

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/2284/BMW-Z4-Coupe-convertible-sportscar>

## BMW Z4 Coupe 3.0si SE

The Z4 gets a metal roof ... and a personality bypass

by Jonathan Goddard published on 28 April 2007

When I first drove the Z4 a few years back, I really loved it. Its challenging looks won me over, it's supremely quick and its roof mechanism is first rate. The Coupe is essentially unchanged dynamically so I wasn't expecting much difference.

I was wrong.

By sewing a steel roof on top, all the magical elements of the Z4 disappear. All the niggles that were always there suddenly become amplified because you can't escape them with a shot of wind through the curls.

But let's begin on the outside. A few minor changes around the light clusters and subtle bodywork tweaks serve to make the Z4 Coupe more pleasing on the eye but turn the rather yobbish exterior of the convertible that I rather liked into something rather conservative, even boring. The hard-top at least looks natural, not at all like an ugly afterthought. But it just doesn't look as exciting as the T-bar metal roof that Alpina chucked atop their tuned version of the convertible, even though it clearly didn't look like it belonged.

Inside it's the same clinical yet very accomplished interior. It's not an exciting place to sit but it does make you feel special. It's also the most ergonomic cabin in its class, with everything in just the right place for your opposable thumbs to swivel and your index digit to poke. But then you remember the roof doesn't tuck itself away and an overwhelming feeling of claustrophobia sets in. Visibility is, however, surprisingly good for a two-seater sports car.

No one deny that the 3.0 in-line six-cylinder beast under the magnificent bonnet is quick. Mated to the rather aggressive gearbox, it's almost a brutal



...cont.

driving experience if you really feel like hammering it. And you often do. But that's when the (Coupe or otherwise) Z4's greatest failing becomes all too apparent. With the stability programme engaged all you can feel is the car constantly searching for grip. Every stamp on the throttle results in a minute yet quite obvious waggle of the tail. Even on a sedate journey on questionable tarmac and cold tyres it's impossible to escape.

So turn the driver aid off, you say. And yes, that does help but your confidence in the car is shot, and driving this sort of car should be all about being confident. Besides, you still have the unforgiving run-flats to contend with, making even short journeys a bit of a trial.

## VERDICT

It may sound like the Z4 isn't a very good car. In many ways it isn't, and it certainly doesn't stack up against the drop-top version, which has all the same faults but has that one saving grace that makes it so good.

Sure, the Coupe doesn't have that but it does have a certain elegance and poise that the convertible lacks. It's a mature choice, especially with the comparatively large boot and generous equipment levels. If you want the power and the status without the excitement, the Z4 makes sense. For everyone else, there's the Alfa Brera.

## TECH SPECS

Engine: 3.0-litre petrol in-line six-cylinder

Transmission: Six-speed manual

0-62mph: 5.7secs

Top speed: 155mph

Economy: 31.7mpg

Emissions: 213g/km

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Sports coupe

### Good

Solid, fast, good looks, suprisingly practical

### Bad

Misses drop-top, scratchy, harsh ride, dull

### Verdict

Technically a good car, the Coupe version of the Z4 just doesn't make much sense

**Price** 31,805

**Our score**

**5/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**