

# BIGGER MINIS

## DEBUT



BMW AG

## THE MINI COOPER AND COOPER S CLUBMAN GROW TO MEET A DEMANDING MARKET.

BY BILL SIURU

**Y**ou will immediately notice that the new Mini Clubman is significantly larger than the previous Clubman—and definitely bigger than its historical ancestors, the Morris Mini Traveller and Austin Seven Countryman that appeared 55 years ago. The new Clubman is 10.9 inches longer at 168.3 inches, 2.9 inches wider at 70.9, and its wheelbase has increased by four inches to 105.1, making it the largest Mini model.

The new Clubman has four conventional doors for its five passengers rather than the two-plus-one single abbreviated rear door on the previous Clubman. Like its predecessors, there are side-opening split rear doors; if optional Comfort Access is ordered, these rear doors can be opened by moving a foot under the rear apron.

We will get two versions, the Mini Cooper Clubman and Mini Cooper S Clubman, starting in early 2016. Two turbocharged engines are offered, a

1.5-liter three-cylinder in the Cooper and a two-liter four in the Cooper S. The three is rated at 134 horsepower at 4,400 rpm, with 162 pound-feet of torque at 1,250; the Cooper S Clubman's four-cylinder engine is good for 189 horsepower at 5,000 rpm and maximum torque of 207 pound-feet at 1,250.

A six-speed manual transmission is



With all seats upright, the luggage compartment has a volume of 17.5 cubic feet. The rear backrests can be folded down; a 40:20:40 split is optional, as is a tilt adjustment for the rear backrest. With seats folded, load volume can be increased to as much as 47.9 cubic feet.

standard in both cars, and a six-speed Steptronic autobox is optional in the Cooper Clubman. The eight-speed Steptronic is now an option for the Cooper S Clubman, too, and features shift paddles and Launch Control. Both automatics can use navigation data for optimum gear and shift-point selection. With the optional navigation system, shift control is based on the route, with the car choosing the appropriate gear for the road ahead.

Features like auto start/stop with automatic transmissions, brake-energy regeneration, active cooling air flaps, need-oriented control of the fuel and coolant pump and other ancillary components, and map-controlled oil pumps help save fuel. **Both models are classified as SULEV—super ultra-low emissions vehicles.**

Although the cars have grown, go-kart-like handling is still there, thanks to front-wheel drive, a low center of gravity, and suspension components developed

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The Mini “shooting brake” has grown considerably over the years: Mini Clubman Estate, Mini Cooper D Clubman, new Mini Cooper S Clubman.



The central display is a standard 6.5-inch or optional 8.8-inch color screen for vehicle, infotainment, phone and navigation functions.



The new Clubman is a five-passenger, six-door vehicle—a long and practical way from BMW’s original Mini.

specially for the new Clubman. Electric-assist power steering, including speed-related assistance, is standard. Optional Dynamic Damper Control allows either a comfort-oriented or a more direct, sporty response to road bumps.

Optional Mini Driving Modes, activated via a rotary switch at the base of the gearshift, provide a standard Mid mode, plus Sport and Green modes. In Sport, the accelerator pedal characteristic curve and steering are switched to a sporty setup, as are the shift times in cars fitted with Steptronic transmissions. In Green mode, a more relaxed and fuel-efficient driving style results from intelligent management of energy and climate control, as well as the shift-point display. In order to save fuel with the Steptronic autobox, a coasting function decouples the drivetrain at speeds above 30 mph when the driver’s foot is removed from the accelerator pedal.

Standard equipment includes dual-zone automatic climate control, a rain sensor with automatic headlights, heated driver and front-passenger seats, and a

47.2" panorama glass roof. Sixteen-inch alloy wheels are standard on the Cooper, while the Cooper S comes with seventeen-inchers. Additional seventeen- to nineteen-inch wheels are optional. The electric parking brake is standard.

The Mini Clubman has an equally sophisticated braking system that includes anti-lock braking, electronic brake-force distribution, Cornering Brake Control, and Brake Assistant. The standard Dynamic Stability Control also includes a drive-off assistant—is that like hill-hold?—a brake-drying function, Fading Brake Support, and Dynamic Traction Control, for driving off on loose sand or deep snow.

When the driving-stability system is deactivated, electronic locking for the front-axle differential—known as Electronic Differential Lock Control—selectively brakes a spinning drive wheel on tight corners, redirecting the torque to the other wheel (let’s see what it does for pad life, autocrossers!). Performance Control, standard in the Cooper S Clubman, supports, it says here, agile steering

for dynamic cornering prior to reaching the threshold level. Well, we’ll see.

There are many options to personalize your own Clubman. Fog lamps, either halogen or LED, are optional, as are LED headlamps. A head-up display is optional. Power seats, a new option, including a memory seat for the driver; they’re adjustable for height, longitudinal position, surface, and backrest angle, and lumbar support is available. Sports seats are standard on the Cooper S Clubman and optional for the other models. John Cooper Works sport seats are also available. I suspect that you want them.

The optional Driving Assistant system includes camera-based active cruise control and distance control, collision and pedestrian warning with initial brake function, high-beam assistant, road-sign detection, Parking Assistant, Park Distance Control, and a rear-view camera. Who could have foreseen that the Mini would grow so large that it required a rear-view camera?! **R**

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