



When you remove the roof of a monocoque, the floorpan has to be strengthened. Here's a beefy sill section for beam stiffness.



Inside the boot strengthening for seat-belt mountings.



That rear window winds down...



...in an unusual way. A nice little design that.

the panel joins properly at the point where the wings meet the windscreen scuttle.

Take a look all around the vehicle for dents and scrapes. On metallic paint finishes rectification of these is more costly than with a non-metallic paint. The bodykit makes it somewhat wider than a traditionally bodied Mini and, consequently, it is vulnerable!

Look at the corners, particularly those of the front spoiler which generally tends to pick up the bulk of the knocks. As with the LAMM and the ERA check the lower edge of the spoiler for grounding marks: it is low enough for this to be a problem over road humps and entrances over pavements. The Cabriolet is a well-engineered car, and there is little scuttle shake when compared with other production convertibles based on saloon vehicles. Interiors are well-finished and should be in good clean condition with no marks or tears in the upholstery.

Availability and the 'word' from the Mini trade

Somewhere between 500 and 600 Rover Mini Cabriolets were produced; Rover is not sure of the exact number and this means that there are still plenty of cars available – if you are prepared to search them out. The best place to buy is from a reputable Mini specialist as very few ever find their way on to the forecourts or Rover dealers.

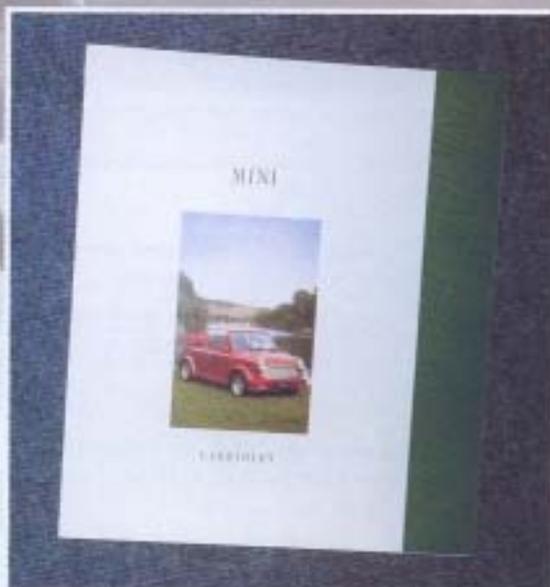
As with any open-topped car they tend to be for sale in the autumn and winter months. In the summer months they are being driven and enjoyed – well, in theory anyway. Still, there is a decent hood to cater for the British summer weather.

Most Cabriolets are in good condition which, as with any car, affects the value, and the view of most of the specialists is that the prices are holding steady. This is one of the most luxurious production Minis ever made, and one of the rarest. It is, after all, a topless Cooper. Parts availability is good, as it should be for such a new car, and even the bodysell at the time of writing was still available – at just over twice the price of that of a normal Mini.

Living with a Cabriolet

The Rover Cabriolet is a super car, and very much one for the Mini enthusiast. It is a vehicle that would be nice to have in the garage for sunny days and holidays, while the Rover Cooper saloon is used as everyday transport. Many Cabrios are owned for just this but not everyone can afford to tie up money for occasional use. Some people do use Cabriolets everyday and there is no reason why they should not do so – the performance is very good from the Cooper engine. Driving down the road over certain rough surfaces it is noticeable that this car doesn't have a steel roof. The strengthening to the 'shell' works well but certain surfaces catch it out and some movement can be felt through the back of the seat. There is virtually no scuttle shake. A great car, and a rare Mini – so buy one and enjoy it!

Many thanks to GC Motors, Swanley, Kent, telephone (01322) 662141, for supplying the Cabriolets and information about buying used Cabrios.



Rover's original sales brochure for the Cabriolet.