

**Installation Guidance**  
Model: BMW 3 Series E36 1994 to 2000 models

There is nothing technically difficult to prevent the average mechanically minded person from replacing the convertible top. After all the top is simply screwed / riveted and glued to the various parts of the frame. No special tools / sewing or trimming skills are required, you simply remove the old convertible top and fit the new one to all the relevant fixing points on the frame. There are factors which will affect the fit of the new top. Take a good look at the old convertible top for signs of damage or poor fit. This can sometimes be due to a worn or mal-adjusted folding frame that will need attention. Remember there is no substitute for some experience so don't expect it to be easy first time around. You should allow approximately 5+ hours to complete the task and a second pair of helping hands is advisable. Convertible tops must be fitted in a warm dry environment. The material will be pliable and easier to stretch when warm. These guidance notes will help you remove the old convertible top and install the new one in the correct sequence. As you remove the old convertible top you will get a much clearer indication of the re-fitting procedure. The old top will be a valuable point of reference during the installation of your new convertible top. It may help if you take photographs of the removal of your old top to use for reference.

**Tools required:** Pop rivet gun and a selection of 5/32 rivets. 5/32 drill bits to drill out existing rivets and a selection of screwdrivers and spanners. Good quality contact cement. A variety of screwdrivers, torx bits and spanners.

**Important:** Before removing the old convertible top check the new one carefully. Is the new top the correct model / colour / material etc? Are there any obvious signs of faults or damage? No point finding this out after you have removed the old one so please check the new top carefully. You can loosely drape it over the old one for direct comparison.

#### **Removing Old Top**

Unclip front of frame and fold half way back.

1. Remove the 4 torx screws holding the headlining at the front.
2. Remove the pin that holds the handle used to close the hood on.
3. Remove the plastic trim on the header rail by carefully pulling it away.
4. Remove the headlining from the header rail.
5. Pull out the side rubbers that run along the top of the doors.
6. Remove the screws holding the front retaining channel and remove the channel from the car with the rubber seals.
7. Drop the headlining from the other frame bows and drill out the 'B' post rivets.
8. Remove the rubber seals from the 'B' posts.
9. Remove the hood from the rear of the car by removing the screws.
10. Drill out any rivets or screws holding the elastic to the frame.
11. Detach the bow straps.

The old top should now be fully released from the frame. Now would be a good time to check the frame for any signs of wear or damage. Check it moves freely both up and down. Check for any irregularities in its operation and that it is correctly aligned by checking the gaps between the frame, car body, tops of doors etc are correct and even on each side of the vehicle.

## **Installing New Top**

- 1. Attach the elastics that are on the new hood to the frame.**
- 2. Attach the rear of the hood to the car. Please ensure the pre cut holes in the hood are used.**
- 3. Feed the side tension cable through the new hood and re attach at the front.**
- 4. Attach the hood at the 'B' posts.**
- 5. Attach the front of the hood with the retaining channel and re fit the seals that run along the top of the doors.**
- 6. Glue the bow straps on.**
- 7. Re fit the headlining starting from the rear of the car.**
- 8. Re attach the plastic trim to the header rail and re fit the handle used to close the hood.**

**The new top may be very tight at first. This is normal. It should be left up and used for a few weeks. Any excessive tension will soon dissipate with use. Never leave your top folded for more than 24 hours or shrinkage can occur. Observe car manufacturer's instructions when folding and caring for your top. When folding the top down always ensure the window folds without buckling or creasing. Many vehicles have inherent design problems / flaws which affect the convertible top. It is widely known that this model has a tendency for the frame to pinch and wear the fabric during normal operation of the convertible top. The rear window is also prone to creasing and scratches during normal operation. Check for signs of this on your old top and be aware that we have no control over factors which will cause premature wear and tear under normal operation. Such damage would not be covered under warranty.**