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The 2010 MINI Convertible Might Warp Time

Drive yourself younger.

While there is no scientific proof that driving a MINI Convertible can make you younger, drivers of the 2010 MINI Convertible are experiencing an unusually high fun-to-miles-driven ratio. If scientists want to study the trend, MINI has an instrument to measure it – the Openometer.



Time may fly when you're having fun, but it also seems to slip by unnoticed when you're *not*. At least there appears to be a way to reverse the effect: driving a MINI Cooper. Any variety will do, but the model that really warps the time-boredom continuum is the MINI Cooper Convertible. Time goes faster because you're having fun. But it also feels better than when you're driving a humdrum car, and that makes you feel younger, which slows time.

To gauge the effect driving a MINI Convertible has on drivers, MINI quite literally invented a gauge. It's called the Openometer, and it's standard in every MINI Convertible. The Openometer records time spent traveling with the top down. Only the MINI Convertible has the Openometer. Many MINI convertible owners around the world participated in the Open One Challenge, which tracked their top-down hours. The winner logged more than 555 hours (www.theopenone.com).

Like the MINI Cooper hardtop, the 2010 MINI Cooper Convertible gives you the choice between the standard model with its 118-hp engine (MSRP \$24,950) and an S version with a brawnier 172-hp turbo version (\$27,850). That "172" is just part of the story. There's also 177 lb/ft of torque, which is massive for a car this size, and it's at your right foot's command from 1,600 rpm through 5,000 rpm. When calling for full power like you really, really mean it, an "overboost" function briefly increases torque to 192 lb/ft. That's muscle!



Either of these fine motors can be teamed with a six-speed manual transmission or a fantabulous six-speed automatic that allows manual shifting. A splendid driving experience is assured in either case. The rest of the impressive hardware that makes the MINI hardtop models so energetic is all present and accounted for in the convertibles: multi-link rear suspension, Dynamic Stability Control (DSC), antilock brakes (ABS), Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD) and Cornering Brake Control (CBC), to name a few tidbits. Stickshift drivers also get Hill Assist, which

helps prevent the car from rolling back when setting off from a stop on a hill.

The MINI Convertible is fortified for safety with reinforced A-pillars and side-sills plus the Active Rollover Protection Bar behind the rear seats. In addition, run-flat tires and a tire pressure monitor system are also standard.

But really, you want to know about the MINI Convertible's top. It lowers in a scant 15 seconds. This is a crucial feature because the speedy process reduces the delay before the Openometer starts recording top-down driving. Every second counts. A special treat with this roof is that it also features a built-in sunroof. So, on those days when sitting in heavy traffic with the top down seems unappealing, you can simply open the sunroof portion.

Even the car's climate control knows it's in a convertible. When the top is down, the system operates in "convertible mode," where it consistently maintains the temperature set by the driver, even with the wind rushing by. In low outside temperatures, convertible mode automatically intensifies heating in the footwells to get you into the comfy zone quickly. Raise the top, and the climate control system resumes normal operation.

For those times when fun must share equal billing with practicality, the MINI Convertible complies. Its rear decklid lowers from the top, creating a generous loading area that also serves as a storage tray able to carry up to 176 pounds. A standard pass-through between the luggage and passenger compartments expands cargo space, which ranges from 6.0 cubic feet with the roof closed and rear seats up, to 23.3 cubic feet with the rear seats folded down.

To convertible drivers, nothing can touch the feeling of cruising with the top down when the weather permits. If – no, make that when – the scientific community comes around and proves that driving a convertible can add years to your life, the MINI Convertible is surely going to be held up as a prime example.

But you don't need a scientist to tell you how to have fun. Come in now and test-drive a 2010 MINI Cooper or Cooper S Convertible.

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