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## No longer necessary

Right after World War II BMW in Munich dealt with the question of how and with which vehicle they should start into the post-war era. Under consideration were the contrary concepts of a luxury sedan and a car for the mass of the population. The management held the opinion that BMW should search for customers in the upper price segment. Nevertheless there was still a uncertainty about whether this consideration would be a good business.

Due to this reason the development department of BMW got instructed also to develop a small car beside the upper price range car in the beginning of 1949. From the beginning on the project got the designation "531" and was intended as an alternative for a motorbike with sidecar. The two cylinder boxer engine, modified to 600 cc, was borrowed from the motorbike production. To avoid overheating the air-cooled four-cycle engine was fitted with an additional air-blower cooling. Internally, the project was

not a priority, the development of the upper type 501 took precedence. And that is how it came that the first roadworthy prototype was finished only at the beginning of 1951. This prototype was meanwhile the fourth revision of the concept. The engine was positioned in front of the front axle and drove the rear axle. Initially it was planned to position the engine in the rear of the car. Due to this change of the engine concept it was possible to enlarge the interior of the small car. It was now possible to install two additional jump seats in the back of the car. This should enlarge the target group to small families.

But all this remained a matter of theory because the type 531 never progressed beyond the stage of a prototype. The small car could not win the favor of the management at all and was also no longer necessary since the type 501 turned out to be a success.

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