

INTERIOR

The Mini Cabriolet was by far the best-equipped and most luxurious model offered at the time, featuring a full-width burr-walnut fascia with matching wood for the door cappings, door pulls and gearlever knob; specially-designed seats trimmed in grey velour; deep cut-pile carpets; and a leather-rim wheel with red contrasting stitching. There was also a glovebox, face-level ventilation, colour-coded seatbelts, stainless-steel kickplates, wind-down rear windows and even a clock, but build quality and the fit of components were never particularly good.



No roof to mount the internal light, so you'll find one under here on the cab...



...and another one inside the glovebox. Ideal for finding all your bits and bobs!



The overall look of the Cabrio's interior was pretty plush. Make sure all the trim is clean when buying one of these though; that velour is often exposed to the elements.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The first thing to check is whether the car you're looking at is the genuine article. Just because a Mini has a convertible roof doesn't mean that it's a Rover or LAMM. Several one-off Mini convertibles have been made over the years, some with insufficient structural strengthening to cope with the effects of chopping off the roof. Most of these more amateur efforts have a very crude hood system. You may also come across one of the Auto Design Mini convertibles, which were well engineered (later ones even had a T-top roof for improved integrity) but, although good, are still not a genuine LAMM or Rover conversion.

Rust

Any Mini is prone to rust and the Cabriolet is no exception. The usual places apply (front wings and A-panels, floor, boot floor, bottom of doors, sills, subframes, scuttle panel by windscreen — in fact almost everywhere) but also beware of a leaking hood producing rust from within in unusual places. Bodywork repairs are more difficult than with a normal Mini due to the additional strengthening underneath, so restoration costs are higher. These cars are more likely to have seen very little use and were often garaged, so finding a good one is easier than you might expect. Cars that have been rustproofed from new are worth seeking out.

Hood

Although the Mini Cabriolet hood is very good, it's by no means immune to leaks. The odd drop coming through in a downpour is to be expected, but seams and seals will need close inspection. Also, make sure the hood opens and closes smoothly as it may require adjustment or lubrication on the pivots. The hood will eventually wear and require replacement, which costs about £600 for the materials alone.

Bodykit

The plastic bodykit was bonded and screwed to the shell and never fitted that well straight out of the factory, so don't expect a perfect fit. Look carefully for any damage, especially the front bumper.

Practicality

The Cabriolet's rear seats are notoriously difficult to get into or out of, it's almost impossible for an adult to use them with the roof up because the bulky front seats don't fold forwards, they only tilt from the front mounting, which combined with the seatbelt impedes access. The boot is tiny, although there is some space on the rear shelf when the hood is raised.

