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First Drive: 2005 Ford Mustang GT Convertible

Drop the top. Let's ride

From the March, 2005 issue of Motor Trend

"Oh. My. God. That is soooooo cool!" She was hanging half out the window of her [Tahoe](#). Smile beaming, hair whipping in the wind. I thought she was going to jump in for a ride--which would've been fine. Such is life when you're piloting a brilliant-red [Mustang](#) drop-top. Soon, you'll be able to get The New Mustang in convertible form.

Powertrains, equipment levels, and critical dimensions are shared with the [2005 Mustang](#) coupe. [Ford](#) engineers further stiffened the coupe's chassis to make up for the rigidity lost in an open-topped configuration. The result is a foundation with twice the torsional stiffness of the outgoing 1999-[2004 Mustang](#) convertible's--much needed, as that car would shake itself silly over a nasty railroad crossing. Bending rigidity is up 25 percent, too. The suspension is recalibrated for a slightly softer ride, given the convertible's more cruise-oriented mission in life.

The fully lined top is covered in a rich yet durable-looking synthetic cloth and is of a Z-fold design, which allows it to fit in a smaller space than that of conventional convertible tops. The rear window is heated glass. Ford paid particular attention to managing wind noise and water sealing; the windows drop about a quarter inch when the door is open, then the glass slides up next to the seal when closed. To lower the top, release a lever at the top of each A-pillar, and hit the button. It takes about 13 seconds with the windows down. Overall weight increases by about 120 pounds over a comparably equipped coupe.

First impressions indicate a job well done. Wind noise and buffeting levels--even at 70 mph--allow normal conversation and better-than-average hairdo retention. Chassis-stiffening measures, which include several structural members to fight shake, are effective; only the nastiest bumps and road acne will make it wiggle, and then only a little. Defining any performance differences will have to wait until we get the convertible to the track, but the added weight and softer suspension take a smidgeon of edge off the driving experience. [Ford](#) should consider making the GT coupe's calibrations optional for those who value performance over ride quality, but most customers will feel this state of tune is fine.

Since 1964, Ford has built and sold more than one million [Mustang](#) convertibles. No reason to stop now.



2005 Ford Mustang GT Convertible	
Base price (est)	\$31,000
Vehicle layout	Front engine, RWD, 2-door, 5-pass convertible
Engine type	90* V-8, aluminum block/heads, SOHC, 3 valves/cyl
Displacement, ci/cc	280.8 / 4601
Max horsepower SAE net	300 @ 5750 rpm
Max torque SAE net, lb-ft	320 @ 4500 rpm
Transmissions	5-speed manual; 5-speed automatic
Curb weight, lb (est)	3650
0-60 mph, sec (est)	5.8
EPA mpg, city/hwy	16/24
On sale in U.S.	Spring 2005

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