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Yes, it was ugly - but was the 2001 BMW X Coupé ahead of its time?

Lead

It might be more of a melted mess than a flame-surfaced success but, almost 15 years on, the BMW X Coupé concept of 2001 is more relevant now than it has ever been...

The premature birth of the ugly duckling



When the X5-based BMW X Coupé was revealed at the 2001 North American International Auto Show in Detroit, it's fair to say general reaction varied between borderline disapproval and absolute hatred. However, while it (and its Bangle-penned siblings) might not have gained beauty through familiarity and maturity, it's ironic that the controversial BMW designer's forethought is more relevant than ever today. Several luxury manufacturers are preparing to enter the previously non-existent niche of high-riding, 'sporting' coupés before the decade's end (if they haven't already), the recently production-approved [Aston Martin DBX](#) concept being freshest in the memory. Regardless of what the purists think, the luxury market is asking for cars with the sleek look of a coupé, merged with the security of a four-wheel-drive system and an elevated driving position. If their inevitable sales success provides manufacturers with a licence to continue building less-lucrative sports cars, then so be it. And while Bangle's ugly duckling might never mature into a beautiful swan, it should at least be commended for its bravery.

Photos: BMW

Gallery

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