

### Installation Guidance

Model: BMW Z3 1996 to 2003 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 and riveted 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.

Tools required: Electric staple gun. 1/8<sup>th</sup> drill bits to drill out rivets. Number 25 star drive and a selection of screwdrivers 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 back.

- 1 Remove rubber seals from front side rails of frame.
- 2 Remove metal retaining bar on front header rail which is held by 10 off crosshead screws.
- 3 Remove side rails seal retaining bar which is held with 3 off number 25 star drive screws.
- 4 Remove the 2 off cross head screws which hold the front of the top to side rails on each side. Note, do not attempt to remove wire from header rail.
- 5 Remove the rubber seal on each side of the frame uprights. (Vertical strut of the frame behind the doors) and remove the seal retaining channel held by 4 off number 25 star screws. Behind this are 5 crosshead screws which when removed will release the top fabric from the frame upright.
- 6 At the top of the frame uprights you will see the retaining plate for the side wires. Using a flat head screw driver carefully prise the retaining plates to release the side wires from the frame.
- 7 Use a 1/8<sup>th</sup> drill to remove the rivet holding the small strap to the frame located just midway above the door glass on each side of the vehicle.
- 8 Push down on the "C" section plastic trim that holds the headlining to the 1<sup>st</sup> frame bow and release the top fabric from the frame bow.
- 9 From inside the car peel back carpet below the rear window to reveal 10mm bolts holding rear frame rail. Remove all bolts holding the rear rail to the body.
- 10 On the outside of the vehicle peel back and remove the rubber seal that sits between the rear bodywork and the convertible top.
- 11 The rear rail which we unbolted earlier can now be removed. This is a difficult task as the rail has a mastic sealant between it and the bodywork. There is no easy way to break this seal and perseverance is the only option. We suggest you work from the outside of the vehicle and using a suitable implement carefully prise between the body work and the rear rail until you have loosened the rear rail away from the bodywork. Care must be taken to prevent any paint damage during this operation. Once loose the rear rail will lift away from the body work. Again take great care not to let it cause any paint damage as you lift it clear.
- 12 Remove all staples and screws that are holding the top fabric to the rear rail.

- 13 Fold the rear section of the top over the frame towards the front to gain access to the rear frame bow and gently prise off the 6 black plastic retaining clips that hold the headlining to the frame bow. Release the top fabric from around the frame bow.
- 14 Pull the top forward again to reveal the 2<sup>nd</sup> frame bow and drill out the 2 rivets holding the "C" section plastic trim to the frame bow. Pull plastic trim from frame bow and release top fabric from around frame bow.
- 15 Drill out the 2 rivets holding the elasticated straps to the frame bow.

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**

Having successfully removed the old top you will already have a good idea how and where the new top fastens to the frame. These guidance notes will provide pointers to the correct installation order. Note you should take extra care when handling the new top and the folding frame. There are many unprotected sharp edges on the folding frame which have the potential to cause damage to the new top and the car body work. Take precautions to protect the rear bodywork when installing the rear rail and take particular care of the new soft top during all phases of the installation. The fabric is tough but until it is fully installed there is always a risk of damage either by miss-handling or inadvertently trapping the fabric in the folding frame. The rear window is particularly vulnerable to creasing so pay particular attention to it when folding the frame back during various phases of the installation.

The installation will commence at the rear of the car. With the frame up loosely drape the new soft top over the framework and carefully check that all fixing points can be aligned to the frame. Now would be a good time to check the soft top for any damage prior to the installation. Once installation begins we cannot be held responsible for damage that might occur during the installation.

- 1 Look on the inside of your old top above the rear window and remove the flat alloy bar and insert into the new top.
- 2 Fit the rear of the top to the rear rail, first by re-fitting the screws to each end of the rail and then stapling using 10mm staples following the recess in the rear rail. When complete you can bolt the rear rail back onto the car, just take care of the bodywork while trying to locate it into the rear cockpit area.
- 3 Feed the original side tension cables thru the inside of the top and re-locate to cable to metal lugs on frame. Bend metal lug over cable using a pair of pliers to secure cable.
- 4 Fix sides of top to frame uprights. Note first locate plastic retaining flap from inside the soft top just behind frame uprights and pull forward to secure around outside lip of frame upright then clip the soft top sides around frame upright and secure using original screws.
- 5 At the front header rail re-attach the plastic flaps on the soft top to each side of the header rail using the original screws.
- 6 Fold the frame back enough to allow you to re-fit the front metal retaining bar over the soft top fabric to header rail using the original screws. Note the material is cut to just fit under the retaining bar and no more. Excess material beyond the end of the bar will cause the soft top to be too tight.
- 7 Rivet the small strap on the side of the soft top (see midway above door glass area) to its original location on the 1st frame bow.
- 8 From inside the soft top take the wide elasticated strap from the rear window and feed over top of rear frame bow and over top and back around the next frame bow to rivet to its original location on that frame bow.
- 9 From inside the car, starting at the front bow and working back, relocate bow straps around frame bows and clip headlining retaining clip over frame bow. Note middle headlining retaining clip requires 2 rivets to secure to frame bow and rear headlining is retained using original fixings.
- 10 Re-locate all metal seal retainers and rubber seals to folding frame (above front of door and on frame uprights etc)
- 11 Relocate rubber seal around bottom rear of soft top between car body and soft top.

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Assuming you have no bits and pieces left over the installation is now complete. 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.