

THE BUYERS GUIDE

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Feel the summer wind in your hair



AUDI A3 CABRIOLET MN verdict **★★★★**

Based on the competent underpinnings of the sedan and featuring a three-box design, the current A3 cab is a far better proposition than its predecessor, which had a more feminine appeal. While the TFSI engines in either 1.4l or 1.8l guises offer good economy, the former tends to struggle with the additional body weight. As such, pull-offs are a touch lethargic, but things are adequate once on the move. The soft-top roof can be opened and closed at the push or pull of a button and can be done at speeds up to 50km/h
CO₂ emission: 152g/km **Power:** 92kW
Consumption: 6.4l/100km **Torque:** 200Nm
Range pricing: R419,500-R1062,500
Our pick of the range: 1.4T S



AUDI A5 CABRIOLET MN verdict **★★★★**

Still one of the best looking models on the market and a worthy alternative to even the latest BMW 4 Series. However, scuttle shake still seems to plague the model, but the engines are feisty, while the soft-top roof can be operated on the move at the push of a button at up to 50km/h. The 3.0 TDI variant offers the best of both worlds by blending good power delivery and low fuel consumption. Performance variants in the form of the S5 and RS5 will appease those with a high adrenalin threshold
CO₂ emission: 152g/km **Power:** 180kW
Consumption: 7.0l/100km **Torque:** 500Nm
Range pricing: R568,500-R1062,000
Our pick of the range: 3.0TDI



BMW 2 SERIES CONVERTIBLE MN verdict **★★★★**

The 2 Series convertible takes over from where the 1 Series version left off, but with a bit more flair this time around. A host of engines are on offer including the feisty M235i should you want some performance bent with your open-top motoring. While the range remains fairly niche, it does take the fight to rivals with conviction. The entry-level variant with an M Sport package will do just fine in our opinion
CO₂ emission: 144g/km **Power:** 135kW
Consumption: 7.8l/100km **Torque:** 270Nm
Range pricing: R489,783-R671,166
Our pick of the range: 220i automatic

Spring is here and we take our annual look at drop tops

SPRING seems to be well upon us, what with balmy evenings and people spending more time outdoors, basking in the elements.

This is a phenomenon that also spills into the automotive world where manufacturers have plenty of open-top choices — whether you call them a convertible, cabriolet, or roadster — on offer.

We have amassed an array of offerings currently on sale, with the exception of the high end topless exotics, so if you are in the market for an open-top driving experience, take a look through our guide.

A to Z Convertibles

MN Top 5

1. Porsche Boxster S
2. Porsche 911 Carrera
3. Jaguar F-Type
4. Mercedes-Benz SL
5. BMW 6 Series

MN Top Pre-Owned Pick

1. Porsche 911 Carrera
2. Porsche Boxster S
3. Jaguar F-Type
4. Mazda MX-5 (company is between models)
5. Mercedes-Benz SL



BMW 4 SERIES CONVERTIBLE MN verdict **★★★★**

With stunning looks and finishes, the interior offers space for up to four occupants. Engines are all turbo charged, so performance is something that is prevalent in the range. The steel roof can be operated at the push of a button, while the airscarf-equipped front seats blow hot air to your neck, making it ideal for those cooler morning and evening drives. Being a bit of a boulevard cruiser, do not expect this one to be as sharp as the coupe in terms of dynamics, but that is perhaps something that buyers in this market are not after
CO₂ emission: 159g/km **Power:** 180kW
Consumption: 7.9l/100km **Torque:** 350Nm
Range pricing: R599,001-R1,262,916
Our pick of the range: 428i automatic



BMW Z4 MN verdict **★★★★**

Five years on the market and the model still looks the part with its long bonnet and short boot — typical proportions of a well-designed roadster. The metal roof quickly stows behind the passengers at the push of a button, while the range of turbo charged engines offer brisk performance, particularly in the instance of the 35i variants. Unlike some open-top models, this one still has the dynamic edge should the enthusiastic driver be so inclined. Still a great offering should you be in the market for a sublime roadster
CO₂ emission: 159g/km **Power:** 180kW
Consumption: 8.2l/100km **Torque:** 350Nm
Range pricing: R586,501-R923,337
Our pick of the range: sDrive28i automatic



BMW 6 SERIES CONVERTIBLE MN verdict **★★★★**

This, by all accounts, is a gran turismo with enough room for four occupants and a cabin appointed in a manner that befits its price. It is also, in our opinion, one of the marque's most evocative designs in a very long time. Engines are turbo charged stonkers, while the headlining M6 offers even more blistering performance. Thanks to the soft-top, weight has been kept down and actually adds that classic design element to its silhouette
CO₂ emission: 185g/km **Power:** 235kW
Consumption: 9.5l/100km **Torque:** 450Nm
Range pricing: R1,070,369-R1,709,409
Our pick of the range: 640i



CITROEN DS3 CABRIOLET MN verdict **★★★½**

Perhaps not a convertible in the true sense of the word in that only the roof slides, leaving the pillars intact, it does, however, mean it retains the structural rigidity of its hatch sibling. Taking the fight to the Mini, the model still looks fresh and should appease those looking for something a little out of left field, but with oodles of character. Dynamics are also something synonymous with the model and the turbo charged variant offers decent performance to take on some of the junior hot hatch brigade
CO₂ emission: 135g/km **Power:** 115kW
Consumption: 7.0l/100km **Torque:** 240Nm
Range pricing: R304,900
Our pick of the range: Only one model

WHAT'S COMING

There are a few models yet to make it onto the scene such the Mazda MX-5 that will be here in November this year and the Mini convertible end of first quarter 2016.

Fiat will at some point launch its new 500 range, which should later spawn a convertible version, too.

Ford will launch the Mustang here

before the end of the year, while the convertible variant will likely follow suit in 2016.

Porsche's 911 is due an imminent facelift, so we can expect the convertible version to receive similar tweaks.

The Range Rover Evoque convertible is also due out next year.



Range Rover's Evoque convertible.



Mazda MX-5



Ford Mustang convertible.



FIAT 500C MN verdict **★★★½**

Similar in spirit to the DS3 cabriolet, the 500C is a cheery city car with a funky disposition and funky interior to match. Space is at a premium and performance is adequate for zipping through the city, but those with a penchant for higher performance can consider the sporty Abarth models. Other than that, the 500C is based on a vehicle with quite an illustrious history and its cute-as-a-button nature will strike a chord with the fairer sex. A new 500 is on its way but the company has not yet released details of a replacement for the 500C
CO₂ emission: 140g/km **Power:** 74kW
Consumption: 7.3l/100km **Torque:** 131Nm
Range pricing: R206,900-R265,350
Our pick of the range: 1.4 Lounge



INFINITI Q60 CABRIOLET MN verdict **Untested**

A bit of an unknown entity and we are yet to sample one, but the Q60 sets itself up as an alternative to the Germans and offers a long list of standard equipment. It comes with a folding metal roof and is styled in a manner that is synonymous with the brand, so it is unique. The 3.7l V6 engine is similar to that utilised in the Nissan 370Z, so performance should be more than adequate
CO₂ emission: 268g/km **Power:** 235kW
Consumption: 13.7l/100km **Torque:** 360Nm
Range pricing: R701,687
Our pick of the range: Only one model



JAGUAR F-TYPE CONVERTIBLE MN verdict **★★★★**

Arguably one of the best models to come from the stable since the indomitable E-Type, the F-Type is striking, characterful, and has the performance to take on the best in the segment. Thanks to aluminium construction and a fabric, folding roof it has fleet handling which can be enjoyed through a winding road. Its only flaw is the puny boot space, which means your golf clubs will have to be carried in your mate's car. Other than that, it is one cracker of a car
CO₂ emission: 234g/km **Power:** 290kW
Consumption: 12.0l/100km **Torque:** 460Nm
Range pricing: R329,000-R476,900
Our pick of the range: V6 S



MERCEDES-BENZ E-CLASS CABRIOLET MN verdict **★★★½**

The recent facelift to the E-Class range has given the model a new lease of life with its sharper front-end. It is still based on the underpinnings of the C-Class, so do not expect a great deal of space in there. Sadly, there is no AMG variant for those seeking that signature V8 snarl, but the E500 is not that far off in this regard. It makes the latter variant with an AMG sports kit makes for a compelling package. With few of them on the road, it has an air of exclusivity about it
CO₂ emission: 213g/km **Power:** 300kW
Consumption: 10.9l/100km **Torque:** 600Nm
Range pricing: R700,378-R1,069,842
Our pick of the range: E500



MERCEDES-BENZ SLK MN verdict **★★★★**

A baby SL if you will, the SLK remains a desirable proposition, but the current model has not quite lived up to the expectations of the modern original. While the model comes standard with an AMG sports package, which further heightens its already sporty looks, pricing and iffy dynamics means it is left by the wayside. It also suffers greatly from scuttle shake, so it never quite feels as solidly hewn as its rivals
CO₂ emission: 153g/km **Power:** 150kW
Consumption: 7.9l/100km **Torque:** 310Nm
Range pricing: R612,499-R1,050,095
Our pick of the range: SLK 250 automatic



MERCEDES-BENZ SL MN verdict **★★★★**

Sporty in design and with a great deal of presence, the SL has taken over the baton from its predecessor. The newly added SL400 variant with its V6 biturbo engine should make the model that bit more accessible, if only just. The SL500 remains a great package, while the SL63 AMG adds a totally bonkers aspect to the model. However, if absolute bragging rights are your thing, then the SL65 AMG is peerless with its 1,000Nm of stupendous torque
CO₂ emission: 214g/km **Power:** 320kW
Consumption: 10.9l/100km **Torque:** 700Nm
Range pricing: R1,267,253-R2,790,990
Our pick of the range: SL500



MINI COOPER CONVERTIBLE MN verdict **★★★★**

This is arguably on its last legs as the model is still based on the previous generation Mini. It might not be everyone's cup of tea but still offers a cheerful character for the driver and its occupants to relish. The Cooper might be a little underpowered, while the S variant offers spirited performance and the requisite exhaust pops to match. Expect a new one in 2016
CO₂ emission: 149g/km **Power:** 135kW
Consumption: 7.6l/100km **Torque:** 260Nm
Range pricing: R329,000-R476,900
Our pick of the range: Cooper S



PORSCHE BOXSTER MN verdict **★★★★**

The current Boxster, which won the 2013 South African Car of the Year accolade, is one of the most balanced roadsters available. And the Boxster S simply blows the competition out of the water. It has all the hallmarks of its 911 siblings such as that gloriously barking flat-six, but with a surefootedness that will flatter any type of driver. Structural rigidity is also one of its strengths as there is nary a shake nor shimmy when driving over rutted roads. It is easily the benchmark roadster in its segment
CO₂ emission: 188g/km **Power:** 232kW
Consumption: 8.0l/100km **Torque:** 360Nm
Range pricing: R780,000-R1,010,000
Our pick of the range: Boxster S PDK



PORSCHE 911 CARRERA CABRIOLET MN verdict **★★★★½**

Much like the Boxster, the Carrera offers exemplary build quality, and is easily one of the stiffest cabriolets that the team has experienced. The Carrera S offers the driving thrills typical of a 911 with an engine that punches well above its weight. The soft-top folds at the push of a button to offer more aural splendour from that flat-six engine. It remains the benchmark sports car and, even in cabriolet form, it remains a properly sorted driver's car
CO₂ emission: 210g/km **Power:** 294kW
Consumption: 10.7l/100km **Torque:** 440Nm
Range pricing: R1,300,000-R3,072,000
Our pick of the range: Carrera S PDK



VOLKSWAGEN GOLF CABRIOLET MN verdict **★★★★**

Based on the sixth generation model, the Golf cabriolet panders to fans of the Wolfsburg model who want something a little sassy without going overboard. It is reasonably well built with a thrifty engine and an electrically operated soft top. There is also a GTI variant for those with a penchant for performance. Unfortunately this model does command a rather hefty price. While the seventh generation based cabriolet is yet to be confirmed, the current model is still competent in most respects
CO₂ emission: 149g/km **Power:** 90kW
Consumption: 7.7l/100km **Torque:** 200Nm
Range pricing: R374,000-R461,000
Our pick of the range: 1.4 TSI Comfortline