



100 years of BMW

BMW has a reputation of making the best driver's cars and is eponymous with quality, reliability and efficiency. Over the course of a century, the German automaker has taken a precise scalpel to the cars they've engineered, and delivered some truly wonderful driving machines. They've established themselves as a leader in luxury cars, with a forward thinking mindset that continues to deliver. How did BMW become the industry leader it currently is, and what does their vision of the future entail?

**March 1916**

Bayerische Flugzeugwerke AG established as the successor to aircraft manufacturer Gustav-Otto-Flugmaschinenfabrik, with a registered office in Munich.

**September 1923**

At the German Motor Show in Berlin, the BMW R32 is presented: the first motorcycle produced under the brand, developed under the management of Max Friz, powered by a horizontally opposed twin-cylinder, four-stroke Boxer engine.

**October 1928**

BMW takes over automaker Fahrzeugfabrik Eisenach in Thuringia where the Dixi 3/15 PS is manufactured as a licensed version of the British made Austin Seven. This makes BMW a manufacturer of automobiles.

**February 1933**

The BMW 303 presented at the International Motor Show in Berlin as the brand's first six-cylinder automobile and the first model to be styled with the BMW signature kidney-shaped grille.

**June 1936**

The two-litre BMW 328 sports car is presented in public for the first time, racing in the Eifel Race at the Nürburgring – Ernst Jakob Henne gets a clear start-finish victory driving it.

**March 1954**

The BMW 502 presented at the Geneva Motor Show, powered by an eight-cylinder engine, the world's first all-alloy V8 engine to be fitted in a volume-produced automobile.

**September 1955**

BMW 507 roadster, penned by designer Albrecht Graf Goertz, comes with a 150 hp eight-cylinder engine and is celebrated in the press as the "Dream from the Isar".

**September 1956**

Based on Italian design from Iso, the German marque started producing the Isetta micro-car on its own. The quirky micro-car would go on to be one of its best selling cars and a cult classic.

**December 1959**

A group of small shareholders prevents a takeover attempt by Daimler-Benz AG. Shareholder Herbert Quandt decides to make a bigger commitment, which secures the independence of BMW.

**March 1966**

Two-door BMW 1600 presented to guests in front of the Bavarian State Opera House on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the company.

**September 1968**

New six-cylinder models - the 2500 and 2800 - are presented at a press reception on Lake Tegernsee. After a break of several years, the brand once again enters the luxury class with these models.

**May 1972**

BMW Motorsport GmbH is established, which will go on to be called M-division, responsible for all motor-sport activities, development of race-cars and particularly sporty automobiles licensed for use on roads.

**September 1973**

BMW 2002 Turbo revealed at Frankfurt Motor Show. Based on the 1600 chassis, the 2002 is the first turbocharged model to roll out of a BMW factory.

**June 1975**

A BMW 3.0 CSL designed by American artist Alexander Calder is the first BMW Art Car to start at the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

**March 1976**

The new BMW 6 Series of coupés are presented at the International Motor Show in Geneva. The 6 series, like the 3, 5 and 7, would go on to be a regular feature in the modern BMW lineup.

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**October 1978**

The BMW M1 is presented at the Mondial de l'Automobile in Paris. A mid-engined sports car generating 277 hp and developed by BMW Motorsport GmbH, the racing version creates a sensation at races in 1979 and 1980.

**September 1985**

BMW presents the first all-wheel drive model at the International Motor Show, the BMW 325i AWD, and the extremely sporty BMW M3, which would go on to be a cult classic.

**March 1987**

The BMW 750i is presented at the Geneva Motor Show, the first twelve-cylinder model to roll off a German production line since the end of the war.

**July 1990**

BMW AG joins forces with its partner Rolls-Royce Plc to establish the independent company Rolls-Royce GmbH for the development, construction and sale of aircraft turbines, taking Rolls back to its origins.

**May 2000**

BMW AG sells the Rover Group without the brands MINI and Land Rover to the Phoenix Venture Group, and two weeks later the Ford Motor Corporation takes over Land Rover. Only MINI remains part of the BMW Group.

**September 2001**

World premiere of the new BMW 7 Series at the International Motor Show in Frankfurt. BMW introduces its revolutionary iDrive control system for the first time in the fourth generation of the luxury saloon.

**June 2013**

Production of the BMW i3 starts up at the BMW Plant Leipzig. This empowers the BMW Group to put the first premium electric vehicle on the road.

**June 2014**

The first units of the BMW i8 plug-in sports car hybrid are handed over to customers at BMW Welt in Munich.

**June 2015**

The new BMW 7 Series is presented in BMW Welt. The sixth generation of the luxury saloon offers unique innovations, including the body structure with carbon core, BMW gesture control and remote parking.



The next 100 years

The 100th anniversary of the company is celebrated at a gala event in Munich's Olympiahalle multipurpose arena with special models from BMW, Mini and Rolls Royce, each projecting BMW's vision of the future of the automobile uniquely. BMW's Vision Next concept shows the world that BMW is not afraid of innovation, with driverless technology, fluid aerodynamic designs, and a distinct lack of visible wheels. Whatever the actual future holds for the automobile, with BMW leading the global auto industry towards it, it's bound to be exciting.