

CLASSIC DRIVER

New MINI Convertible Arrives in Spring



The second-generation MINI Convertible is due to reach the UK next March. The British-built best-seller will come in Cooper and Cooper S versions, complete with plenty of new technology and design features.

Unlike its predecessor's fixed rollover bars, the new model has a single-piece roll bar behind the rear seats which – should the car overturn – extends in milliseconds. A common criticism of the outgoing model was rear visibility and, claims MINI, this arrangement will help the driver's line of sight. Rear passengers will also be able to adjust the height of their headrests; another new feature.

The body is stronger, stiffer and lighter than before, while the new car's luggage capacity has increased by five litres (to 125 litres with the roof open and 170 litres with it closed). With the rear seat folded down and roof closed, luggage space totals an impressive 660 litres: 55 litres up on the previous Convertible.



The roof of the new model opens and closes via a toggle switch in 15 seconds and can be operated at speeds up to 20mph. Alternatively, the roof can be electrically retracted by about 40cm, sunroof-style, at up to 75mph.



Air-con will, for the first time, be standard - plus the lockable glovebox will receive cooled air, to stay icy. A unique feature will be the optional 'Openometer', which records the time spent driving with the top down; a nice touch, though its practical advantage is not entirely clear...





Aesthetically, the new breed of Convertible has a more dynamic stance, thanks to its raised shoulder line, highlighted by a chrome strip which extends around the body of the car. The Cooper S stands out by virtue of its enhanced 'powerdome', 20mm higher than the Cooper's bonnet, and air scoop. At the rear, large twin-tailpipes, a bold diffuser in the rear bumper and a two-piece rear fog lamp set it apart. At the front, the Cooper S sports a hexagonal grid pattern on the radiator grille, while the Cooper Convertible's grille has a chrome frame and three horizontal, chrome-plated bars.



Finally, two new colours will be exclusive to the drop-top: Interchange Yellow and Horizon Blue. Contrasting roof options add visual appeal, with a UK selection of Black, Denim Blue and Hot Chocolate.

The new MINI Cooper Convertible is priced from £15,995 OTR, while the MINI Cooper S Convertible starts at £18,995 OTR.

Text: Charis Whitcombe
Photos: BMW MINI

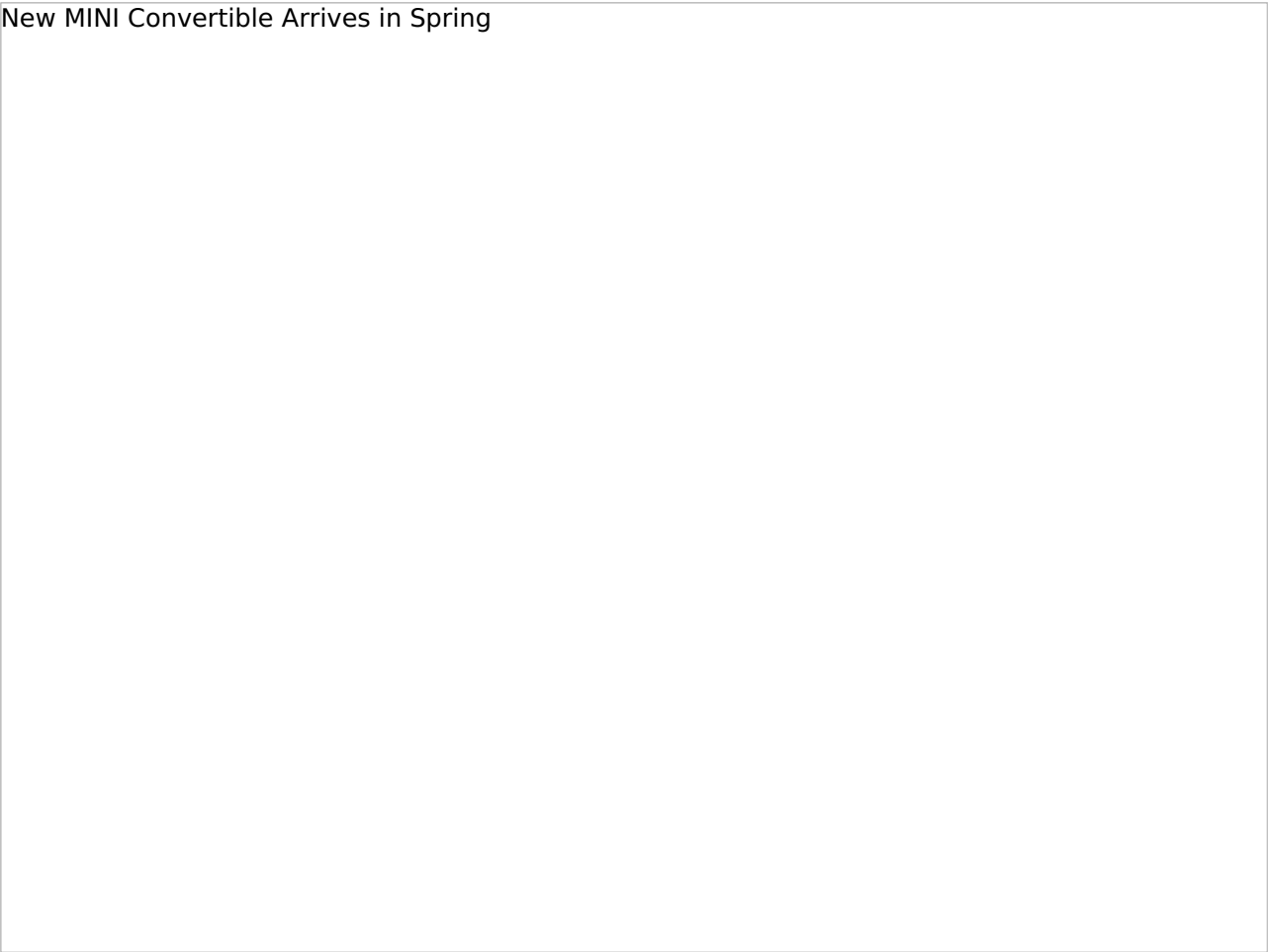
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