

5. Market & history

The current generation of BMW 3 Series Saloon and Touring has been the most successful in the UK ever. Since the latest Saloon was introduced in March 2005 and the Touring in September 2005 a total of 95,000 Saloons and 27,000 Tourings have been sold in the UK.

Historically, the BMW 320d Saloon has proved the biggest selling version of the range with the next two best sellers being the 318i and the 318d respectively. For the Touring range the 320d is again the most popular followed by the 318i and 320i. To put the 320d's popularity another way, in 2007 that variant accounted for 12,015 cars – around 10 per cent of all BMW's sold in the UK.

Total UK sales volume

Model	2002	2003	2004	2005*	2006	2007
BMW 3 Series Saloon	26,070	26,495	24,462	24,196	30,471	28,278
BMW 3 Series Touring	7,290	8,274	7,150	6,412	9,296	8,705

*New 3 Series Saloon and Touring introduced

Tim Abbott, Sales Director at BMW UK, said: "The BMW 3 Series is the heartbeat of the brand. Accounting for 45 per cent of sales when all four derivatives are considered, it is a key car in the range and so the introduction of a new variant is very important.

"It comes to market in a challenging time for the UK car industry, but I'm pleased to say that while the new car market as a whole is down, BMW sales go from strength to strength. We are up four per cent in a year where the market is down substantially. This sales success is no doubt buoyed by the EfficientDynamics technologies we first introduced in 2007 which makes our products the default choice for the business and private buyer alike."

Prices for the new BMW 3 Series start at £21,475 OTR for a 318i ES Saloon and rise to £37,060 OTR for a 335d M Sport Saloon. Those customers choosing a Touring model can choose from a 318i ES Touring at £22,665 OTR through to a 335d M Sport Touring at £38,250 OTR. The table below details the pricing structure.

Model	OTR Price	Model	OTR Price
BMW 318i ES Saloon	£21,475	BMW 318i ES Touring	£22,665
BMW 318i SE Saloon	£22,765	BMW 318i SE Touring	£23,955
BMW 318i M Sport Saloon	£24,755	BMW 318i M Sport Touring	£25,945
BMW 320i ES Saloon	£23,140	BMW 320i ES Touring	£24,330
BMW 320i SE Saloon	£24,430	BMW 320i SE Touring	£25,620
BMW 320i M Sport Saloon	£26,420	BMW 320i M Sport Touring	£27,610
BMW 325i SE Saloon	£26,900	BMW 325i SE Touring	£28,090
BMW 325i M Sport Saloon	£29,595	BMW 325i M Sport Touring	£30,785
BMW 330i SE Saloon	£30,295	BMW 330i SE Touring	£31,485
BMW 330i M Sport Saloon	£33,250	BMW 330i M Sport Touring	£34,440
BMW 335i SE Saloon	£32,025	BMW 335i SE Touring	£33,215
BMW 335i M Sport Saloon	£34,980	BMW 335i M Sport Touring	£36,170
BMW 318d ES Saloon	£24,225	BMW 318d ES Touring	£25,415
BMW 318d SE Saloon	£25,515	BMW 318d SE Touring	£26,705
BMW 318d M Sport Saloon	£27,505	BMW 318d M Sport Touring	£28,695
BMW 320d ES Saloon	£25,390	BMW 320d ES Touring	£26,580
BMW 320d SE Saloon	£26,680	BMW 320d SE Touring	£27,870
BMW 320d M Sport Saloon	£28,670	BMW 320d M Sport Touring	£29,860
BMW 325d SE Saloon	£28,320	BMW 325d SE Touring	£29,510
BMW 325d M Sport Saloon	£31,015	BMW 325d M Sport Touring	£32,205
BMW 330d SE Saloon	£30,930	BMW 330d SE Touring	£32,120
BMW 330d M Sport Saloon	£33,885	BMW 330d M Sport Touring	£35,075
BMW 335d SE Saloon	£34,105	BMW 335d SE Touring	£35,295
BMW 335d M Sport Saloon	£37,060	BMW 335d M Sport Touring	£38,250

The BMW 3 Series is offered in ES, SE and M Sport levels of specification (plus, of course, the M3 models). The UK market is actually the biggest in the world for M Sport specified 3 Series cars. In 2008, up until July, UK car buyers have taken delivery of 14,284 M Sport 3 Series cars compared to the next most popular market, Germany that accounted for 8,648 3 Series M Sport cars. All BMW 3 Series M Sport cars are specified with an M Aerodynamic package, M Sport suspension, shortened gearshift, Sport seats, M Sport multi-function steering wheel, Anthracite headlining, High-gloss Shadowline exterior trim, M designation door sill finishers, Blue Shadow cloth and Alcantara upholstery.

Incidentally, it is a similar story when looking at M Sport model uptake across all BMW models. Since July, the UK has so far taken delivery of 32,203 such vehicles with Germany, again, the next biggest market accounting for 24,386 vehicles.

Strong residual values

Residual values for the BMW 3 Series have already been predicted to be some of the best in the segment, with the 320d ES Saloon retaining 66 per cent of its value after the first year and 10,000 miles according to CAP monitor with these levelling off at 39 per cent after three years and 60,000 miles. EMMOX Car Cost Ltd give a second, more promising, prediction with a predicted residual value of 45 per cent after three years or 60,000 miles for the same model.

All BMW models come with a three-year, unlimited mileage warranty, 12-year anti-corrosion warranty and six-year paint warranty. But for added peace of mind a variety of Service and Maintenance packages are offered. The standard Service Inclusive package is priced from **XX** and covers the costs of all oil services, air-conditioning filters, spark plugs, brake fluid and fuel filters needing replacement during a three-year, 36,000 mile or five-year, 60,000 mile period. A customer choosing the Service and Maintenance package for the same periods is also protected from the costs of front and rear brake discs and pads, clutch assembly (if worn) and new wiper blades. This is priced from **XX** depending on chosen model.

A new BMW 3 Series for just £355 a month

BMW Financial Services is able to make entry into the 3 Series class easier for customers by offering some of the most competitive new car finance quotes around. The table below outlines how 3 Series ownership is more affordable than ever.

	BMW 318i SE Saloon	BMW 318d SE Saloon	BMW 330d M Sport Saloon	BMW 320d SE Touring	BMW 335i M Sport Touring
34 monthly payments	£355	£399	£535	£429	£565
Price OTR	£22,765	£25,514.99	£33,885	£27,870	£36,170
Deposit	£4,522.43	£5,137.19	£6,675.81	£5,560.55	£7,146.76
Amount to finance	£18,242.57	£20,377.80	£27,209.19	£22,309.45	£29,023.24

	BMW 318i SE Saloon	BMW 318d SE Saloon	BMW 330d M Sport Saloon	BMW 320d SE Touring	BMW 335i M Sport Touring
First monthly payment	£504	£548	£684	£578	£718
Optional final payment	£10,418.97	£11,531.23	£15,278.16	£12,934.56	£16,522.73
Total amount payable	£27,515.40	£30,782.42	£40,827.97	£33,659.11	£43,593.49
Contract mileage	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Excess mileage charge	4.16	4.68	6.05	5.22	6.69

Prices correct at time of media launch (September 2008)

History

The first BMW 3 Series debuted at the Geneva Motor Show in 1975 but took its inspiration from the BMW 1600-2 of 1966. The BMW 3 Series bloodline can be traced back to 1966, with the launch of the BMW 1600-2. Buoyed by the success of the larger BMW 1500 in 1961 (the model that steered BMW away from near-bankruptcy in 1959) and later, the 1600, 1800 and 2000 four-door saloons, BMW engineers designed a new 'small' BMW.

The BMW 1600-2 (the last digit denoting two doors) was a revelation at its launch in 1966 and it went on to be a popular addition to the BMW portfolio. Its sleek body offered ample space for four adults yet its 85 bhp four-cylinder engine delivered a top speed of just over 100 mph and 0-62 mph acceleration in 13 seconds.

The 02 Series was built from May 1966 until July 1976 with 861,940 units leaving the Munich plant's production lines with the model flagship undoubtedly being the 170bhp 2002 turbo.

The first Three

Codenamed E21, it was only ever sold in one body style but, like the 1600-2 before it, had a sporty appearance that eschewed the winning driving dynamic's formula inherent on all four further generations of the 3 Series. A line-up of four high-performance engines, a fifth appeared later, mounted at the front were mated to either a four- or five-speed manual gearbox with power being fed to the rear wheels provided class-leading dynamics.

The four-cylinder range started with the 316. Delivering 98bhp to a 'family' car of just 1,010kgs ensured a spirited driving performance from the entry model. The range also included the 318, 320 and the halo model 320i. With 125bhp, the 320i offered near-sports car performance with a top speed of 112mph, aided by independent spring strut suspension system at the front and rear to deliver a truly revolutionary sporting drive.

BMW debuted the new 320i and 323i at the 1977 Frankfurt Motorshow. Producing 143bhp, the 323i had a top speed of 118mph. The new car was a landmark in engine electronics technology, with K-Jetronic fuel injection and transistorised ignition used for the first time. This not only provided class-leading performance but also benefited economy, with the 323i delivering 21.4mpg.

The E21 was produced from 1975 to 1983 with 1,364,639 being sold worldwide during its lifetime. The flagship of the day was the BMW 323i with its 143hp engine.

A second coming

The next generation 3 Series, codenamed E30, made its debut in 1982. Having been thoroughly revised and updated, the new car offered four centimetres more interior space inside and a 35mm wider track, but tipped the scales at an average of 30kgs less than its predecessor.

In autumn 1983, after one year and 233,781 units of two-door saloon production, a four-door 3 Series model was launched for the first time. In its eight-year life, the E30 3 Series was also offered as a full Convertible (the E21 3 Series offered only a Baur Cabriolet conversion) and a Touring - this time as a convenient small estate variant.

Perhaps the most notable development at this time was the start of large-scale production of four-valves per cylinder engines, offered first in the high-performance M3. Unveiled at the Frankfurt Motorshow in 1985, and appropriately first driven at the Mugello racetrack in Italy, the legendary E30 M3 was launched offering 200bhp from its four-cylinder, 16-valve engine and a top speed was 146mph. It was later available as an M3 Convertible, making it the fastest, small four-seater convertible of its time. In 1998, the M3 Evolution was launched and the ultimate M3 Sport Evolution with a 238bhp 2.5-litre 'four'. In total, 17,970 road-going M3's were produced. The racing version of the M3 won every official touring car championship in the world in the late 1980's and early 1990's.

Although predominantly sold as a rear wheel drive car, this 3 Series generation was the first to be available as a four-wheel drive 325ix on the continent (and in the UK, with left-hand drive cars imported in very limited volumes). The E30's hugely successful production run ended after 2,220,225 units had been built.

The very first prototype E30 3 Series Touring



E36 – the third generation

Launched at Miramas in the South of France, the third generation 3 Series range, codenamed E36, was a major design and engineering step. Offered for the first time as a four-door saloon at launch in 1990, it reflected the growing popularity of four-door variants in the E30 range.

The saloon version was followed in 1992 by a new model variant: the former two door was now renamed Coupé for the first time to reflect its subtle, yet extensive, design differences. The 3 Series Coupé was followed by the Convertible, Touring and, a new model, the Compact.

The E36 3 Series range carried forward the tradition of four- and six-cylinder engines and offered a range of engines that all exceeded 100bhp for the first time. The halo of the range, the new M3, was launched in 1992 as a Coupé, 1993 as a Convertible and 1994 as a Saloon with a 286bhp, six-cylinder M engine. In 1995, the ultimate E36 model, the M3 Evolution was launched delivering 321bhp through its six-speed manual or Sequential Manual Gearbox.

The E36 range extended to no less than 31 different models, comprising Saloon, Coupé, Convertible, Touring and Compact models. It also included the first diesel-engined cars to be sold in the UK – the 325td and 325tds. In total, the E36 3 Series models reached a total of 2,745,773 owners, 69,794 of which were M3 drivers.

E46 – The fourth generation

1998 saw the introduction of the previous 3 Series, codenamed E46. Initially only available as a Saloon, the E46 followed the pattern set by its predecessor in offering Coupé, Convertible, Touring and Compact variants within two years. M3 and M3 CSL versions were introduced in 2000 and 2003.

The E46 generation marked the first time that diesel-engined 3 Series cars were bought by UK customers in large numbers and by 2003, the 320d overtook the 318i as the UK's single largest selling model in the BMW range.

From the start of production in 1998 until February 2005, a total of 3,141,330 E46 3 Series models had been built.

The fifth generation of Three

Codenamed E90, the new 3 Series Saloon was launched in Spring 2005 to almost unilateral plaudits. Unlike its predecessors, the Touring, Coupé and Convertible models shared different E numbers, being 91, 92 and 93 respectively. Since its launch, and with the assistance of BMW's EfficientDynamics technologies referred to above, the 3 Series has gone from strength to strength and the range has never been so wide and diverse. From the 318i to the 335i, from a Touring to a Retractable Hard Top and from cloth to Sun Reflective leather, the 3 Series has cemented itself as the executive car of choice with fleet and private buyers alike.

The new BMW 3 Series, being a revised version of the fifth generation, goes on sale on 20 September 2008 and looks sure to continue where its predecessors have left off.

Q & A

This section of a BMW press pack is based on an interview between a journalist and James Morrison, the Product Manager for the BMW 3 Series Saloon and Touring in the UK. The aim of the section is to provide you with the answers to questions that may not be outlined elsewhere in the press pack and for quotes that can be used in your articles.

How many BMW 3 Series have been sold and what are the most important markets?

The current generation of 3 Series Saloon was launched in March 2005 with the Touring arriving in September 2005. A total of 1 million Saloons and 280,000 Tourings have been sold worldwide, with the USA being the largest single market for the 3 Series Saloon, followed by the UK and Germany. The Touring shows a similar sales pattern, although this particular body format is not sold in such great numbers in the USA.

Why aren't the BMW 3 Series Coupé and Convertible being updated at the same time?

This is simply to do with model life cycles. The 3 Series Coupé was launched in September 2006 and the Convertible is a relative youngster having been launched in March 2007. As such, these cars still have a time to go before any mid-life actions might occur.

Early reports referred to the 3 Series having EU4, EU5 and EU6 engines. This doesn't make sense. Why can't all the cars just be of the same high standard when it comes to emissions?

I can confirm that from launch, all 318d, 320d and 330d models will be EU5 compliant. EU6 standards are still yet to be agreed.

You say BMW is the first to introduce full Internet connectivity but that's a bit hollow given you can't get this outside Germany isn't it?

BMW is the world's first car maker to provide unrestricted access to the World Wide Web in the car's display, also enabling the user to send and receive e-mails. And he may also use other services without restrictions such as online banking. However, the EDGE technology needed to allow for full Internet access use has not been set-up in the UK but we hope to have this capability in the near future.

So how much has this redesign cost then?

As you will appreciate developing a new car represents a significant outlay. For a new model this can be in excess of £1 billion. For a Life Cycle Impulse such as that for the new 3 Series Saloon and Touring the figure is a lot less, but still a substantial amount.

Four-wheel drive versions of the 3 Series are very popular in other markets, why won't you offer right-hand-drive versions of the new car here?

We do have a small number of customers who ask for this 3 Series configuration in the UK and, as a result, we have investigated this several times. Unfortunately, the business case for the conversion to right hand drive does not add up. Fortunately, we do have a number of cars in the range, X3 for example and more expected in the future, that can fulfil these requirements.