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New 2012 BMW 3 Series revealed



BMW has revealed the saloon derivative of its new sixth-generation 3 Series. Along with styling heavily influenced by the current 5 Series, every model will have a twin-turbocharged engine and an optional 8-speed automatic gearbox.

At launch in the UK next March, the F30 3 Series will be available in four versions, each with a twin-turbo engine: there will be two versions of the diesel-engined 320d (in 181bhp or 161bhp EfficientDynamics form), as well as 328i and 330i petrol models. The 328i has a 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine (242bhp), while the 335i has a 3.0-litre version of BMW's ever-popular straight-six, producing 302bhp. All powerplants will come with a 6-speed manual gearbox as standard, although an 8-speed automatic will be available at extra cost.

Whichever gearbox is chosen, it will be mated to the start/stop system which is now standard on all models. Other fuel-saving measures include regenerative braking, an optimum shift indicator and "need-based ancillary systems". Additionally, the 4-stage engine management has an ultra-frugal ECO PRO mode.



These features – combined with the fact that each model is around 40kg lighter than the one it replaces – equate to lower consumption and pollution across the range, despite being wider and longer than the E90. The advantages of the larger footprint of the car are most obvious in the back, with rear passengers gaining a notable amount of extra legroom.

The new car is safer, too: the ConnectedDrive features include lane change and lane departure (with camera-based collision detection) warning systems, as well as active ‘stop and go’ cruise control. Joining these on the options list is a full-colour head-up display, and a text-to-speech system which can read emails on the move.





Three levels of trim will be available: Sport-line, Luxury-line and Modern-line. More engines will be introduced after launch, in the form of three lower-power petrols, and several more powerful diesels. Additionally, the [first hybrid 3 Series](#) will be launched in mid-2012 and will go by the name ActiveHybrid 3.



The 3 Series is likely to make its formal debut at the Detroit motor show on 9 January next year, with UK sales beginning shortly afterwards in March. A 5 per cent price increase over the previous generation can be expected. Touring and GT models will follow, as will 4 Series badged coupé, convertible and GranCoupé bodystyles.

Text: [Joe Breeze](#)

Photos: BMW

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Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/new-2012-bmw-3-series-revealed>
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