

THE HISTORY OF THE MAZDA MX-5 MIATA

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“agile”

Function: adjective

Etymology: Middle French, from Latin agilis, from agere to drive, act

1 : marked by ready ability to move with quick easy grace

2 : having a quick resourceful and adaptable character

3 : quick and light in motion

4 : see Miata

1990

The Birth of a Neo-Classic

- Miata introduced in fall of 1989 with a base price of \$13,800. Originally designed as a \$7,500 sports car, dollar-to-yen fluctuations drove the price up a couple of years before its introduction.
- The Miata Club of America is started months before the auto's release in anticipation of the reaction the auto will provoke.
- Demand far surpasses supply. Some dealers are asking and receiving twice the sticker price for the first six months.
- Because of the Miata's introduction, Automobile Magazine starts an annual tradition of naming one car the Automobile of the Year. The first award goes to the Miata.
- "Most Fun" Autoweek, Chicago Auto Show
- Road & Track names the Miata one of the five best cars on Earth, along side of a Mercedes, BMW and Porsche.
- "Top Ten" list of import buys for 1990, Motor Trend Magazine
- One of the eleven "Products of the Year", Fortune Magazine
- Applauded by Time Magazine for design in "Best of the Decade" section.
- "Top Ten List" for 1989, Wheels Magazine, Australia.
- One of the "Top Products" for 1989 Newsweek Magazine
- One of the "Best 100 Products", Popular Science Magazine
- Named "Coup of the Year" by Automotive Magazine
- Named "Best Sports Car" by Autocar & Motor, a British Magazine
- Named to 1990 "Ten Best" list by Car & Driver Magazine.
- "Best Car of 1989/90", Modern Motor, an Australian car enthusiasts magazine.
- "Car of the Year", Wheels Magazine
- Voted top import cabriolet by readers of Auto Motor & Sport, a German magazine
- Voted "Most Fun to Drive" in "Cars for 1990" by Playboy Magazine.
- "Best Sports Car" in the eighth annual "Driver's Choice Awards", Motorweek.
- Named "Modern Motor Best Car Award of 1989/90" and Best Sports Car of 1989/90" by Modern Motor
- J.D. Power & Associates names the Miata the most trouble free sports car available.
- Ranked in top ten of all cars surveyed in "Initial Quality Survey", J.D. Power and Associates.
- Voted "Best Handling Car in the World" by Autocar & Motor, a British magazine.
- "Sporting Car of the Year", by Middleborough Northeastern Gazette.
- "Best Sports Car", Newcastle Journal
- "Top Ten Performance Cars - Cost no Object" Motor Trend Magazine
- Named one of the "Ten Best Cars in the World" by Road & Track Magazine.
- "Top Ten List" for 1990, Wheels Magazine, Australia.
- Awarded 1991 "Prize of Honour" by Danish Club of Motor Journalists.
- Named "Best Sports Car" by the Australian National Roads and Motorist Association.
- Named "Car of the Year 1990" by the New Zealand Motoring Writers Guild.
- "...if the new Mazda MX-5 Miata were any more talented and tempting, buying one would be illegal." - Arthur St. Antoine - Car and Driver, September 1989
- "...a car for those of us who were born too late for the English roadster craze... Mazda tore down the concept of a purebred sports car... and brings back the pure sport of open-air driving... The car is light, agile, and quick, with a seat that supports, a wheel that commands, a shifter that snaps, and an exhaust note of sheer exuberance. The MX-5 Miata feels just about perfect, delivering every bit of simple fun its voluptuous, organic shape promises." - Automobile Magazine, March 1989
- "This car is alive. It breathes and flexes its muscles and generally behaves more like an organism than a machine... a flat-out blast to drive. Nimble, precise, even, smooth- wonderful traits all wrapped up into one neat little package... nothing short of continuous ear-to-ear smiles." - Autoweek, May 22, 1989
- "If you were reading this magazine 30 years ago... no one would have dared dream of a two-seater so deft in its execution... All that's left of the traditional sports car is the fun. 'Mazda engineers wisely recognized that low weight is the key to frisky, zingy, flingable sports cars... A brisk drive... says, 'Mission accomplished sir.' " - Car and Driver, March, 1989

- "Wait 'till you drive the Miata! You'll love it... The lightweight sports car is back! And it's better than ever. 'Twist the key and you're rewarded with a pleasant burble... torque is strong across a wide band... a feeling of directness between the throttle and rear wheels... its combination of communication, responsiveness, predictability and forgiveness makes it the best-handling 2-seater I've driven in recent memory..." - Road & Track, March 1989
- "Mazda went to the considerable expense of going to rear-drive on its new sportster... and the resultant handling and feel... are worth the effort... From its unequal length control arms to the one-hand-operated top, the Miata is top-drawer all the way." - Motor Trend, March 1989

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE

Type	In-line 4-cylinder with dual overhead camshafts and 4 valves per cylinder
Valve gear	DOHC 16-valve
Displacement	1597cc (97 cubic in.)
Bore and stroke	3.1 x 3.3 inches
Compression ration	9.4:1
Horsepower, SAE net	116 @ 6500 rpm
Torque, SAE net lb.-ft.	100 lbs.-ft. @ 5500 rpm
Fuel system	Multi-port electronic fuel injection
Fuel requirement	Unleaded regular

TRANSMISSION

	5-speed manual with overdrive
Ratios: 1st	3.136
2nd	1.888
3rd	1.330
4th	1.000
5th	0.814
Reverse	3.758
Final drive	4.300
Clutch	Single dry plate, hydraulically actuated

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Battery	Lightweight maintenance-free type, 32 amp/hr
Alternator	60 Amp
Ignition system	Distributor-less electronic

CHASSIS

Frame	Monocoque, analyzed at 8900 points	
Suspension	Fully independent, double-wishbone type with coil springs and gas-filled shock absorbers, front and rear stabilizer bars	
Steering	Rack-and-pinion type (optional power assist)	
Steering ratio: 18.0:1 (power assist: 15.0:1)	Steering wheel turns, lock-to-lock: 3.3 (power assist: 2.8)	
Turning circle diameter, curb-to-curb: 30.6 feet (9.14m)	Brakes	Power-assisted with dual hydraulic circuits
	9.3-inch ventilated front discs	
	9.1-inch rear discs	
Wheels	5.5JJ-14 styled steel	5.5JJ-14 aluminum alloy (optional)
Tires	P185/60R14 82H steel-belted radials	
Fuel capacity	9.9 gallons (45.0 liters)	
Curb weight	2105 pounds (955kg)	

DIMENSIONS inches (mm)

Wheelbase 89.2 (2265)
Track: front/rear 55.5/56.2 (1409/1427)
Length 155.4 (3947)
Headroom 37.1 (942)
Width 65.9 (1674)
Legroom 42.7 (1084)
Height 48.2 (1224)
Shoulder room 50.4 (1280)

MILEAGE ESTIMATES

5-speed City: 29 MPG; 9.7L/100km
Highway: 40 MPG; 7.1L/100km

MECHANICAL FEATURES

16L DOHC 16-valve engine
Sport-tuned stainless steel exhaust system with tubular header
5-speed manual transmission with overdrive
Power Plant Frame (PPF)
Rear-wheel drive
Rack-and-pinion steering
Power-assisted 4-wheel disc brakes

EXTERIOR FEATURES

14-inch styled steel wheels with bright center caps
P185/60HR14 steel-belted radial tires
Dual color-keyed outside rearview mirrors
2-speed windshield wipers with intermittent and 1-wipe features
Tinted glass
Retractable halogen headlamps
Aluminum hood
Manual soft folding top

INTERIOR FEATURES

Highback reclining bucket seats
Black cloth upholstery
Loop-pile carpeting
Full center console with lockable storage compartment
Lockable glove box
Map pocket on back of passenger's seat
Remote fuel-filler door release
Day/night rearview mirror
Double-fold sun visors with passenger's vanity mirror
Two dashboard-mounted courtesy lights
8000-rpm tachometer with 7000-rpm redline
220-kph speedometer
Resettable trip odometer
Gauges for engine coolant temperature, oil pressure, and fuel level
3-spoke steering wheel with soft rim
Heater/defroster with 4-speed blower and side-window demisters
Compact spare tire

OPTIONS:

- A package: leather steering wheel, alloy wheels, cassette stereo, power steering
- B package: A package plus headrest speakers, power windows, and cruise control
- Hard top (requires package A or B)
- CD player
- air conditioning
- vicious-type limited slip differential

COLORS:

- Red
- Mariner Blue
- White
- Silver (introduced mid-year)

Road Test Results

(Sports Car International, August 1989, pp. 44-52)

Braking from 60: 134 ft
 Braking from 80: 232 ft
 0-60 mph: 8.82 sec
 0-100 mph: 27.1 sec
 1/4 mile: 16.76 sec at 81.8 mph

Engine elasticity (time, seconds)

Gear	30-50	50-70
3	5.3	5.5
4	7.0	7.4
5	9.6	10.9

Top speed: 113 mph (top raised)
 109 mph (top lowered)
 Skidpad 0.88 g

ENGINE

Configuration - Longitudinal front mounted
 inline-4, rear wheel drive
 Bore x stroke.....78.0 x 83.6 mm
 Displacement....1597 cc, 97.45 cu. in.
 Compression ratio.....9.4
 Power output.....116 bhp @ 6500 rpm
 Torque.....100 lbs.-ft. @ 5500 rpm
 Engine redline.....6500 rpm
 Fuel delivery.....Electronic fuel injection
 Fuel requirement.....Unleaded regular
 Valve train.....4 valves/cyl, belt-driven
 dual overhead cams,
 hydraulic lash adjusters,

TRANSMISSION

Five-speed manual

	Ratio	Speeds in gears
1st.....	3.136	31
2nd.....	1.888	51
3rd.....	1.330	72
4th.....	1.000	96
5th.....	0.814	113 @ 6250 rpm
final drive	4.300	

STEERING, SUSPENSION, BRAKES

Steering type.....rack f pinion, engine speed sensitive power assist optional

Steering ratio.....18:1 (with power, 15:1)

Turns lock-to-lock.....3.3 (with power, 2.8)

Turning circle.....30.6 ft.

Front suspension....Double wishbones, coil springs,
anti-roll bar, tube shocks,

Rear suspension....Double wishbones,
coil springs, tube shocks,
anti-roll bar

Wheels tires.....14 x 5&+ steel (aluminum alloy optional)
Bridgestone SF 325, 185/60HR14

Brakes, front.....9.3 in. ventilated discs

rear.....9.0 in. discs

Power assisted, non-ABS

WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS

Curb weight.....2182 lb.

Weight distribution, f/r....50/50

Wheelbase.....89.2 in.

Track, front f rear....55.5/56.2 in.

Length.....155.4 in.

Width overall.....65.9 in.

Height.....48.2 in.

Fuel capacity.....11.9 gallons

EPA fuel economy city/hwy..25/30 mpg est.

1991

The Beginning of the Special Editions

- British Racing Green Special Edition introduced
- Automatic transmission added as optional equipment.
- Glossy convertible top latches replaced with nonglossy latches.
- Miata appears on Automobile Magazine's All Star list of favorite cars.
- In SCCA Club Racing, Miatas win 45 races in the Showroom Stock C class.
- Car & Driver names the Miata to its Ten Best List.
- Voted top import cabriolet by readers of Automotor and Sport, a German magazine
- Best Convertible in the ninth annual "Drivers Choice Awards", Motorweek
- "Best Sports Car of the Year", What Car?, a British magazine
- At the Chicago Auto Show, Mazda displays the Club Racer, a concept car demonstrating the aftermarket potential of the Miata.
- Class Winner Showroom Stock C Longest Day 24 hour race
- Broddie Britain Racing of England introduces the B.B.R. Turbo for the Miata. With only four pounds of boost this turbo gives the Miata 40 extra horsepower. The system is so reliable that Mazda of England allows this to be dealer option in England covered by the full 3 year warranty. The system is not offered in the US for insurance reasons although it can be purchased aftermarket.

OPTIONS:

- A: leather steering wheel, alloy wheels, cassette stereo, power steering
- B: A package plus power windows, headrest speakers and cruise control
- SE: B package plus tan leather interior, wooden shift knob and brake handle, tan tonneau cover (some owners report having a black tonneau cover), stainless sill plates, air conditioning, compact disc player, limited slip differential, and British Racing Green paint (only 4000 produced, numbered sequence with badge, all produced between 12-03-90 and 3-30-91. There were about 1400 BRGs sold in Canada in 1991. The Canadian model did not have an air bag, leather-wrapped steering wheel, tonneau cover, air conditioning, or cruise control. All Canadian Miatas had daytime running lights. In Australia customers were offered Momo shift knob (handmade, numbered), Momo steering wheel, no power steering or cruise. Hardtop came standard No options. About 300 1991 MX-5 BRG-SEs were sold in Australia.
- ABS (requires package B)
- Hard top (requires package A or B)
- CD player
- air conditioning
- viscous-type limited slip differential (requires manual transmission)
- 4 speed automatic transmission

COLORS:

- Red
- Silver
- Mariner Blue
- British Racing Green (SE only)
- White

1992

- Rear defroster and liner added to hard top
- Rear subframe chassis bracing added.
- Power antenna added to option package B
- Winner SCCA Road Racing National Championship Showroom Stock C class winning 61 races.
- After an RX-7 wins the 24 Hours of LeMans, Mazda of England releases 24 limited edition LeMans Miatas.
- Monster Motorsports of California introduces the "Monster Miata" which is a standard Miata with a Ford 302 V8 from a Mustang GT, Mustang 5 speed transmission and RX7 differential and hubs.
- Kim Reynolds of Road & Track publishes regarding the 1992 Miata: "...the fact is, the Miata is the best sports car you can buy in 1993, and that's that."
- Miata appears on Automobile Magazine's All Star list of favorite cars.
- Named to "Ten Best" by Car and Driver Magazine
- "One of the Best Handling sports cars in America" - Road & Track Magazine.
- Voted top import cabriolet by readers of Automotor and Sport, a German magazine

OPTIONS:

- A: leather steering wheel, alloy wheels, cassette stereo, power steering
- B: A package plus power antenna, power windows, headrest speakers, cruise control
- SE: B package plus tan leather interior, wooden shift knob and brake handle, stainless sill plates, silver BBS wheels and black paint (7500 produced)
- LeMans Edition: BBR turbo, suspension kit, special wheels and tires, full body kit and a striking white/orange/green paint.
- Black Edition: Tan leather interior, tan boot, black top, stainless steel scuff plates, leather steering wheel (no air bag), LSD, power antenna (but no radio), alloy wheels and painted rear mudflaps. Options: Hard top, front mudflaps, ABS, 'wood finish' (custom made in Belgium - center console, ashtray, armrest and shift knob) and a 4-spoke Momo steering wheel. Note that there is no mention of automatic transmission, power windows, power steering, power mirrors, headrest speakers, radio or AC. (only 250 produced, Belgium only)
- ABS (requires package B)
- Hard top (requires package A or B)
- CD player
- 4 speed automatic transmission
- limited slip differential (requires manual transmission)
- air conditioning

COLORS:

- Red
- White
- Mariner Blue
- British Racing Green (Europe & Japan only)
- Silver (discontinued mid-year, 10817 produced over the 3 years it was available)
- Yellow (introduced mid-year, only 1519 produced after January '92. Available only with A package. In Australia, the yellow was called "Malibu Gold", and 60 were sold in 1992.)
- Black (SE only) (there are reports of several early '93 C models being sold late in the '92 model year as '92s.)

1993

- New Mazda Sensory Sound System is introduced to address the poor standard sound system. Sensory Sound is composed of a tuner, cassette and CD player with a 200 watt amplifier, along with separate midrange and tweeters in the doors, headrest speakers and subwoofers built into the seats. This is one sound system you can actually feel as well as hear. The system is finished with a stainless steel plate covering the face of the stereo.
- Mazda's new corporate logo added to the Miata's nose, between the turn signals.
- Miata appears on Automobile Magazine's All Star list of favorite cars.
- Voted top import cabriolet by readers of Automotor and Sport, a German magazine
- Named to the "Top Ten" by Wheels
- Miata becomes the best selling sports car of all time, selling over 300,000 units in under four years.
- A Miata wins the SCCA National Showroom Stock C class, winning 73 out of 73 races. In Solo II, a Miata wins the C Stock Ladies championship.
- Monster Motorsports introduces the "Mega Monster Miata" which is a Monster Miata with a supercharger added, now producing 400 horsepower for a cost of \$45,000. The Mega Monster Miata also features flared fenders covering 16" wheels and extra wide rubber and souped up exhaust.

OPTIONS:

- A: leather steering wheel, alloy wheels, power steering, power mirrors and cassette stereo
- B: A package plus power antenna, power windows, headrest speakers, and cruise control
- C: B package plus tan leather interior and tan soft top (only available on Red, White and Black)
- LE: C package with red leather interior, Nardi leather shift knob, silver BBS wheels, black paint, polished kickplates around the door speakers, stainless sill plates, Bilstein shocks, and front and rear spoilers. (1500 produced) Canadian models sported Mazda's Canada's 25th Anniversary logo on the fenders behind the front wheels
- ABS (requires package B or C)
- Hard top (requires package A, B or C)
- Mazda Sensory Sound System (requires package A, B or C)
- 4 speed automatic transmission
- viscous-type limited slip differential (requires manual transmission)
- air conditioning

COLORS:

- Red
- Mariner Blue
- White
- Black
- British Racing Green (Europe & Japan only)

1994

The First Evolution

- Engine displacement increased to 1.8 liters. Power increases to 128 horsepower.
- Alloy wheel width increased by .5 inches from 5.5" to 6", spoke is redesigned, hubcap is removed exposing the lug and wheel weight is reduced by 2 pounds a wheel to 10.5 lbs. Tire size remains the same.
- Brake size increased.
- Bracing added between seat belt posts for American side impact standards.
- Arm rests removed and map pouches added to door interiors.
- Passenger airbag added as standard equipment.
- Flash-to-pass feature added to turn signal stalk.
- Gas tank size increased to 13 gallons, from 11.6.
- "Miata" script plate on rear of car changed from black letters to red letters.
- Miata appears on Automobile Magazine's All Star list of favorite cars.
- The SCCA raises the R Type Miata two classes (to A Production) in competition in anticipation of the advantage it will have over other competitors. The Miata is the champion of Showroom Stock C for the third year in a row, winning 50 SSC races. Highly modified Miatas were classified in E Production in addition to Showroom Stock C and Showroom Stock A. A Miata wins the E Prod championship.
- Class Winner SCCA Showroom Stock C Longest Day 24 hour race
- SCCA Solo II C Stock and C Stock Ladies Champ
- In SCCA ProSolo2, a Miata wins the C Stock championship.
- "One of the best cars a person could ever own." - Automobile Magazine
- The Miata is the winner of Automobile Magazine's Reader's Survey for "Most Fun Per Dollar"
- 1994 Lowest Average Insurance Prices for a Sports Car: Mazda Miata
- The Miata out sells every two seater, coupe or convertible, in the United States.
- Introduced 1993 as a competitor for the Miata, Ford cancels the Mercury Capri due to a lack of sales.

OPTIONS:

- R: Torsen limited slip differential, alloy wheels, wheel locks, Bilstein shocks, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars, front and rear spoilers, stripe kit (dealer installed) Requires manual transmission. 1218 produced.
- A: leather steering wheel, alloy wheels, wheel locks, Torsen limited slip differential, power steering, headrest speakers
- B: A package plus power antenna, power windows, and cruise control
- C: B package plus tan leather interior and tan soft top
- M: C package plus wooden shift knob and brake handle, chromed wheels, M Edition keyring and lapel pin and Montego Blue paint (3000 produced)
- LE: C package plus wooden shift knob and brake handle, silver BBS wheels, red exterior paint, ABS, Hard top, Mazda Sensory Sound System and air conditioning. Only 100 produced. (Offered only in Australia)
- ABS (requires package A, B or C)
- Hard top (requires package A, B or C)
- Mazda Sensory Sound System (requires package B or C)
- 4 speed automatic transmission
- air conditioning

COLORS:

- Red
- White
- Laguna Blue (1797 produced this year)
- Black
- British Racing Green (Canada, Europe & Japan only)
- Montego Blue (M only)

1995

- ABS option is repackaged to be smaller and lighter
- Sensory Sound System is redesigned
- Calibrated oil gauge is replaced with a high-low indicator.
- In SCCA Club Racing, Miatas win 6 EP, 18 SSB and 32 SSC races. In Solo II, Miatas win the C Stock and C Stock Ladies championships. In ProSolo2, Miatas win the C Stock championship.
- Automobile Magazine, August '95 issue: "It is more purely agile than any other car sold today, and, in spite of its diminutive size, is a practical choice for people who know how to travel lightly. That is hasn't changed much since its introduction is a tribute to the absolute virtue of the original concept."
- The Museum of Modern Art in New York City hosts an exhibit of excellence in modern design. Featured is a Miata tail light.
- Miata appears on Automobile Magazine's All Star list of favorite cars, fifth year in a row.
- Mazda unveils the **Miata M Speedster** concept car at the Chicago Auto Show. Features include: Doors cut into body with sweeping curves ala RX7, slightly beefier fender flares, spoiler, air dam and rear skirt, low profile headlights (projector lamps, H/L doors open half high), integrated driving lights in the front skirt, deep cherry red paint, chopped windshield with integrated rearview mirror on the top edge and side mirrors on top of A pillars, no top, bubbles behind the headrests that are functioning storage areas for two helmets, stock trunk, black leather racing seats with five point harnesses, stock dashboard and controls, gauges, etc, black leather interior with red seams, corporate logo between seats on body piece, no center console except for padded arm rest, exposed trunk and gas flap release, five spoke wheels, drilled brake discs, stainless steel brake lines, gas shocks, adjustable sway bars, custom increased rate springs, engine is the 1.8L engine and is sporting a supercharger.
- According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, the Miata had the lowest overall driver death rate of the small sports cars listed, and the second lowest of all sports cars, including the mid-sized ones. It's only 3/4 of the average rate for all passenger vehicles.
- Due to a lack of sales, Toyota cancels the MR2 in America.

OPTIONS:

- R package: (requires manual transmission) Torsen limited slip differential, alloy wheels, Bilstein shocks, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars, front and rear spoilers, aluminum alloy wheels, wheel locks, stripe kit (dealer installed) 465 produced.
- Popular Equipment Package: power assisted steering, leather wrapped steering wheel, power mirrors, aluminum alloy wheels, wheel locks, Torsen limited slip differential (requires manual transmission), head restraint speakers, cruise control, power windows, and power antenna
- Leather Package: Popular Equipment package plus tan interior with leather seating surfaces and tan vinyl top.
- M Edition: Includes Popular Equipment Pkg and Leather Pkg, Unique Seats w/Miata Script on seatback, 15" BBS Wheels with 195/50VR15 tires, M-Edition Badges, M-Edition Sill Plate and Floor Mats, CD Player and Door Tweeter Speaker, Black Instrument Panel Rings, Nardi Black Leather Shift Knob, High Quality Cut Pile Carpet, Air Conditioning, Anti-Lock Brakes, Gift Set (Key Fob, Lapel Pin, Badge), Headrest Speakers N/A on M-Edition; MSRP: \$23,530
- California Edition: offered in Britain. Limited to 300 units and they, were numbered. Standard equipment:: engine immobilizer, 195/50VR15 tires, power steering, Clarion CRX601R RDS stereo, and yellow paint.
- Sunracer Edition: detuned (90 bhp) 1.6 liter engine, fake suede "Nubetex" interior, ABS, two airbags, power steering, power windows, yellow paint and optional alloy wheels. Was offered in Germany and in Belgium and they are numbered. The German model was limited to 500 units.
- Clubman Edition:: Torsen limited slip, Bilstein shocks, body color rear mudguards, power mirrors, electric antenna, Nardi leather shifter. Air conditioning is optional. Australia only.
- R Limited: Dark blue metallic paint, dark blue fabric top, bright red leather interior, 15 inch BBS wheels, light flywheel, 4.3 to 1 axle ratio, Torsen limited slip, Bilstein shocks, Potenza 195/50 R15 tires. power steering, power windows, Nardi steering wheel, wood brake handle and gearshift knob. Japan only.

- G Limited: alloy wheels, black interior, Momo three-spoke leather steering wheel, power steering, power windows, Torsen limited slip. Automatic transmission is an option. The black seats may be the imitation suede Nubutex; they do have separate headrests as in the 1995 M Edition U.S. model.
- ABS
- Hard top
- Mazda Sensory Sound System (requires Leather package)
- 4 speed automatic transmission
- air conditioning

COLORS:

- Red
- Montego Blue (not available with R package)
- White
- Laguna Blue (discontinued 10/94; total production of 2359; 432 were C packages)
- Black
- Yellow (European Special Editions only)
- British Racing Green (Canada, Europe & Japan only)
- Merlot Mica (M Edition only)

1996

- Chrome gauge rings are removed.
- The "special bass transducers in the seats" have been removed from the MPSS (Mazda Premium Sound System) (formerly the MSSS Mazda Sensory Sound System).
- Compliance with the federal government's On Board Diagnostics II specifications requires a new engine management chip which yields 5 more horsepower, now up to 133 hp. Torque is also increased from 110 to 114.
- Map pockets are added to the doors of Miatas with power windows.
- Arm rests added back to the door.
- Rear view mirror now attached to the windshield.
- Interior light now on windshield header.
- Light added to the trunk.
- The Miata wins the 1996 ITS national championship
- In SCCA Club Racing Miatas take 7 EP, 39 SSB and 11 SSC wins. In Solo II, Miatas win the C Stock, C Stock ladies and C Stock Prepared Ladies class championships. In ProSolo2, Miata win the C Stock, Ladies, Club and Ladies Club championships.
- '96 IMSA Endurance Championship Compact Class Winner
- For the unprecedented sixth year in a row, Automobile Magazine names the Miata one of its ten All Stars. The editors of Automobile Magazine state, "Whenever a road begins to twist and turn, it's playing the Miata's tune. After thirty minutes behind the Miata's fat little wheel, we're convinced it's still a modern classic -- nippy, fun-to-drive and remarkably responsive. Little wonder we still love the Miata."
- Mazda has sold more than 367,000 Miatas around the world, of which nearly half have been sold in the U.S., making it the best-selling two-seat, light-weight, open sports car in the world.
- The Miata also boasts the largest single marquee car club in the U.S., the 30,000-member Miata Club of America.
- Automobile Magazine names the Miata one of the ten most significant automobiles of the last ten years.
- M.S.R.P. Base Price: \$18,450
- At the New York International Auto Show, Mazda debuts the Miata M Coupe. The Miata M Coupe concept car was designed and built by Mazda's research and development facility in Irvine, Calif., to explore the potential of the Miata platform. The most noticeable aspect of the yellow mica M Coupe is, of course, its flowing roofline. The addition of the roof necessitated a reshaping of the rear decklid. The new decklid, along with the relocation of the spare tire to beneath the trunk, gives the M Coupe substantially more trunk space than the Miata roadster. The door cutline of the Miata M Coupe sweeps upward in a graceful arc, echoing the lines found on Mazda's dramatic RX-7 sports car and on the Miata M Speedster concept car shown at the 1995 New York Auto Show. Other features of M Coupe include a set of pop-up low-profile quad headlights, cross-drilled brake rotors, 16-inch alloy wheels with Dunlop SP8000 performance tires and a free-flow exhaust system. Inside the Miata M Coupe, the seats have been covered with a suede-like fabric, highlighted by an embroidered "M" logo on each seatback. In addition, a leather and aluminum shift knob tops the gearshift lever and attractive charcoal carpeting covers the floor and rear cargo area.
- The April, 1996 issue of Consumer Report calls the Miata "Most Fun to Drive." This is interesting coming from a publication which in its original review of the Miata complained about such mundane "problems" as small trunk space and excessive wind noise. In addition, it also listed the Miata in its list of the 15 best cars!
- 1996 J.D. Power & Associates Initial Quality Survey: Sport Car Segment: Mazda Miata, Acura Integra & Toyota Paseo
- "The best modern sports car there is. You can enjoy it going slowly or pushing it." - Dennis Simanaitis, Road & Track magazine.
- "The Miata is truly a modern automotive miracle. There is nothing like the Miata on the market today. Unless you enjoy project cars that never allow you to complete the project, the Miata is the only way to go to obtain the true roadster experience." - Edmund's review

OPTIONS:

- Power Steering Package: Power steering and wheel trim rings.
- Canadian Base Model: alloy wheels, power steering, front subframe brace, driver airbag, radio/cassette, trunk lamp, stainless steel tubular headers. Only options are automatic or hardtop.
- R package: (requires manual transmission) Torsen limited slip differential, wheel locks, rear subframe bracerods, Bilstein shocks, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars, front and rear spoilers, aluminum alloy wheels, stripe kit (dealer installed) 111 produced.
- Popular Equipment Package: power assisted steering, leather wrapped steering wheel, power mirrors, aluminum alloy wheels, rear subframe bracerods, Torsen limited slip differential (requires manual transmission), head restraint speakers, cruise control, power windows, and power antenna
- Leather Package: Popular Equipment package plus tan interior with leather seating surfaces and tan vinyl top.
- Leather Package Canadian: Canadian base model above plus tan leather seats, tan top, power mirrors, power windows, cruise, MPSS (with CD and headrest speakers), leather wrapped steering wheel, stainless scuff plates, 2 airbags, Torsen Limited Slip differential, rear subframe brace and ABS. Again, the options are automatic transmission and hardtop. (only on Black, Montego or BRG cars in Canada)
- MX5 1.6 Special Series: tan leather interior, tan top, leather Momo steering wheel (non-airbag), alloy wheels, power steering, colors: NEO GREEN or MONTEGO BLUE (Belgium only)
- Gleneagles Special Edition: Montego Blue exterior paint, bone leather upholstery and steering wheel, wood console power assisted steering, low back seats like in the 95 M edition, 15" 5 spoke alloy wheels, boot cover that is customized to fit over the brace bar behind the seats, black interior (carpet, and door panels), Scottish tartan shifter boot, boot cover pocket to place the folded boot into when not in use, special "Gleneagles" badges just below the side turn signals and embroidered jacket and tartan print wallet with the Gleneagles badge. \$26,210 US (UK only)
- Australian BRG: Tan leather interior, Momo steering wheel, CD player, (only 75 produced, Australia only)
- M Edition: MSRP: \$24,760, Starlight Mica exterior paint treatment, 15" five-spoke Enkei alloy wheels, tan leather interior, tan vinyl top, remote keyless entry system with alarm, bucket seats with the M Edition script embroidered in deep blue on the seat back, a NARDI wood manual transmission shift knob, a wood hand brake handle, air conditioning, M Edition polished sill plates, Mazda premium AM/FM/cassette audio system with CD player and headrest speakers, special M Edition floor mats, commemorative key chain, lapel pin and badge, M Edition logo on the tachometer, Torsen(R) limited-slip rear differential (standard on manual transmission Miata M Editions) and ABS. The only options available on the M Edition are a body-color detachable hardtop and a four-speed electronically controlled automatic transmission. (only 3000 produced)
- VR Limited: 15" five spoke gray wheels with 195/50/15s, Torsen differential, aluminum trim ring around the shifter boot, round polished aluminum shift knob, aluminum hand brake cover, polished aluminum door sill guards, aluminum speaker guards, MOMO steering wheel, and carbon fiber facia covering the instrument cluster. Available in British Racing Green with black cloth or Metallic Red with tan cloth and only in Japan only.
- ABS
- Hard top
- Mazda Premium Sound System (requires Leather package)
- 4 speed automatic transmission
- air conditioning

COLORS:

- Red
- Black
- White
- Montego Blue
- British Racing Green (Canada, Europe & Japan only)
- Starlight Mica (M Edition only)

1997

- For the record setting eighth consecutive year, Automobile Magazine names the Miata one of their All Stars for 1996. The editors of Automobile Magazine stated, "The Miata has established itself as one of the most successful sports cars in history. It is also the most automotive fun available for anywhere near the price. This isn't just a weekend driver, it's a real car." In this year's "All-Stars" balloting, the Miata had to face something it never had before competition. Despite the presence of the BMW Z3 and Mercedes-Benz SLK, the editors stated, "We were nearly unanimous in naming the Miata a better buy than either of them. After all this time, its brilliance simply left the high-dollar pretenders dusted."
- On December 2, Mazda Motor Corporation announced that the popular Mazda MX-5 Miata roadster had reached the 400,000 unit production mark worldwide, with nearly half of those sales coming in the highly competitive North American market. This makes the Miata the best selling sports car of all time, surpassing the record of the MGB/C series.
- When comparing the '97 M Edition vs. the BMW Z3 2.8 Edmund's Car Guides said: "Of the two, the Miata is the driver's car. It steers more precisely, it corners flatter, it grips better, and it is much easier to shift thanks to exceptionally short throws. Small exterior dimensions and a telepathic sense of where each wheel is located make placing the Miata in a turn a breeze. The Mazda communicates so well to the driver that it almost seems to predict what you want to do before you've done it. Perfectly balanced in corners, the Miata is more tossable, and more confidence inspiring than the BMW. While not particularly powerful, the 1.8-liter engine provides entertaining acceleration and an engaging blat of an exhaust note. On one curvy portion of our loop, the Miata ran away from a Mustang GT in the twisties, only to be reeled in when the pavement straightened. But part of the fun of driving is doing so with gusto. The Miata allows vigorous motoring, and encourages it without threatening to turn you into road kill for making a wrong move. BMW hasn't forgotten about making the Z3 2.8 fun to drive, but having a good time is more work than it is with the Miata. It stops on a dime, but not quite as well as the Miata. It provides exceptional feel and feedback through the steering wheel, but not as crisply as the Miata. It grips like Superman on fantastic P225/50 ZR16 Michelin Pilot HX tires, but the Miata's P195/50 R15 Bridgestone Potenza RE010's feel stickier. It sweeps through corners with aplomb, but rolls more and is harder to plant properly due to its higher curb weight and larger size. Here's the deal: the BMW Z3 2.8 is a great sports car, but when you drive it, you feel like you are driving it because the clutch and the steering and the shifter and the body roll constantly remind you. When you drive the Miata, it becomes an extension of your soul. It disappears from view. So, roadster buyers, listen up. If money is no object and you need something respectable to park at the country club, buy the Z3 2.8. Those performance hounds who could care less about 9 blue-and-white propeller badges, need a Miata. As toys, these cars are meant to provide nothing but pure entertainment. The Mazda Miata is as entertaining on twisting roads as anything on wheels."
- When comparing four SCCA Solo II racers (Mustang Cobra, Saturn SC, Dodge Neon ACR & Miata R package), Car & Driver's Solo II driver said regarding the Miata: "This is the most perfect race car here. You can dive in deep before hitting the brakes, and it won't spin or slide wide. The cornering attitude is utterly neutral." By the end of the day, the fastest of the four through the cones was the Miata.
- In their August '97 issue, Road & Track stated "Since we began our Used Car Classic series nearly 25 years ago, we've profiled some 50 sports cars and sports sedans. And never have we found a car to be as utterly reliable or as durable as the Miata appears to be."
- At the SCCA Nationals at Road America, the Miata dominated the BS class winning overall. In EP, there were 3 Miatas in the 26 car field. Miatas came in 1st, 2nd and 4th. This year Miatas took 10 E-Production wins, 49 SSB wins and 3 SSC wins. In Solo II, Miatas won the B Stock, B Stock ladies, C Stock Prepared, C Stock Prepared Ladies classes. In ProSolo2, Miatas won B Stock and Club classes.
- "There is no greater automotive joy than driving a great-handling car." - Road&Track magazine
- Introduced in 1993 as a competitor for the Miata, the Honda Del Sol is canceled due to lack of sales.

OPTION PACKAGES:

- Power Steering Package: Power steering and wheel trim rings (N/A with hardtop, MPSS or ABS)
- Touring Package: Power steering, leather wrapped steering wheel, power windows, power mirrors, aluminum alloy wheels with locks and door map packets. (N/A with hardtop, MPSS or ABS)
- Popular Equipment Package: Touring Package items plus Torsen(r) limited-slip rear differential (manual transmission only), rear subframe brace rods, head-restraint speakers, cruise control and automatic power antenna.
- Leather Package: Popular Equipment Package items plus tan interior with leather seating surfaces and tan vinyl top.
- R Package: (requires manual transmission) sport suspension with Bilstein shock absorbers, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars, rear spoiler, front air dam, rear skirt, alloy wheels with locks, Torsen(r) limited slip differential and rear subframe brace rods. 47 produced.
- M Edition: Leather Package plus light weight, 15", six spoke chromed wheels and Marina Green exterior paint.
- Dakar Edition: Starlight Mica exterior paint, light grey leather seats with blue piping, multi-spoke wheels, special badging and Momo steering wheel (UK only)
- Speedster Edition: 15 " Enkei alloy wheel, P195/50R15 81V tires (high performance summer tires), Limited Slip Differential, Lip spoiler, Wood shift knob, Wood brake lever, Floor mats, Marina green mica (13C) only and "Speedster Edition" decal. This package was offered for February production only at a price of \$1,120. This package could not be combined with any other options. MSRP was \$25,815. Canada only.
- Monza Edition: Finished in British Racing Green, 14-inch alloys and an uprated sound system over the 1.6i's spec. Priced at £14,595. Only 800 made. Britain only.
- Special Touring Option: 1500 units containing all the equipment in the Touring Package as well as headrest speakers, tan leather seats and tan soft top, stainless steel scuff plates, Twilight Blue paint, CD Player, 15" Enkei Alloy wheels, R Package Lip spoiler, STO "badging" (interior, floor mats) and Nardi leather shift knob
- Berkeley Edition - Sparkle Green paint work, 15-inch alloy wheels, power assisted steering, two-color leather trim, single CD audio system, a stainless steel brace bar, wood trim, Momo leather steering wheel and a deck rack. The price is £17,600. (UK only)

OPTIONAL FEATURES:

- Anti-lock Brake System (requires Popular Equipment or Leather Package, plus MPSS)
- Automatic Transmission (requires option package, N/A with R package)
- Removeable hardtop with rear window defogger (with with manual transmission requires Popular Equipment or Leather Package, N/A with MPSS or ABS. With automatic transmission requires Leather Package, MPSS and ABS.)
- Air conditioning
- Mazda Premium Sound System (MPSS) with compact disc player (requires Popular Equipment or Leather Package)

COLORS:

- Montego Blue Mica (not available on R Package)
- Brilliant Black
- British Racing Green (Canada, Europe & Japan only)
- White
- Marina Green (M Edition only)
- Classic Red
- Twilight Blue (Special Touring Option only)

1999

"Like falling in love all over again"

- Road & Track 1998 Sports & GT Cars

- The '99 Miata is introduced in Japan in October of 1997 at the Tokyo Auto Show.
- The '99 Miata is introduced to North America on January 7th at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, Michigan. Even though the car is labeled a '99, dealer deliveries begin in late February of 1998. Technically there were no '98 Miatas.
- The 10th Anniversary Edition is unveiled in January 1999.
- Exterior sheet metal revised to be more curvy and aggressive.
- Pop up headlights replaced with fixed units
- Revised interior with door pockets and a Nardi three spoke steering wheel and reshaped shift knob
- Spare tire and battery relocated to sunken cavity in the trunk.
- Base price \$19,770.
- New five spoke wheels, 14 or 15 inch available
- New glass rear window, yet new top is 2 pounds lighter than previous
- Reinforced central tunnel, floor and side sills
- Variable intake, larger diameter intake and exhaust ports, higher compression pistons (9.5:1), new cam profile, new cylinder head with knock control yields 140 hp. Torque improves to 119 ft lbs.
- 0-60 mph in 7.8 seconds
- Reverse gear moved directly below 5th gear, with a lock out
- Changes in shift linkage reduce shift handle vibration
- Bending rigidity up 10%
- Front and rear cross bars reshaped to improve rigidity
- Tie rod ends, upper and lower control arm pivot points and rear hub supporting arms all moved
- Steering gear mounting changed
- Increased shock travel, urethane bump stoppers and a change in the caster trail, front and rear tracks widened (10mm & 20mm respectively)
- Chrome exterior door handles replace with body colored handles.
- Road & Track states "The new Miata is a better car to drive, thanks to a little more power, a little more tautness, a little more sporting touch and a little more this and that inside and out. Its risky business to make changes to an icon such as the Miata, but Mazda has done it with intelligence and style."
- Car and Driver magazine names the '99 Miata one of its ten best for 1998 along side the Porsche Boxster and Chevy Corvette. The editors stated: "The Miata feels as if you're wearing the car like a wet suit and controlling it through a direct telepathic link from your brain to the tire treads, rather than through mechanical controls. With a price that remains at about \$20,000, the Miata is still the least expensive sports car on the market and a terrific value for anyone whose idea of motoring entertainment consists of small size, agile handling and an open roof."
- "Twist the key, floor the gas and fling the new Miata into one of your best-memorized bends and all is right with the world again... ...our car was impressive, with a more taut feel that communicated more seat-of-the-pants sensation than the old car - and the veteran Miata was already excellent in this regard. Simply put, it's about the purest driving experience you can have with a modern production car." - Road & Track 1998 Sports & GT Cars
- "While I happen to be partial to the Z3's nifty retro styling, I'd be only too happy to save 10 grand or so on my automotive entertainment, particularly when the Miata will outperform anything of remotely comparable price, the Z3 included. How 'bout you? ... Relocating the relatively modest mass of the spare and battery lower also helps get the car's center of gravity down a bit, which in turns helps in the handling department. And that, of course, is what the Miata is all about -- the vehicle as a finely honed extension of the driver's will, common enough in sport motorcycles, extremely rare in cars." - Tony Swan, Detroit Free Press Auto Critic
- "The car is eminently deserving of a 'wow'." - AutoWeek, November 3, 1997
- "...yet those imagined sports cars were to be exactly like this Miata - crazy fun to drive, frisky and zingy and quick to the touch. A sports car must have this essential zest, and the Miata captures it better than anything on the road." - Car & Driver, March 1998

- "The name Miata is German for high reward, but don't think that means Mazda is trying to compete in the same market with upscale, higher-priced two-seaters. It doesn't have to; the Miata is already the world's best-selling roadster and has nothing to prove - but it will... If that doesn't convince you that Mazda has gotten serious about the Miata's performance, how about a wickedly fast cone-dodging display through the 600-foot slalom at 70.5 mph. Believe it or not, that's in the realm of the F355, NSX, 911, and even the record-holding Viper! The little sportster's 0.92g lateral acceleration figure is enough to make your head spin, but when it stops, it'll do so from 60 mph in only 122 feet... ...Saying we like the new Miata would be like saying that wasabe is a mild horseradish condiment from Japan. More succinctly, the new Miata is not a poseur; it's a genuine sports car and it's still at a bargain price." - Motor Trend, June '98
- "There will never be enough accolades for Miata's short-throw five-speed manual transmission. The already fabulous transmission has been improved to reduce vibration and make shifting easier and smoother. The shift knob is large, fits comfortably in the hand and disappears into the center console on its extremely short stick. It feels solid and gives the driver superb control over the engine... Miata's handling can't be beat in its class or for the money. On mountain roads the handling competes with roadsters costing nearly twice as much, such as the BMW Z3 1.8... The new Miata is a real value -- no, a steal -- at its price and compares favorably performance- and feature-wise with the plethora of roadsters costing close to twice as much. The handling is superb. The short-throw five-speed and instantaneous acceleration from the exceptional engine are among the most important features of this already stellar Mazda offering. Everyone should have at least one Miata. With one of these in your garage, you'll likely never need a therapist." - Woman Motorist webpage
- In its June '98 issue, Sport Compact Car magazine compared the BMW Z3 1.9, Toyota Celica convertible, Toyota Paseo convertible, Mitsubishi Eclipse Spyder, Kia Elan and '99 Miata and said of the Miata: "If I could keep one car from this group, this would be it. The Miata is hands down the most fun car of the bunch. In fact, for ear-to-ear grins driving, I can't think of another U.S.-market car that can touch the new Miata. The Miata feels small - not cramped, but purposefully small, like a go-kart... I really love what Mazda did to the MX-5. It's been transformed into a real driver's car, one that embodies what a convertible is all about-that-wind-in-the-hair freedom that only a solid platform can offer. Moreover, when it come to most bang-for-the-buck, I'll pick the Miata."
- "Despite a bumper crop of new cars from all corners of the world, there is still no better way to have more fun on four wheels for about \$20,000 than with a Miata." - The Orlando Sentinel, May 10 1998
- "One of the best things in the old MX-5 was its flick-of-the-wrist gear change. And this one's even better, apparently. I honestly can't tell the difference. It was brilliant, and it still is brilliant. This is still the best small sports car of them all. I would dearly love to give you a down side with this car, I really would, but there isn't one. Sorry." - Jeremy Clarkson, Top Gear Magazine
- In the August Consumer Reports the Miata is compared with the Z3, Boxster and Corvette: "Measured by the fun factor alone, the Miata is the equal of any car in this group, at a fraction of the price. It's the easiest and least intimidating to drive.... At our test track, the Miata proved stable, predictable and easy to control right up to its cornering limits."
- 'Mazda has remade its legendary MX-5 sports car, and it is more of a charmer than ever' – London Sunday Times
- 'Changing a well-loved design is a dangerous game but Mazda has done a brilliant job with the latest MX-5' - Auto Express
- 'King of the heap is the MX-5. No question. The MX-5 is so much fun to drive that it's hard to resist the temptation of a long blast. No roadster has given more enjoyment to its drivers over the past decade.' - Autocar
- 'Mazda's new MX-5 does all that a sports car should do. It's a cracker.' - Car Magazine
- 'Mazda's influential MX-5 roadster has been updated with the subtle flair it deserves... the new version is even better than the original. The first MX-5 was never going to be an easy act to follow, but one of the true ground-breakers of the Eighties has been blessed with a worthy successor.' - Daily Telegraph
- 'When it comes to precision and response, the Mazda is still king' - Top Gear
- 'This new MX-5 is the best sensible-money, everyday-practical sports car you can buy.' – Motoring

- "Ultimately, it (the 5) does not grip as hard as the M Roadster, but within its limits is a level of interplay between steering and throttle the BMW does not even hint at. Its combination of composure and communication at speed on a demanding road is breathtaking. For all it's grunt, grip and macho posturing, the M Roadster simply can't match that. There's energy, efficiency and effect but surprisingly little excitement... ..in isolation, it's hard to put your finger on what's missing. What's missing are the things the MX-5 gets right. The exquisite steering, the dynamic shading, the innate good balance that bids you to play, the flick-switch gear change, the feeling that you are really driving. These are qualities that you would expect to pay lavishly for, yet they're part of the cheaper car's repertoire." - Autocar article entitled "Is Grunt too Blunt?" comparing the Miata MX-5 to the BMW M Roadster
- Car & Driver magazine names the '99 Miata one of it's Top Ten Cars of 1999.
- Playboy Magazine lists the best autos made during the magazine's existence.
 1. Mercedes Benz 300 SL 1955 with the gullwing doors;
 2. Shelby 427 AC Cobra 1965
 3. Porsche 911 Carrera 1998
 4. Dodge Viper R/T 1992
 5. Jaguar XK-E
 6. Ferrari 365 GTS/4 / Daytona Spyder
 7. Chevrolet Corvette Sting Ray 1963
 8. Austin-Healey 100-6 MK1, 1959
 9. Alfa Romeo Spider 1963
 10. Lamborghini Miura S, 1968
 11. Datsun 240Z, 1969
 12. Lotus Elan, 1973
 13. Mazda MX-5 Miata, 1989
 14. Morgan Plus 8, 1994.
- "The Mazda MX-5 is less expensive than any other genuine sports car on sale in Australia. So happens that it's also better than anything similar up to more than double its price. Intimacy between car and driver is the essence of the sporting experience, and the second generation of Mazda's two-seater delivers in full." – The Sydney Morning Herald
- Once again, Automobile Magazine names the '99 Miata one of its All Stars of the year. Automobile said "Mazda's redesigned Miata remains the best sports car you can buy when cost is an issue. The new car not only looks better than its predecessor, it goes better too. What makes the new Miata so special, however, is the thoughtful development of its chassis. [The Miata] might just be the only sports car you'll ever need to own." This is the only car that has been given this honor every year it was in production.
- "History confirms that many successful, inspired automobiles were encouraged, sponsored, and created by visionary Car Guys. I'm thinking of cars like the '38 Jag Mk. II, the '41 Lincoln Continental, the '63 Corvette Sting Ray, the Porsche 904, The XKE, the Ferrari Lusso, and the Mazda Miata, to name but a few." - Chuck Jordan (primary designer of the 1958 Corvette, retired GM vice president of design)
- "The new Mazda Miata is like a good mystery novel; the more twists and turns it takes, the harder it is to put away." – Larry Saavedra, Sport Compact Car Magazine
- "This car is perfection. Anyone who can find a fault with the Mazda Miata isn't a sports car enthusiast. Dictionaries should have a picture of the Miata next to the sports car entry. If God was a sports car enthusiast He'd drive a Miata. Light weight and rear-wheel drive are part of Miata's driving appeal. If front-wheel drive was the hot setup, then Ferraris and Porsches would come that way. The Miata is a real driver's car; the higher the skills of the driver, the more the exceptional balance of the Miata can be appreciated... ..No other car on this list is closer to a Formula Ford than the Miata. There are those who say the Miata doesn't have enough power – most of these people have never been to a professional driving school. A capable driver can scare the bejeezus out of his or her passenger on a winding road." – Mitch McCullough, Sport Compact Car Magazine
- "The Mazda Miata defines how much fun a car can be." – Josh Jacquot, Sport Compact Car Magazine
- A '99 Miata sponsored by Road&Track magazine comes in first in class and third overall in the Timex 12 Hours of Thunderhill endurance race.

- Mazda North American Operations announced that Mazda Motor Corporation has reached production of 500,000 units of the Miata, making it the world's favorite sports car based on a decade of cumulative production. This milestone coincides with the introduction of the 10th Anniversary Edition Miata. Mazda Motor Corporation president James E. Miller drove the 500,000th Miata off the assembly line at a history-making, ribbon-cutting ceremony held at Mazda's Ujina plant in Hiroshima, Japan. In an address to Mazda employees and local media, Miller said, "This production record for a two-seat sports car is a milestone in which Mazda can take great pride before the world."
- "The Porsche Boxster and the Mazda Miata are about as pure as sports cars can get in this day and age, and it is entirely fitting that they should be equally wonderful in use. There is a difference, however. If the Miata seems like an astonishing amount of car for the money, the Boxster seems to demonstrate the perils of too-enthusiastic cost cutting." - David E. Davis Jr. editor of Automobile Magazine
- 1999 MotorWeek Drivers' Choice Awards for Best Convertible: Mazda MX-5 Miata
- 1998 Valvoline SCCA Runoffs Showroom Stock B class champion: '99 Miata. In fact, Miatas took the top 8 places in this class.
- 1998 SCCA E-Production champion: Miata
- 1998 SCCA Solo II National Showroom Stock B class Champion: Miata. Miatas took all three podium positions.
- The Miata wins the Readers Choice All Star Awards for Best Entry Level Sports Car in the May 1999 issue of Automobile Magazine.
- "...the 1999 Anniversary Mazda MX5 is simply the best handling car I have ever driven. It's a stunning mix of brilliant chassis, superb brakes, steering that almost works out corners for itself, and a ride/handling compromise that is breathtaking. The car remains balanced, predictable and forgiving, tracking so truly that 'tramlining' is a word not in the Mazda's vocabulary. You find yourself using every millimeter of road, running the passenger side wheels right up to the very edge of the bitumen; using the driver's side wheels to clean the outline of the central white line. Occasionally you forget which car you're in, aiming the nose at a corner and then realizing that you are one, two - or even an incredible three - gears too low for attack speed" - AutoSpeed.com (Australian on-line magazine)
- "With both cars donning standard suspensions, the effect of 600 pounds difference in curb weight between the two is instantly clear. Where the Z3 asks *You sure you wanna turn in that fast?*, the Miata puts you in the next lane or right at the apex, asking *Okay, okay! What's next?! You want that lane over there? How 'bout across the freeway going the other direction?! I can do that, you know!... ..*One staffer said that this was the most fun Miata he'd ever driven (among several), despite it's standard suspension package. Others agreed. The handling advantage is so one-sided, it even prompted post-mortem suspicion that our specific Z3 was something of a dud. The Z3 and Miata engines go about their business in quite dissimilar ways, but hardly in the manner you'd expect. The Z3 with ample torque on paper, should positively leap from a start at low rpms, while the smaller Miata engine should need a whole bunch of revs to match the Z3. Not so. The Miata jumps off the line, even with tiny throttle openings. It chirps rear tires over paint strips at intersections where the Z3 ambles forward with the same amount of throttle fed into it. Response is so immediate In the Miata, you're constantly tempted to drive it wit hall the finesse of a teenage freed from detention several minutes early. All the controls and movements in the Miata are immediate. Turn the wheel, instant direction change. In the Z3, you wait far longer. Apply the Miata's throttle and you get instant (almost hyperactive) response. In the Z3, there's an annoying pause, as well as a pause for rpms to drop. Tap the brakes in the Miata, and it's as if the other end of the pedal is shoving the pads directly into the rotors. The Z3's shifter requires shorter throws than those in the 3 Series, but the Miata has minute, Formula-car-like throws. Every input in the Miata requires about half the motion, time and thought to bring about the same change in the Z3 2.3." - Bimmer Magazine comparing the '99 Miata and the '99 Z3 2.3.
- "Back in 1990, Mazda turned a simple concept into a revolution. Its idea of the Miata--an affordable, compact, reliable sports car--not only revived the roadster but turned our interest in it into a passion. Many roadsters have followed, such as the BMW Z3, the Mercedes-Benz SLK, and the Porsche Boxster, but the Miata is still the reference point by which the Europeans are measured. I like the Miata because it doesn't pretend to be practical; its sole purpose is to be enjoyed. It rides well, handles beautifully, and never feels overburdened. The watertight, easy-to-use convertible top is an engineering marvel. The Miata is a sports car, pure and simple. Sure, we want a Porsche Boxster, but we can easily own a Miata without feeling like we've settled for less." - Megan McCann Automobile Magazine
- "People have said the Miata drives like a go-kart. Correction: this is how go-karts are supposed to drive. The go-karts my rich friends had growing up were a bore compared to this." - Reilly Brennan, Automobile Magazine.

- "But what made our Miata - and previous-generation Miatas - so captivating has little to do with reason. For the Miata is much more than the sum of its parts. This was most evident during our Automobile of the Year testing last October, when we took a similarly equipped car to Tennessee and Kentucky. The test was not very fair, as the Miata was competing with much more expensive and powerful performance cars such as the new Porsche 911, the BMW M coupe, and the Mercedes-Benz C43. Yet the Miata held its own on the twisting mountain roads, constantly nipping the heels of these "better" cars. Pouring all of you ability into driving an M coupe only to see a four-cylinder Miata glued to your tail is truly a blow to the ego. However, driving the Miata up the tailpipes of the C43 makes you feel like a superhero." - Monte Doran, Automobile Magazine
- "My initial reaction to the first Mazda Miata was pretty much like everyone else's - I thought it was beautiful, and I loved the idea of an English sports car built with Japanese reliability and Japanese attention to detail. It turned out to be all that and more. When people complained that it was underpowered, I bridled. Most of these were people who had never driven a Miata and had no intention of ever buying one. Many of them were the tank-topped, gold-chained young men who think history's first sports car was '71 Corvette. The Miata is an exquisitely balanced little sports car. If you wanted more power, I reasoned, you should buy another kind of car. I wanted a white Miata with a Hard top, Cunningham-blue strips, and old-style American Racing mag wheels. Now we've spent a year with the more powerful new Mazda Miata. Not more powerful in the sense of Honda Civic street racers with engines that expire like artillery shells, nor like a small-block Chevy, just more of the neat little Miata we loved so much all those years ago. What I like most about it is its eager ability to run with much more powerful cars on our magazine's test trips. What it lacks in raw horsepower it makes up for with agility and poise. It won't carry three bird dogs and all your camping gear, but it most definitely is that perfect English sports car - the one that England never built." - David E. Davis, Jr., Automobile Magazine
- "To own a Miata must be like taking a summer vacation every day" - Megan McCann, Automobile Magazine
- "Any skepticism I might have had about how well the new Miata would stack up to its lofty predecessor has vanished. Mazda's roster has been improved in nearly every aspect, but in ways that don't sacrifice its original's purity of purpose. Through its endearing, uncompromised simplicity, it remains one of the few real sport cars." - Bengt Halvorson, Automobile Magazine
- After 3 years of sales, BMW cancels its most direct Miata competitor, the 1.9 liter 4 cylinder Z3.
- "Mazda's Miata is still the best roadster on the market today. Sure, Germany has unleashed the BMW Z3, the Mercedes SLK and the Porsche Boxster, but none of them can match the Mazda for sheer bang for the buck. The Miata is about simplicity in design and operation. It's about having fun behind the wheel. It's about feeling free and young on warm summer nights. Not a serious car, the Miata, but that is this Mazda's charm. Knuckleheads driven by large quantities of testosterone will dismiss the Miata as a woman's car. They don't know what they are talking about. Purists will dismiss the Miata in favor of the German convertibles, citing bloodline and heritage as worthy attributes that the Mazda does not possess. These are people who haven't driven any of the four, in most cases. We've driven the current crop of two-seat roadsters, and while some members of our staff refuse to openly admit that the Miata is the better car, it is an unspoken understanding that Mazda builds the superior roadster for the dollar. Redesigned from the ground up, the 1999 Miata has been improved upon in every way. The car is faster, more rigid, and sports updated styling that strays just far enough from the original to be fresh but not so far as to dilute the traditional Miata profile. In some ways, the new car is better looking than the first-generation model, thanks to its wider tail and more sculpted bodywork." - Edmunds review of the '99 Miata

STANDARD FEATURES

- Dual air bag Supplemental Restraint System (SRS)* with passenger-side deactivation switch
- Black convertible top with glass window
- Black cloth reclining bucket seats
- AM/FM/CD stereo with 2 speakers and digital clock
- 2-speed windshield wipers with intermittent setting
- Glass rear window with electric defogger
- Dual body-color mirrors
- Door map pockets
- Sun visors with passenger's vanity mirror
- Tachometer, engine coolant temperature gauge, oil-pressure gauge
- Speedometer with LCD odometer and trip odometer
- Lockable center console with storage compartment and dual cup holders
- Lockable glove compartment
-
- Remote trunk and fuel-door releases
- 14-inch styled steel wheels with bright center caps
- Heater/defroster with rotary controls and 4-speed blower

OPTION PACKAGES

- Touring Package: (Not available with BOSE audio system or the Anti-Lock Brake System) Power-assisted steering, 14-inch alloy wheels, power windows and mirrors, and NARDI 3-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheel
- Popular Equipment Package: Touring Package, plus Torsen limited-slip differential (manual transmission only), cruise control, power door locks, upgraded sound system with door-mounted tweeters & power antenna, and Windblocker antidraft panel
- Leather Package: (Automatic Transmission models require ABS) Popular Equipment Package, plus tan interior with leather seating surfaces and tan convertible top, 15-inch alloy wheels with P195/50VR15 radials, and BOSE audio system
- Sports Package: (requires manual transmission) Torsen limited-slip differential, 15-inch alloy wheels with P195/50VR15 radials, NARDI 3-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheel, sport suspension with Bilstein shock absorbers, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars, front strut tower brace, front air dam, and rear spoiler
- Appearance Package 1: front air dam, side sill extensions & rear mud guards
- Appearance Package 2: front air dam, side sill extensions, rear mud guards, rear spoiler and fog lights
- VS Edition: Leather package plus wooden steering wheel, Nardi shift knob and brake handle (Japan only)
- VS Type II Edition: Leather package plus wooden steering wheel, Nardi shift knob and brake handle, chrome power mirrors, chrome radio, chrome machined speaker surrounds, chrome doorsills with "Roadster" imprinted, 15 inch BBS look alike wheels (Japan only)
- Special Package: 5 spoke 15 inch wheels, 4 spoke steering wheel, power windows (Japan only)
- Basic Package: steel wheels (Japan only)
- M Package: steel wheels (Japan only)
- RS Package: 5 spoke 15 inch wheels (Japan only)
- S Package: 5 spoke 15 inch wheels (Japan only)
- 10th Anniversary Model: 1.8-liter engine, 6-speed manual transmission, power door lock, BOSE sound system, FM/AM electronic tuner with CD deck, "Innocent Blue Mica" exterior paint, Color of the soft top and its cover are blue with similar shade of the body color, aluminum alloy wheels has stylish, polished finish. The interior trim color is two-tone black and blue, coordinated with its exterior. Blue-colored suede-like material is used in the center part of the seats, while the side and headrests are covered with black leather. NARDI leather-wrapped steering wheel and shift knob are colored in black/blue. Blue is also applied on the shift lever boot and floor carpet. Sporty, chrome-plated rings surround the speedometer and tachometer. The center console panel includes carbon-fiber-look trim. 6-speed manual transmission, 7,000 units of the "10th Anniversary Model" will be sold in overseas markets, in addition to 500 units for the Japanese market. Distribution for each market is as follows: 3,150 units for North America; 3,700 units for Europe; 150 units for Australia. A special emblem on the front in driver's side

fender conveys the serial number among the total limited sales volume of 7,500 units. The ignition key has an exclusive design with Mazda's brand symbol on the blue-painted grip. The "Owner certificate," which includes the signature of James. E. Miller, President of Mazda Motor Corporation, serial number and chassis number of the vehicle, will be presented to all owners.

OPTIONAL FEATURES

- Air conditioning - Available as an option on all models.
- Detachable hardtop - Available as an option on all models.
- Cassette Player - Available as an option on all models.
- Carpeted Floor Mats - Available as an option on all models.
- Power Steering - Available as an option on the Base model and those equipped with the Sports Package.
- Automatic Transmission - Available as an option on all models except those equipped with the Sports Package.
- BOSE Audio System - Available as an option on models equipped with the Popular Equipment Package.
- 4-Wheel Anti-Lock Brake System - Available as an option on models equipped with the Popular Equipment Package or Leather Package. Note: must be ordered in combination with the BOSE audio system on models equipped with the Popular Equipment Package and a manual transmission. The Leather Package requires the anti-lock brake system on models with automatic transmission.
- Style Bar - non protective roll bar (Japan only)
- Carbon fiber look center dash cover - (Japan only)
- Chrome dash vent rings - (Japan only)
- Chrome dead pedal - (Japan only)
- Chrome pedals - (Japan only)
- Chrome shift knob - (Japan only)
- Chrome brake handle - (Japan only)
- Black classic brake handle boot - (Japan only)
- Wooden shift knob
- Wooden brake handle - (Japan only)
- Wooden center dash cover
- Ski rack - trunk mounted - (Japan only)
- Front strut brace - (Japan only)
- Front Air Dam - dealer installed option
- Fog Lights - dealer installed option
- Side sills - dealer installed option
- Rear Lip Spoiler - dealer installed option
- Front and Rear Mudguards - dealer installed option
- Front mask - dealer installed option
- Door Sill scuff plate - dealer installed option
- License plate frame - dealer installed option
- Engine Block Heater - dealer installed option
- Car cover - dealer installed option
- Tonneau cover - dealer installed option
- Trunk mounted luggage rack - dealer installed option

COLORS:

- Brilliant black
- Grace green
- red
- white
- twilight blue
- evolution silver
- evolution orange (Japan & Europe only)
- Sapphire Blue Mica (10th Anniversary Edition only)

MEASUREMENTS:

- Wheelbase 89.2 in
- Track front/rear 55.9/57.0 in
- Length x width x height 155.3 x 66.1 x 47.3 in
- Curb weight 2245 lbs
- Coefficient of drag 0.36
- Fuel capacity 12.7 gallons
- Cargo capacity 4.8 cu ft

ENGINE:

16-valve DOHC 4-in-line, iron block, aluminum head
Bore x stroke 3.27 x 3.35 in (83.0 x 85.0 mm)
Displacement 112 cu in (1839 cc)
Compression ratio 9.5:1
Fuel system sequential multipoint electronic injection
Power SAE net 140 bhp @ 6500 rpm
Torque SAE net 119 lb-ft @ 5500 rpm
Redline 7000 rpm

DRIVETRAIN:

5-speed manual transmission
Gear ratios (I) 3.14 (II) 1.89 (III) 1.33 (IV) 1.00 (V) 0.81
Final-drive ratio 4.10:1

SUSPENSION:

Independent front, with double wishbones, dampers, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Independent rear, with double wishbones, dampers, coil springs, anti-roll bar

STEERING:

Rack-and-pinion
Turns lock to lock 3.3
Turning circle 30.0 ft

BRAKES:

Vented front discs, rear discs
Anti-lock system

WHEELS AND TIRES:

14 x 5.5-in steel wheels
185/60R-14 Toyo tires

1999 Mazda MX-5 Miata

All we want for Christmas.

By Jean Jennings
Automobile Magazine

Hiroshima, Japan--A gorgeous British racing green Mazda MX-5 Miata wrapped in a big red velvet bow. A fire-engine red Miata with a festive evergreen wreath on the hood. Images of sugarplums dance through our heads this holiday season. There would be no sweeter treat than taking Yuletide delivery of the masterfully reworked Mazda Miata.

Yes, masterfully reworked. That was the biggest concern, correct? That somehow, the new Miata (which had to happen sometime) would miss the incredible, indelible high-water mark of the original. A car we have enthusiastically lauded in print year after year as "one of the best cars a person could ever own," a car that "feeds our automotive soul like no other car does," a car that will "hold its own over the long run," and a car that "reaches out to the perpetual teenager in all of us." A magic car.

What was going to happen to our first Automobile Magazine Automobile of the Year (1990), the only car to have ever been named to the Automobile Magazine All-Stars list seven years in a row--every single year of its life? Only good things, it turns out.

One can imagine the almost paralyzing trepidation faced by the design and engineering teams given the task of reinventing Mazda's standard-bearer, the car that gives Mazda reason to still be alive. Or perhaps they reveled in the opportunity to be the heroes who would revitalize one of the truly iconic cars of the past two decades.

Heroes they are: The new Miata is lighter, faster, stronger, and quieter. Side by side, new car and old, the 1999 Miata muscles its way into your vision to the exclusion of the delicately drawn original. Almost nothing remains in terms of body parts but the A-pillars; the body is lower, with shorter overhangs, and the front air intake has been reshaped. Wind-buffeting pop-up headlamps have been replaced with shallow oval fixed headlights, and the taillights are shapelier as well. The sills bulge slightly, the midsection looks more substantial, and the wheels fill nicely bulging wheel wells (the old Miata's add-on wheel-well lips in the rear are gone). The entire look is organic, voluptuous.

To answer complaints about space efficiency and utility, there are bigger door pockets, a larger console bin, cup holders (!), and more trunk space now that the battery and spare are stacked under the floor.

It is a different car than it was, yet the Miata's original spirit of joy, simplicity, and "oneness between horse and rider" (as so eloquently stated by Toshihiko Hirai, the Miata's original product program manager) remains intact.

Vehicle Viagra: The search for essence
Steve Thompson
Autoweek Magazine

Car guys don't talk much about what happens when automotive passions burn low and begin to smolder, which is no surprise, given that we XY-chromosome types don't much talk about what happens when any of our passions cool off. At least not to anybody but our medicos, and even then, only after the evidence has become impossible to deny. To which the doc response nowadays includes prescribing biochemical reinigorators like Viagra.

Viagra for waning automotive passions takes various forms. Sometimes it's just a shift of scenes, as in from sports cars to hot rods, or from racing to building. Sometimes it just requires a vacation from an obsession that suddenly seems meaningless. And sometimes, it just means reconnecting with what triggered the passions in the first place.

When we older gents are seen wandering around old-car zones, young people often think we're reliving our past, wishing we were young again, and there is something to that, of course. But there's also, often, a search for essence underway, maybe unconscious, but very real.

That's why, when Mazda PR honcho Jay Amestoy told me recently how hard the company worked to keep the redesign of the '99 Miata to fundamentals of the small-bore sports-car essence, I wasn't surprised when he also noted how many Miata buyers are and always have been middle-aged (and older) men. And for good reason: The Miata was and remains the best distillation of the lightweight Road Dancer ever built. Better even, thanks to its real-world utility, than my '66 Lotus Elan S2.

Like many others, I didn't expect the latest Miata to retain its essential simplicity. I'd expected Mazda to follow the money upscale, just as Honda evidently has decided to do with the S2000 roadster, and as BMW did with the Z3. So to climb into a new Miata and find its essence refined but not lost in unnecessary weight, glitz and power was a pleasant surprise. Actually, it was more than that. For tiresome medical reasons, my own automotive passions had not exactly been white-hot when, purely by test-car scheduling coincidence, that silver '99 Miata showed up in my driveway.

The day was drizzly when I got into it to check out the changes from the previous model, and I started it with no real intention to drive through the mist. But when the lively little 1.8-liter engine spun to life, so unmuted by unnecessary sheetmetal and sound-deadening insulation, my right hand fell of its own accord onto the stubby little shifter. And suddenly, the driver's door was closed and I was out on the back roads.

Soon, the mist dissipated, the sun peeked through the clouds, and I stopped to lower the top, aware vaguely that I had no destination, but not giving a damn. I didn't think about the car's ergonomics, handling, noise levels or anything else for a long time: I just drove, and as I pulled into my driveway, a knot I hadn't really known was there between my shoulders was gone.

We assign values to cars because we are hard-wired for such behavior, and researchers seem to be close to understanding how that biological programming developed and how exactly it has benefited us in evolutionary terms. When those puzzles are solved, the real, non-"socially constructed" reasons why a simple drive in a simple sports car can bring brightness to a dreary day will be available to all.

Meanwhile, for some of us, it's enough that such vehicles themselves are available to all.

Thanks, Mazda.

2000 "The Modern Original"

Autoweek

- When challenged at a forum last week, several of the world's top automotive designers agreed on one thing -- that there were many cars to choose from when selecting the best design of the century. A stellar group of eight of the top automotive designers in the world gathered at the 1999 Motor Press Guild (MPG) Design Forum to discuss "Form follows Passion," the official topic of the panel. While the representatives from American, Japanese and European automakers appeared to have some consensus on the need for inspiration in car design, they parted company when it came to naming one vehicle as the epitome of design for this century. The panel included Ed Blandford, designer, Mazda North America Design Center; Peter Brock, international design consultant; Ed Golden, design manager, Ford Motor Company; Dave Merak, chief designer, American Honda; Simon Padian, design manager, Saab; Chuck Pelly, president, Designworks USA BMW; Tom Tjaarda, international design consultant; Tom Tremont, design director, DaimlerChrysler Pacifica; and Kip Wasenko, chief designer, Cadillac. Moderating the panel was Del Coates, design consultant and educator. One of the key organizers of the event on behalf of MPG was designer and MPG special events committee member Gene Garfinkle. One of the most challenging questions posed to the panel was to pick one car that was the best "statement of visual aesthetics" for the industry. Many responses centered on Italian designers -- Ferraris, Bugattis and Alfa Romeos. For example, Cadillac's Wasenko picked the 1964 Ferrari GTO along with the Ferrari Daytona as his favorites. The current Jaguar XK8 was cited by Ford's Golden. Others, like the American Tjaarda who followed his love of Italian car design from Michigan to Italy, mentioned the overall inspiration of Ferrari-Pininfarina-Lancia designs from 1957-58. Specific choices like a custom-bodied 1929 Alfa Romeo picked by race car designer Brock won nods of approval from other panelists and attendees at the event. When the discussion turned to design classics among current cars, the Mazda Miata and RX-7, Dodge Viper and Porsche 911 were proposed as "future collectibles." The panel's choice for trendsetting vehicles among contemporary cars spanned from VW's New Beetle to the upcoming Chrysler PT Cruiser to the Renault Scenic. The Motor Press Guild is a Los Angeles-based association of automotive journalists, public relations persons and others in the industry. MPG is among the largest organizations of its kind, currently with more than 525 members. MPG's president is B.J. Killeen. The Design Forum was organized by Earl Gandel, Gene Garfinkle and Don Prieto.
- Toyota introduces a new competitor for the Miata, the MR2 Spyder. It is sold in the same weight, power and price class as the Miata.
- "Mazda Excels at SCCA Runoffs" - 10/16/1999 - IRVINE, Calif., Oct. 15 /PRNewswire/ -- There are no guarantees in racing, but it appears that one factor helping many amateur racers get to this year's Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) National Championship, better known as the Runoffs, was driving a Mazda or Mazda-powered car. Of the 580 vehicles participating in the event, roughly one in six, were Mazdas or vehicles powered by a Mazda engine. The 93 vehicles made Mazda the best-represented import-brand manufacturer, easily eclipsing the next most populous import brand (Nissan, at 51 entries). Mazda vehicles competed in 10 of the 24 classes contested at the Runoffs. Mazda scored class wins in Showroom Stock B, C Sports Racing and Formula Mazda, backing those results up with podium (first-, second- or third-place) in E Production, GT3 and GT5 classes. "We are very proud of the showing by Mazda vehicles at the Runoffs," said Richard Beattie, president and CEO of Mazda North American Operations. "Racing has played a significant role in Mazda's history, and our performance on the track speaks to the 'Spirited' part of Mazda's 'Stylish, Spirited and Insightful' brand character." In Showroom Stock B, Mazda Miatas occupied the top three positions, and captured seven of the top 10 positions. This is typical of the dominance that Mazda's legendary sports car has held in SCCA Showroom Stock racing since it was introduced a decade ago. In fact, some observers refer to Showroom Stock B as "Spec Miata" in recognition of this winning tradition. At this year's runoffs, David Daughtery of Noblesville, Ind., took the victory in a rain-shortened race, edging out Eric Morehouse of Fountain Valley, Calif., and Bob Schader of Louisville, Colo. Thirty-one of the 45 cars that took the green flag at the start of the race were Miatas. In C Sports Racing, Mazda-powered Beasley B-2 racers took first and third positions. Ben Beasley of Mentor, Ohio, captured first place, while Matias Bonnier of New Albany, Ohio finished third. The Beasley B-2 is powered by Mazda's unique 12A rotary engine. The compact size of the rotary, coupled with its incredible durability and high power output, makes it ideal for streamlined sports racers. The 12A is related to the four-rotor engine that powered the Mazda 787B sports prototype to victory in the 1991 running of the 24-Hours of LeMans, making Mazda the only Japanese manufacturer to ever win this

grueling endurance race. It would be next to impossible for a Mazda-powered vehicle not to win the Formula Mazda event, as all 19 starters were powered by Mazda rotary engines. Keith Roberts of LaGrange, Ga., was first to the checkered flag, followed by Matthew Beardsley of Breckenridge, Colo., who set fastest lap of the race in his effort to chase down Roberts. Mickey Gilbert of Golden, Colo., placed third. Formula Mazda uses open-wheeled chassis powered by Mazda's 13B rotary engine to deliver exciting, highly competitive racing. Mazda remains committed to the development of the rotary engine and, in fact, will unveil a revolutionary rotary-powered concept car at the Tokyo Motor Show later this month. Mazda has a long and successful history in motorsports, including its victory in the 1991 edition of the 24-Hours of LeMans. The Mazda RX-7 is the most successful model in International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) history, with more than 100 victories and numerous manufacturers' championships. Since its introduction in 1989, the Mazda Miata has dominated SCCA Showroom Stock racing, first in Showroom Stock C and, more recently, in Showroom Stock B. Mazda North American Operations is responsible for the sales and marketing, customer parts and service support of Mazda vehicles in the United States. Headquartered in Irvine, Calif., MNAO has more than 750 dealerships nationwide and is owned by Mazda Motor Corporation, Hiroshima, Japan.

- The January, 2000 issue of Road & Track votes the Miata one of the 100 best automobiles ever produced.
- Legendary automotive journalist Peter Egan of Road&Track magazine buys a '91 Miata for personal use.
- The Miata is named the winner in Motorweek's Drivers Awards in the category of Best Convertible.
- "I've never thought of Mazda's little roaster, the Miata, as anything but perfect. The lightweight, agile body, coupled with a suspension that puts an emphasis on gentle low-speed, makes for a perfect back-roads driving partner. Even better, the five-speed tranny snicks into gear with pure mechanical satisfaction, and the rev-happy engine snarls when spun to the 7000-rpm redline." – Larry Webster, Car & Driver Magazine
- Automobile Magazine names the Miata Best Sports Car in it's 2000 All Stars, saying: "It's been ten years since the Mazda Miata resurrected the roadster in the United States, and the harvest of two-seat, folding top funsters grows more bountiful every season. But despite the many wonderful new entries, the Miata has not been over shadowed. Instead, its inherent simplicity makes it stand out all the more. Break down the idea of the sports car into its essential elements, and you see the Miata has them all: sunshine-in-your-face motoring, available without getting up from the driver's seat with a one armed toss of the top; brisk acceleration from a lusty, sonorous engine; a tidy size just big enough to enwrap driver, passenger, and mechanicals; playful handling, thanks to light weight and skillful chassis tuning; controls that keep the driver actively a part of the driving experience; and a comfortable perch from which to enjoy it all. The Miata provides everything you need in a sports car and nothing you don't. Mazda's startling execution of the sport car ideal made the original Miata our first Automobile of the Year. (In fact, it provided the impetus to have such a thing as an Automobile of the Year.) Since then, the Miata's sports car purity has kept it a fixture on our All-Stars list year after year."
- "The perfect sports car. Mazda Miata remains the benchmark in spite of an invasion of two-seat sports cars from other manufacturers. It offers truly outstanding, classic sports car handling. There's plenty of power for this lightweight rear-wheel-drive roadster. Amenities are traditional, elegantly designed sports car: simple and functional. It isn't the most powerful, or the most luxurious. It isn't the most exotic or the most sophisticated. But in terms of an affordable roadster, which is what the original sports cars from Great Britain were, the Miata is near perfection. Handling is excellent. It reacts to the driver's input just like a Formula Ford race car: Lift off the throttle in the middle of a fast corner and you'll feel the chassis rotate as the car turns in tighter. Step on the gas again and it straightens out as weight is transferred to the rear and the rear tires gain grip. It's just perfectly balanced. Unlike most front-wheel-drive sports coupes, the rear-wheel-drive Miata does not mask poor driving technique. Conversely, it really rewards good technique. A good driver will become a better driver in this car." – Mitch McCullough, TheCarConnection.Com
- The July 2000 issue of Car&Driver compares the Miata to the MR2 Spyder and declares the Miata the winner stating "The Miata is worthy of a purchase on its goodness alone an not simply for a low price... The Miata's virtue lies not in outright speed but rather in a oneness the driver feels almost immediately with this sports car. Few cars feel so much like an extension of the brain as the Miata does... [It's] the Japanese roadster with more soul than James Brown... Handsome interior's ergonomics work perfectly. Shifter is one of the best... In the lane-change test, which demonstrates a car's agility, controllability, and willingness to change direction, our Suspension-package-equipped Miata could do the test more than 2 mph faster than could the MR2. Both cars have identical grip at 0.88 g, but the MR2 did not thread through the cones as gracefully as the Miata. The Miata digs in and hangs on; the MR2 is more sensitive to where the weight of the car is, deceleration giving grip to the front and acceleration making

the front end feel light... The Miata isn't just great fun to drive on a racetrack; it shines in everyday driving, too. The exhaust snarls smartly and never sounds as though you're thrashing the engine. The Mazda's shifter ties the Honda S2000's for best on the market today. We wrote in our first Miata road test way back in September 1989 that the Miata made us cheer. It still does."

- Road&Track magazine compares the Miata to the new MR2 and picks the Miata the winner. They find their performance to be neck and neck, but give the extra points to the Miata for its usefulness and styling.
- "The Toyota puts up a good fight and is the value winner here. It's the more eco-friendly roadster, one that's strong on refinement, quality, and the ability to cover ground effortlessly. It's new and it's different, but the design is peculiar and space utilization is poor. As it has been since day one, the Miata is something special-to look at, to sit in, to drive, and to own. After two days of hard driving, the decision between the new Toyota and the Mazda was an easy one to make. The Miata is still MAGIC." - Automobile Magazine comparing the 2000 Toyota MR2 and the Miata
- "Despite all that the MR-2 has going for it, it's just not as fast as the Miata on the track. Try as we might, we simply couldn't pedal the MR-2 around Buttonwillow's East Loop as fast as we could the Miata. The Mazda roadster laughs in the face of the MR-2's bigger power, lighter weight, and superior braking." - Sport Compact Car June 2000 Comparison
- "I love TVRs, absolutely love them. If one of these things came into the room and patted you on the back all your teeth would fly out!.. The only problem is that really they're just too fast to be proper British Sports Cars. I mean, with the roof down 50 feels like 150, so what's the point of actually doing 150? The MG-F is much slower but I like it a lot. The only problem is that it's a bit 'limp of wrist'. I think that if it were a person, it would be called... Julian! So what about the Elise... the thing is, that Lotus had remembered what I'd forgotten, that the British like a bit of discomfort. Our plumbing is not bad by accident, we like it that way; we could get our trains to run on time, but we choose not to, because we enjoy standing around on the platform moaning. Britain is the S&M capital of the world. We're known everywhere for being kinky, fond of pain, and the Elise delivers in spades. There are no carpets, and if you get caught in a rainstorm keep going; don't bother getting out and trying to put the roof on because, by the time you've done it, it'll be summer! The Elise concentrates on just one thing - being fun in an anodyne world. But the Elise is not the best British sports car... because the Mazda MX-5 is! Yes, yes I admit it; it's not entirely British. In fact it could be argued that it's sort of completely... Japanese! But you see, the thing is, if you go to Tokyo and order bacon, eggs, mushrooms, and so-on-and-so-forth, even though they're in Japan they'll still call it 'a full English Breakfast'. Ideas travel, so I don't care where this car was designed, or where it was made, it's still a full English Sports Car! The MX-5 kicked off the sports car renaissance, and ever since it came along in 1989 everyone else has been trying to beat it with more power, more-wheel-drive, more whizz-bangs, and more fancy gearboxes. But you can't beat the original recipe, a recipe that was written more than sixty years ago - keep it simple! The Mazda has a not-very-powerful 1.8 litre engine at the front, where it belongs, not in the middle. And drive goes to the back, like it should. It's as complicated as wood!... So who cares if it doesn't have an electric hood and climate control. A bit chilly? Well you're British for heavens sake - wear a hat!" - Jeremy Clarkson
- "Mazda Miata remains the benchmark in spite of an invasion of two-seat sports cars from other manufacturers. It offers truly outstanding, classic sports car handling. There's plenty of power for this lightweight rear-wheel-drive roadster. Amenities are traditional elegantly designed sports car: simple and functional. It isn't the most powerful, or the most luxurious. It isn't the most exotic or the most sophisticated. But in terms of an affordable roadster, which is what the original sports cars from Great Britain were, the Miata is near perfection." - Mitch McCullough - NewCarTestDrives.Com
- "I was a skeptic before I actually drove a Miata. Why would anyone pay \$26,995 (\$21,245 US) for such a small low powered car I thought. Go out and drive one and you will understand instantly. As soon as the stubby gear lever notches into first and you take up the smooth clutch with its perfectly defined friction point everything feels right in the world. With only 140 hp on tap the Miata is obviously not a muscle car but the short gearing makes the most of the available power. Acceleration is spirited requiring about 7.8 seconds to hit sixty. Gear changes come quickly but there's always lots of acceleration in gear. It's hard to convey the thrill of driving this car with mere words. The suspension is taut and despite the modest power the chassis is best balanced with oversteer. The car corners flat and the ride is quite firm but purposeful. Steering is direct and perfectly weighted. Between the shifter, the handling, the brakes, the rear drive layout and the steering there are few cars that are as intuitive to drive quickly and fewer still that are as much fun." - Automotive Review.Com

STANDARD FEATURES

- Air conditioning
- Fog lights
- Windblocker
- Floor mats
- Dual air bag Supplemental Restraint System (SRS)* with passenger-side deactivation switch
- Black convertible top with glass window
- Black cloth reclining bucket seats
- AM/FM/CD stereo with 2 speakers and digital clock
- 2-speed windshield wipers with intermittent setting
- Glass rear window with electric defogger
- Dual body-color mirrors
- Door map pockets
- Sun visors with passenger's vanity mirror
- Tachometer, engine coolant temperature gauge, oil-pressure gauge
- Speedometer with LCD odometer and trip odometer
- Lockable center console with storage compartment and dual cup holders
- Lockable glove compartment
- Remote trunk and fuel-door releases
- Heater/defroster with rotary controls and 4-speed blower
- Power-assisted steering
- 14-inch alloy wheels
- Power windows
- Power mirrors
- NARDI 3-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheel

OPTION PACKAGES

- Miata LS: tan interior with leather seating surfaces and tan convertible top, 15-inch alloy wheels with P195/50VR15 radials, Appearance Package and BOSE audio system
- Suspension Package: (requires manual transmission) Bilstein® shock absorbers; recalibrated rear springs and sway bars; front strut-tower brace; Torsen® limited-slip differential (Std. on Miata LS); 15-inch alloy wheels with wheel locks and 195/50R15 V-rated Michelin tires (Std. on Miata LS); 6 speed manual transmission
- Appearance Package: front air dam, side sill extensions & rear mud guards
- Convenience Package: door mounted tweeters, power door locks and cruise control (not available with the LS or Suspension Package)

OPTIONAL FEATURES

- Detachable hardtop - Available as an option on all models.
- Torsen limited slip differential (base)
- Cassette Player - Available as an option on all models.
- Automatic Transmission - Available as an option on all models except those equipped with the Sports Package.
- 4-Wheel Anti-Lock Brake System - Available only on Miata LS Package. Style Bar - non protective roll bar (Japan only)
- Carbon fiber look center dash cover - (Japan only)
- Chrome dash vent rings - (Japan only)
- Chrome dead pedal - (Japan only)
- Chrome pedals - (Japan only)
- Chrome shift knob - (Japan only)
- Chrome brake handle - (Japan only)
- Black classic brake handle boot - (Japan only)
- Wooden shift knob

- Wooden brake handle - (Japan only)
- Wooden center dash cover
- Ski rack - trunk mounted - (Japan only)
- Front strut brace - (Japan only)
- Front Air Dam - dealer installed option
- Side sills - dealer installed option
- Rear Lip Spoiler - dealer installed option
- Front and Rear Mudguards - dealer installed option
- Front mask - dealer installed option
- Door Sill scuff plate - dealer installed option
- License plate frame - dealer installed option
- Engine Block Heater - dealer installed option
- Car cover - dealer installed option
- Tonneau cover - dealer installed option
- Trunk mounted luggage rack - dealer installed option

COLORS:

- **Brilliant black**
- **Grace green**
- **Red**
- **White**
- **Twilight blue – royal blue**
- **Evolution silver**
- **Evolution orange - butterscotch**
- **Mahogany Mica (SE only) - burgandy**

2001

- Models equipped with 16-inch tires have larger brake discs; and the brakes on models equipped with 14- or 15-inch tires have over-sized master cylinders and boosters. For more precise braking, a four-wheel ABS-enhanced Electronically-controlled Braking force Distribution (EBD) system, which automatically optimizes the distribution of braking force to match the front and rear load when the brakes are applied, is now available either standard or optional, depending on the model.
- New front fascia which better integrates the foglights and includes a reshaped grill.
- More comfortable redesigned seats with better bolstering and higher seat backs to comply with European regulations.
- The front air intake opening incorporates the "five-point grille," for the distinctive Mazda family appearance. Slimmer headlamps create a sharp and stylish impression. New tail lamps that are the same shape as the current ones, they are made to look as if they have twin headlamps below the clear lenses.
- Enhanced body frames with increased body rigidity from new added cross members.
- Sequential Valve Timing (S-VT) mechanism added to engine to optimize the open/close timing of the intake valves, for smoother acceleration, and improved performance.
- The size of the center console box has been increased to accommodate up to six CDs.
- The shape and location of the cup holders and ashtray have been modified to make them easier to use. It is also possible to remove the ashtray and use the resulting space as a storage compartment for small objects or another cup holder.
- A keyless entry system including a trunk-lid opener is available as standard or as an option on certain models. This makes the trunk, which is large enough to accommodate two golf bags (9-inch size), even more convenient.
- Standard equipment on all models now includes seatbelts with pretensioners and load limiters, as well as the previously offered Supplemental Restraint System (SRS) airbags on the driver and passenger sides.
- The Miata Club of America goes out of business and is replaced by the Miata Owners Club, officially sponsored by Mazda of North America
- "Drive a current Mazda MX-5 and you'll marvel at the ways and means of this little Japanese roadster: its telepathic steering, wonderful flick-wrist gear change, agile chassis, lightweight feel and so on. It really is a huge amount of fun. And that hasn't changed with the 2001 update. What has changed is engine refinement and ride quality, the MX-5 now smoother and less stressful at speed. Visually, it also looks a tad more aggressive. The new variable-cam 1.8 is also more vigorous. Not only does it have more power, but it's also much happier to pile on the revs. The engine sounds crisper, too, although it's still not as zingy as some Japanese rivals. Mazda hasn't quoted performance figures, but with all the extra power, the new 1.8 must be quicker off the line, perhaps knocking 0.5 sec off the 0-60 mph dash, while adding some 3-5 mph at the top end. But as ever, it's not speed that counts with the MX-5. With this car's compact size, perfect weight distribution, light weight and terrific chassis, you don't have to be going at 170 mph to have fun. The stiffer body and refined double-wishbone suspension have done much to cure the Mazda's edgy ride and bouncy high-speed stability. The MX-5 now sticks to the tarmac more faithfully, yet without losing any of its famed sharpness at the wheel. It still responds just as you want it to and a grin-inducing tail-slide is only a decent corner or deserted roundabout away. Braking is also stronger in the new car, while the gearbox (six speeds as standard with the 1.8 in Japan) and clutch are as delightful to play with as ever. Yes, the cabin plastics still look cheap and the fixed seating position is not ideal. But Mazda decided not to add a tilt-adjustable steering wheel and/or a height-adjustable seat as it would add kilogrammes and complexity. In such a finely balanced roadster as the MX-5, the company felt that adding weight was not the way to go. And it's that kind of engineering purity that keeps the MX-5 at the top of the budget sports-car tree." – 4Car Magazine, Britain
- Base MSRP: 21,180; LS MSRP: 23,930
- Peter Raymond driving a '99 Miata wins the SCCA BS Solo II National Championship. In fact, the top 13 positions were all Miatas and 52 of the top 56 positions were Miatas.
- David Palmquist driving a 1.8l equipped 1990 Miata won the SCCA CSP Solo II National Championship.
- A Miata wins the National Championship in the SCCA Runoffs SSB class.
- "If there has ever been a sports car that is dependable as the morning sunrise, it's the Miata... With base suspension, generic dealership tires and an open rear differential, Project Miata can't hold a candle to its fully juiced Sport Package brethren, which is one of the most exquisitely balanced and best handling cars we have ever driven." – January 2001 Sport Compact Car magazine
- Once again, Car and Driver magazine names the 2001 Miata one of its Ten Best Cars of the Year, saying "Ever since Mazda reinvented the affordable sports car 11 years ago, the nimble Miata has been a Car and Driver favorite. For those who find rapture in the act of driving, nothing satisfies like a small, light car with instantaneous reflexes, and the fun is multiplied in a roadster. With the upgrades for the 2001 model, the Miata delivers more of this telepathic responsiveness than ever before. Upgrades to the Miata's chassis improve rigidity to more directly and immediately translate the driver's input into accurate and precisely proportionate reactions. These

improvements combine to provide this Miata with additional muscle without compromising the lithe handling and quick moves that have been hallmarks of the Miata since its introduction.” A Toyota MR2 was also nominated, but did not win.

- “Most apparent is the new Miata’s structural rigidity. Thanks to a formidable list of reinforcements to the car’s frame and body—including new crossmembers at both the front and rear, and a shock tower brace—the Miata exhibits body stiffness that’s truly remarkable for a roadster. Torsional and bending rigidity have been improved 22 and 16 percent, respectively, over the current model. And this newfound rigidity is most noticeable when cornering. The Miata remains rock-solid stable through all types of turns, with its double-wishbone suspension (with firmer shocks) providing minimal body roll and flawless balance. Gone is the car’s tendency to oversteer through sharp corners, even when depressing the brake pedal in mid-turn. And although the rack-and-pinion steering system remains unchanged, the car’s improved chassis makes it feel more precise than ever. Everything works in harmony, including the brakes whose pedal feel has been improved.” – Road&Track magazine
- “The question most would-be MR2 buyers will ask is: Is it better than the Mazda Miata? The answer must be equivocal. In a few ways it’s better. It certainly corners at speeds few vehicles can approach, thanks to its mid-engine setup. But even Toyota’s own focus groups have come to this conclusion: Overall, the Mazda Miata is more evolved. It’s a more complete sports car. It’s more satisfying.” – Robert Bowden, The Car Place
- Automobile Magazine yet again names the 2001 Miata one of its All Stars, saying “The reason the Mazda Miata is almost a perennial Automobile Magazine All Star is simple: There is no other sports car that offers the same combination of engaging personality, practicality, affordability and sheer driving pleasure. Other cars in the sub \$40,000 category may offer more style (Chrysler Prowler), more speed (Honda S2000), or more finely tuned handling (Toyota MR2 Spyder), but the Miata is the best all-around package. On street or track, these improvements make the Miata one of our very favorite cars to drive – and one of the easiest, too, for the controls are all so intuitive and the chassis so nicely balanced.”
- “As Mazda has proved time and again with its Miata, what’s most important about a sports car is not how quickly it can accelerate. Rather, it’s how it makes its driver feel behind the wheel. And on a secluded mountain road, the 2001 Miata makes you feel as if you’re part of the environment. In the words of Robert M. Pirsig, author of the cult classic, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, the new Miata makes you feel “completely in contact with it all. You’re in the scene, not just watching it anymore, and the sense of presence is overwhelming. That concrete whizzing by five inches below your foot is the real thing, the same stuff you walk on, its right there...and the whole thing, the whole experience, is never removed from immediate consciousness.”” – Road & Track’s Sports & GT Cars 2001
- Motor Trend magazine compares a base-model Miata against the base model MR2 Spyder in its February 2001 issue and narrowly chooses the Miata stating that the Miata is more fun to drive and a better value.
- “The Rolling Stones are to rock & roll as the Miata is to the twisties. The MG arguably defined it, but the Miata certainly understands a thing or two about sports car run. First, the top must be retractable, that’s a given. Second, there should only be room for two –no sharing this experience with a mob. And third, the car should be light and peppy and eminently tossable. The Miata fulfills these three criteria and it sets the standard. Its rear-drive layout makes balancing the car through winding mountain roads a snap with a flick of the throttle. You’ll feel every nuance of the road, through the wheel, the shifter and the seat, without tiring of any of it. Driver, machine, road-it’s a zen thing.” - December 11–17 issue of AutoWeek
- On 7.2.01, WWW.MSN.COM names its top 22 convertibles for the 2001 model year. The Miata is included. The Toyota MR2 Spyder is not.

- The May issue of Automobile magazine contains an article called "High Five-Just what makes a great sports car?" They examine five great sports cars, including the Miata, MG TC Midget, Jaguar XK120, Porsche 911, and Chevy Corvette. They say: "One of this magazine's perpetual favorites, the Miata echoes the [MG]TC by proving that a real sport car can be enormous fun without having scalp-lifting quantities of power and torque. The 1.8 liter, sixteen-valve in-line four sings and zings to 7000 rpm as you flick the stubby shifter up and down the gearbox, but what makes the Miata so enjoyable is the sharp and predictable way it responds to every input from accelerator, gearbox, steering, and brakes. While some cars give an impression of what it must be like to wear armor and wield a medieval battle-ax, the Miata makes its driver feel like a twinkle-toed fencer armed with a light, beautifully balanced rapier. Compact, responsive, agile, and trustworthy, this automotive jewel is at its best when flowing with ever-increasing confidence through a sequence of teasing, testing corners whose complexities would make most cars feel clumsy... What these landmark sports cars have in common is a rear and precious ability to stimulate and delight three of the senses. They look great, albeit in very different ways; they sound wonderful, from the MG's cheerful chuckle through the Porsche's wailing rasp to the XK120's bellicose bellow; and, most important, they appeal to the sense of touch by communicating so intimately with the driver, feeling more like living creatures than machines made of metal, plastic, rubber, and glass."
- Sport Compact Car Magazine names the Miata one of its 8 Great Rides for the year 2001. "What hasn't been said about the Miata before? Anyone who hasn't been frozen in a slab of polar ice for the last decade knows the little Mazda is the one of the finest sports cars ever to roll upon the Earth. Blessed with low mass, superb chassis balance and looks that can bring a smile to the face of even the most staunch automotive critics, the Miata has lived up to its reputation without missing a beat. And don't accuse Mazda of lazily resting on its laurels, for each successive production year has brought a number of improvements. And the 2001 model is no exception. With a number of new, strategically placed braces sprinkled around its underbody, the Miata offers a virtually flex-free ride."
- The Automobile Magazine 2001 Reader's Choice Awards Editor's All-Star for Best Sports Car under \$40,000 is the Miata.
- The July 2001 issue of Road & Track features a cover story titled "The Best Convertibles: Our 5 Choices for Excitement, Entertainment & Value". The Miata LS was included in their list, beating-out its price competitor the Toyota MR2 Spyder. The R&T list was ranked by price range:
 1. Mazda Miata LS
 2. Chevrolet Corvette Convertible
 3. BMW M3 Convertible
 4. Porsche 911 Carrera Cabriolet
 5. Ferrari 360 Spider
- Mazda reorganizes the Miata Club of America into the Miata Owners Club.
- Edmunds.Com reviews the 2001 SE saying: "Still the most fun you can have while driving with your pants on," and states it has "Astounding handling".
- "The Mazda Miata has virtually dominated small-bore SCCA showroom Stock road racing and autocross..." - Grassroots Motorsports October 2001

STANDARD FEATURES

- Power-assisted 4-wheel disk brakes
- Air conditioning
- Fog lights
- Windblocker
- Floor mats
- Dual air bag Supplemental Restraint System (SRS)* with passenger-side deactivation switch
- Black convertible top with glass window
- Black cloth reclining bucket seats
- AM/FM/CD stereo with 2 speakers and digital clock
- 2-speed windshield wipers with intermittent setting
- Glass rear window with electric defogger
- Dual body-color mirrors
- Door map pockets
-
- Sun visors with passenger's vanity mirror
- Tachometer, engine coolant temperature gauge, oil-pressure gauge
- Speedometer with LCD odometer and trip odometer
- Lockable center console with storage compartment and dual cup holders
- Lockable glove compartment
- Remote trunk and fuel-door releases
- Heater/defroster with rotary controls and 4-speed blower
- Power-assisted steering
- 15-inch alloy wheels
- Power windows with driver side auto down feature
- Chrome meter rings
- White gauges
- Power mirrors
- NARDI 3-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheel

OPTION PACKAGES

- Miata LS: tan interior with leather seating surfaces and tan convertible top, 16-inch alloy wheels with P205/45VR16 radials, larger brakes, shock tower brace, Torsen limited slip differential, cruise control, power door locks featuring new dual stage unlock switch with remote keyless entry, chrome inner door handles and BOSE audio system
- Suspension Package Base: (requires manual transmission) Bilstein® shock absorbers; front shock tower brace, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars; larger brakes, Torsen® limited-slip differential (Std. on Miata LS); 16-inch alloy wheels with wheel locks and P205/45VR16 V-rated Michelin tires (Std. on Miata LS)
- Suspension Package LS: sports suspension with Bilstein® shock absorbers, front shock tower brace, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars
- Convenience Package: door mounted tweeters, power door locks featuring new dual stage unlock switch and keyless entry system and cruise control (not available with the LS or Suspension Package)
- YS Limited: Blackout headlamps (bezel portion of the headlights are black-coated), Black and titanium two-tone color scheme for Leather-wrapped Nardi steering wheel, Leather-wrapped shift knob, Titanium-colored center panel and door trim, Titanium stitching on seat upholstery, Stainless steel scuff plates, Keyless entry system and Power locks. Outer panel colors are Black mica (model-unique color), pure white and sunlight silver metallic. Engine: 1.6 L DOHC with 5-speed manual or optional 4-speed automatic (Japan only)
- Special Edition: Only 3000 units of the Special Edition were produced. British Racing Green makes an encore appearance and features include: SE badging, SE mats, new cloth-like tan vinyl top, tan leather seats, chrome inner handles, chromed aluminum fuel door, new remote w/2-stage unlock, 6-speed, 16" buffed alloys, Nardi wood steering wheel and shift knob, wood brake handle w/chrome button and tan cover, tan shift lever boot, tan brake cover, simulated wood center panel, power windows w/driver one-touch, strut tower brace, stainless scuff plates, and power door locks w/switch. Estimated MSRP, \$26,760
- Mazdaspeed Limited Edition: full Mazda body kit, gold tinted wheels, special header, muffler and LSD, Bilstien shocks, shock tower brace, (Japan only)

OPTIONAL FEATURES

- 6 speed manual transmission (Miata LS only)
- ABS brakes (Miata LS only)
- Detachable hardtop - Available as an option on all models.
- Torsen limited slip differential (standard on LS and Suspension Package models)
- Cassette Player - Available as an option on all models.
- 4-speed Automatic Transmission - Available as an option on all models except those equipped with the Sports Package.
- Wooden shift knob
- Wooden brake handle
- Wooden center dash cover
- Front Air Dam
- Side sills
- Rear Lip Spoiler
- Front and Rear Mudguards
- Front mask
- CD Changer
- Style Bar
- Chrome fuel door
- Door Sill scuff plate
- Car cover
- Tonneau cover
- Trunk mounted luggage rack

COLORS:

- Classic Red
- Pure White
- Emerald Mica
- Midnight Blue Mica – dark blue/purple
- Brilliant black
- Crystal Blue Metallic – sky blue/teal
- Sunlight Silver Metallic – bright silver

2002

- Mazda makes two special colors (Vivid Yellow and Laser Blue Mica) available only to Miata Owners Club members as the 2002s go on sale.
- Automobile Magazine declares the Miata the best sports car under \$40K in its annual All-Stars issue saying "Few automobiles remain as perfect after a dozen years and only two generations, and few have so closely to their original design and engineering briefs... No competitor has equaled the Miata's pureness of spirit, at least not at this price... The Miata is still the best formula for a roadster that puts driving pleasure before all else, with reliability, practicality, and beauty in the bargain."

STANDARD FEATURES

- Power-assisted 4-wheel disk brakes
- Air conditioning
- Fog lights
- Windblocker
- Floor mats
- Dual air bag Supplemental Restraint System (SRS)* with passenger-side deactivation switch
- Black convertible top with glass window
- Black cloth reclining bucket seats
- AM/FM/CD stereo with 2 speakers and digital clock
- 2-speed windshield wipers with intermittent setting
- Glass rear window with electric defogger
- Dual body-color mirrors
- Door map pockets
- Sun visors with passenger's vanity mirror
- Tachometer, engine coolant temperature gauge, oil-pressure gauge
- Speedometer with LCD odometer and trip odometer
- Lockable center console with storage compartment and dual cup holders
- Lockable glove compartment
- Switch in trunk to turn on license plate lamps
- Remote trunk and fuel-door releases
- Heater/defroster with rotary controls and 4-speed blower
- Power-assisted steering
- 15-inch alloy wheels
- Power windows with driver side auto down feature
- Chrome meter rings
- White gauges
- Power mirrors
- NARDI 3-spoke leather-wrapped steering wheel

OPTION PACKAGES

- Miata LS: tan interior with leather seating surfaces and tan convertible top, 16-inch alloy wheels with P205/45VR16 radials, larger brakes, shock tower brace, Torsen limited slip differential, cruise control, power door locks featuring new dual stage unlock switch with remote keyless entry, chrome inner door handles and BOSE audio system
- Suspension Package Base: (requires manual transmission) Bilstein® shock absorbers; front shock tower brace, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars; larger brakes, Torsen® limited-slip differential (Std. on Miata LS); 16-inch alloy wheels with wheel locks and P205/45VR16 V-rated Michelin tires (Std. on Miata LS)
- Suspension Package LS: sports suspension with Bilstein® shock absorbers, front shock tower brace, recalibrated rear springs and sway bars
- Convenience Package: door mounted tweeters, power door locks featuring new dual stage unlock switch and keyless entry system and cruise control (not available with the LS or Suspension Package)

- Special Edition (Canada only): unique exterior colour - Blazing Yellow with black leather interior Canadian production is limited to 250 units. Features include 1.8L DOHC (142 Hp and 125 lb.ft), 6 speed Manual Transmission, Front Strut Tower Bar, Torsen Limited slip differential, ABS, Immobilizer, Keyless remote with two transmitters, panic mode, two-stage unlock, horn and lights feedback and trunk release, 16" Unique design Alloy Wheels, 205/45R16 83W summer tires, Black manual soft-folding convertible top, Black leather seats with silver stitching and Miata logo, Nardi leather 3 spoke black leather wrapped steering wheel with silver stitching, Black leather gear shift knob with silver stitching, Black shift lever boot with silver stitching, Black leather wrapped parking brake with silver stitching and aluminum button, Aluminum shift plate bezel, foot pedals and foot rest, Aluminum meter rings and center panel, Aluminum inner door handles and four air vent bezels, Air Conditioning, Black Floor mats, BOSE audio AM/FM radio and CD changer with 2 speakers and 2 tweeters
- Special Edition (US Versions): Both come equipped with a host of features that make these the "raciest" SE models to date. For starters, both Miata SE s wear exhilarating paint jobs: one is Titanium Gray Metallic, the other Blazing Yellow Mica. The Titanium Gray SE model comes with a deep saddle brown leather faced interior and door panels and the Blazing Yellow SE has, for the first time in the Miata s 13-year history, a black leather interior. The seats on the black leather SE even carry the Miata logo embroidered into the seat back. Other features of both 2002 Miata SE models are a standard in-dash 6-CD changer with 200-watt Bose ® AM/FM/CD audio system with speed-sensing audio volume control, a slick-shifting six-speed manual transmission, chrome fuel filler door, custom 16-inch Enkei alloy wheels and Mazda s exclusive Special Edition badging. Also included are two-tone, three-spoke NARDI ® steering wheel, a NARDI ® leather shift knob and handbrake lever, white gauge faces, aluminum accent rings on the gauges, aluminum door handles, aluminum foot pedals and foot rest as well as aluminum scuff plates. Also part of the SE equipment on both models is Torsen ® limited-slip differential, fog lights, a body appearance package and ABS brakes are available as options.

OPTIONAL FEATURES

- 6 speed manual transmission (Miata LS only)
- ABS brakes (Miata LS only)
- Detachable hardtop - Available as an option on all models.
- Torsen limited slip differential (standard on LS and Suspension Package models)
- Cassette Player - Available as an option on all models.
- 4-speed Automatic Transmission - Available as an option on all models except those equipped with the Sports Package.
- Wooden shift knob
- Wooden brake handle
- Wooden center dash cover
- Front Air Dam
- Side sills
- Rear Lip Spoiler
- Front and Rear Mudguards
- Front mask
- CD Changer
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COLORS:

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- Sunlight Silver Metallic – bright silver
- Vivid Yellow
- Laser Blue Mica