

MINI Cooper S 1.6 3d (04)

BEHIND THE WHEEL

★★★★★★☆☆☆☆

BMW has had a crack at trying to recreate the character of old Mini while delivering a good quality environment. Some would say its funky, others might say its overdone. Either way you'll soon forget the interior once you've got your toe down on the accelerator.



COMFORT

★★★★★★☆☆☆☆

You can get grown-ups in the back but if one person is tall then there are going to be complaints. Feels refined when cruising and certainly an improvement on most hot-hatches. Standard seats aren't the most comfortable but will suffice for shorter journeys. Extra supportive bucket seats are available on the options list - they're great but not cheap.

Length:	3655 mm
Width:	1688 mm
Height:	1416 mm
Weight:	1140 Kg
Noise:	74 dB

HANDLING

★★★★★★☆☆☆☆

The MINI is blessed with great handling and it seems to delight in being chucked into the corners with gusto. Big wheel upgrades add extra grip but we prefer its adjustability on the standard wheels and the ride is better too. Steering is quick and full of feedback - you'll have to watch your shopping in the boot.

Wheelbase: 2467 mm

SAFETY

★★★★★★☆☆☆☆

Makes the grade as a four star car in the Euro NCAP crash test which makes it a million times safer than an original mini. Four airbags are standard and curtain bags are optional. Electronic safety aids are also standard and it gets the usual alarm, immobiliser and deadlocks.

Euro NCAP	
Adult occupant rating:	★★★★☆
Child protection rating:	n/a
Pedestrian rating:	★★☆☆☆



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PERFORMANCE



The Chrysler-developed engine is not the most refined unit but it delivers the goods and the supercharger sounds reminiscent of the original Mini's gear whine (which we reckon is a good thing). A six-speed gearbox replaces the five-speeder fitted to lesser models. An official John Cooper 'Works' conversion ups power to 200bhp making it extremely fast. The original Cooper S model had 163bhp which was lifted to 170bhp in 2004 when the Convertible was launched.

BHP:	170
Engine capacity:	1598 cc
Cylinders:	4
Fuel delivery:	Supercharger
Gears:	6 Speed
Top speed:	138 mph
Torque:	162 lb/ft
Torque:	220 Nm
Transmission:	Manual
Valves:	16
Zero to sixty:	7.0 seconds

RELIABILITY



Built to BMW standards, so should be very good, but there were quite a few recalls with early ones, and it is not unheard of to encounter the occasional problem.

- Car check body:** Watch out for paintwork as there have been some problems with its durability. Also watch out for discolouring of the plastic wheelarches.
- Car check engine:** Initial gremlins saw replacement engines and gearboxes in early cars. Shouldn't be a problem now.
- Car check other:** Faulty audio equipment can drain battery; rattling trim, early models suffered more problems particularly with trim and electrics, but most issues have been resolved.

RUNNING COSTS



Demand is high so residuals are rock solid and BMW offers a fantastic servicing package that provides five years maintenance for just £100. Petrol and insurance are reasonable too. Going over-board on the options, not specifying the TLC package or outright neglect are the only ways you'll lose much money on one. The TLC pack was extended to cover an eight year period in 2004 for £450. Older cars can also be upgraded.

Insurance group:	15
Click here for an insurance quote	
Miles per gallon:	32
Fuel capacity:	50 litres
Euro emissions standard:	4
CO2 emissions:	207 g/km

Vehicle excise duty for cars registered on or after 1st March 2001, is now based on the fuel type and carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions levels of individual vehicles.

VED Tax Band:	F
VED for 12 months:	£190
VED for 6 months:	£95

Company car tax for the year 2005/2006; for tax purposes the list price of a car includes delivery charges but not road tax and new car registration fee.

Annual tax at 22%:	£941
Annual tax at 40%:	£1712

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