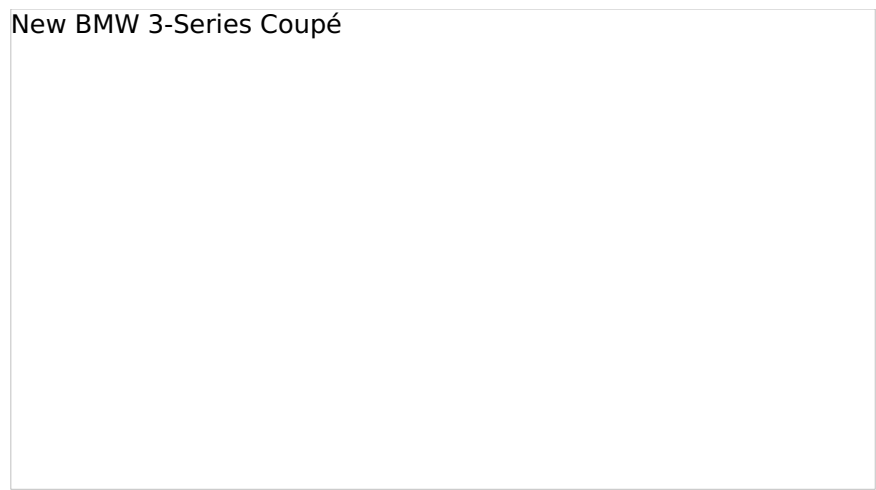
ClassicInside - The Classic Driver Newsletter

[Free Subscription!](#)

Gallery

New BMW 3-Series Coupé





Hide gallery

Hide gallery

Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/new-bmw-3-series-coup%C3%A9>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.