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BMW 3-Series and Z4 (99-05) Includes 2006 325ci/330ci Coupe and Convertible models Haynes Online Manual.

24 Airbag system - general information and precautions

The models covered by this manual are equipped with a total of six airbags and two extra as an option on Sport Wagons and Sedans. There is a driver's airbag mounted in the center of the steering wheel, a passenger's airbag located behind the dash, two head protection airbags located in each A-pillar (headliners), two side impact airbags located in each front door trim panel and, on some Sport Wagons and Sedans models, behind each rear door trim. The airbag system consists of the airbag unit(s) (complete with gas generators), impact sensors, the control unit and a warning light in the instrument panel.

The airbag system is triggered in the event of a heavy frontal or side impact above a predetermined force; depending on the point of impact. The airbag(s) is inflated within milliseconds and forms a safety cushion between the cabin occupants and the cabin interior, and therefore greatly reduces the risk of injury. The airbag then deflates almost immediately.

Every time the ignition is switched on, the airbag control unit performs a self-test. The self-test takes approximately 2 to 6 seconds and during this time the airbag warning light on the dash is illuminated. After the self-test has been completed the warning light should go out. If the warning light fails to come on, remains illuminated after the initial period, or comes on at any time when the vehicle is being driven, there is a fault in the airbag system. The vehicle should be taken to a BMW dealer for examination at the earliest possible opportunity.

- Note that the airbag(s) must not be subjected to temperatures in excess of 194°F (90°C). When the airbag is removed, ensure that it is stored the correct way up to prevent possible inflation (padded surface uppermost).
- Do not allow any solvents or cleaning agents to contact the airbag assemblies. They must be cleaned using only a damp cloth.
- The airbags and control unit are both sensitive to impact. If either is dropped or damaged they should be replaced.
- Disconnect the airbag control unit wiring connector prior to using arc-welding equipment on the vehicle.

