



Volkswagen Golf Variant (2007 - 2013) Themely Estate

Car review | About three years ago, Volkswagen introduced the fifth generation Golf. Over the course of time, the sporty Golf GTi, the roomy Golf Plus and the Cross Golf appeared. Now, Volkswagen has added the Golf Estate to the collection. What does this newest variation on the Golf theme have to offer?

It seems so simple: stick an extra little bit on the back of the car and bingo, you've got yourself an estate. However the Golf Estate had to be not just a little roomier than the normal Golf; it had to be a lot roomier. Consequently the car has been lengthened, the undercarriage has been adapted to carry heavy loads and the access to the luggage space has been widened. Under the skin, the Golf Estate actually has a greater resemblance to Jetta Estate. However since the Golf is a more popular car, this label has been slapped on.

More room

The increase in length (+14 inches) is first visible in the extra legroom in the back seat. Now, even adults can sit comfortably.

The boot is generous (+18 ft³), with a flexible compartmentalization system. Under the loading floor there are two additional compartments ideal for smaller items which have to keep out of the way of harm's way. It is also possible to place partitions in order to divide the boot into compartments. Thus,

fragile objects can be divided safely from larger items. Volkswagen provides toggles, nets, guy ropes and other fine things to ensure that all the baggage is safely tied down.



The rear seat can be folded down in two unequal parts to increase the luggage space by up to 55 ft³, which is of exceptional significance in this class segment. Volkswagen's ingenuity leaves much to be desired. The process to fold up the back seat is time-consuming

(detach headrests, push the front seats forward, fold up seats, lay the backs of the chairs flat). Many a competitor has devised a more ingenious system. Moreover the loading floor is littered not only with three headrests but also a back shelf.

The work is recompensed, since the loading floor is perfectly flat, without any lifting sills. Moreover thanks to the large lid of the boot it is remarkably accessible.



A Golf is a Golf

Behind the steering wheel the Golf Estate feels just like an ordinary Golf. The interior is austere and sober, but extremely respectable. The space in front is good, with sufficient room for taller drivers even though the seats of the front chairs are a little short. An optional glass sun roof gives an increased sense of room and freedom.



As it should be in a practical car, a lot of attention has been paid to the interior storage space. Every empty corner or space been filled with some compartment, container or holder.

The test car is a basic model and that is immediately evident. In comparison with the previous generation, the new Golf Estate is more abundantly equipped. However in comparison with its competitors, Volkswagen is extremely frugal. Six airbags, remote central locking, air conditioning, electric fore and rear windows, ABS and roof rails are standard. An electronic stabilisation programme, parking aids, and a radio are extras on most models.



From TDI to TSI

The Golf Estate is available with a wide range of engines. At one end of the spectrum, there is the very economical 1.9 litre diesel. This is of course the turbo diesel engine that Volkswagen has been producing for years and years.

The 105 hp strong power source is after a cold start noisy and restless, but after a couple of minutes this basic engine appears to be more than able to perform. In the city, this diesel engine is so strong that if desired it can be driven more economically. On the motorway, full power is available; and even on the German Autobahn, this simple diesel keeps pace surprisingly well. A sixth gear is lacking, however once warm the engine runs so gently that this is not a problem.



The finest petrol engine, with which the Golf Estate can be delivered, is without a doubt the 1.4 litre TSI engine. Thanks to the use of a turbo and as well as a compressor, this power source performs as if it were much larger. The consumption is however that of a modest 1.4 litre engine. Particularly the 170 hp strong model makes this Golf into a super-fast estate car.

Due to the necessary adjustments to the undercarriage, the road handling is good. Although the Golf Estate is longer than an ordinary Golf, it still has the same wheel base. This in turn means that its maneuverability has also been maintained. The performance is safe and predictable. The real driving pleasure is to be found in the Sport Wagon model, with its sport undercarriage which has been lowered by 15mm. Irrespective of the engines, the Estate drives, brakes, steers and changes gear just like any other Golf; the Estate is a variation on a trusted theme.



Conclusion

At last, after a long wait, the Golf V is also available as an estate. The car is significant larger than an

ordinary Golf. The extra length translates into leg room in the back of the car, which is always desirable in a family car.

As a business estate car, the Golf is also a success. The boot is considerable and on top of which, the available space can be divide up in a very flexible manner. Unfortunately the folding up of the back seat to create more room is a time-consuming process.

The car's performance under all circumstances is extremely good. Depending on the engine the Golf Estate is an economical business car (1.9 TDi) or on the contrary a super-fast leisure car (1.4 TSI). The name doesn't say much but the Golf Estate is the most multi-faceted Golf. ■



Specifications

Volkswagen Golf Variant (2007 - 2013) SE TDI 1.9

Size and weight



Length x width x height	456 x 178 x 147 cm
Wheelbase	258 cm
Kerb weight	1.336 kg
Trailer	730 kg
Trailer - braked	1.400 kg
Fuel capacity	55 l
Luggage space	505/1495 l
Tyre size	205/55R16

Engine and performance



Capacity	1896 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/2
Max power	105 PS @ 4000 rpm
Max torque	250 Nm @ 1900 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	12.2 secs
Top speed	187 km/h
Average mileage	5.2 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	6.6 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	4.5 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	137 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 16,592
Price base model	Â£ 14,347