



Volkswagen Passat

The new standard

Review | This is the new Volkswagen Passat. And that isn't as obvious as it seems. The previous generation was based on the model before that. That's why many wondered how "new" that car really was. The eighth generation presented here has been developed from scratch. That's because the Passat is meant to set the standard in its class. Will Volkswagen succeed?

It's not really difficult to turn the Volkswagen Passat into the standard in its class. It has been ever since the beginning of automotive history. The Passat owes that title mostly to its reputation, but of course every new generation has to prove itself once again.

A glance at the new bodywork is enough to realise that the Passat has made a big leap forward. The car is slender, elegant and yet generously proportioned. In fact, the new Passat is a tad smaller than the old one. The overhang in the front and back has decreased, while the wheelbase has increased. This in turn has increased the cabin space. And thanks to smart packaging, even more cabin space has been created.



Space

The result is obvious: the cabin is impressively spacious! The room in the front is overwhelming and the seats can be adjusted in so many ways that drivers of any posture can sit comfortably. It may not be noticeable during a short test drive at the dealership, but even after a full day's driving the seats are still very pleasant.

The room in the back is not short of spectacular. Some limousines offer less legroom in the back. The boot is

huge as well, measuring 586 litres. What's more, the boot lid opens and closes automatically, even on the saloon.



To add to the feeling of spaciousness the dashboard isn't wrapped around the driver and passenger. Instead the dash is straight and flat. An enormous air vent extends from the far left to right of the dashboard to accentuate the width of the cabin.

Trim levels

The atmosphere in the cabin is clean and simple. In 2014, luxury is something for the occupants and not for the outside world. The number of knobs and buttons is limited, yet the car can be fitted (optionally) with all luxury and safety features Volkswagen has to offer.

Noteworthy features are the three-zone climate control (left, right and rear) and the DynAudio sound system.



The sat nav now includes online functions including live traffic reports. Every new Passat communicates its speed and location to Volkswagen HQ, where congestion data is used to optimise routes. Another function of this "Car Net" is to supply up-to-date fuel prices so that every Passat driver can find the cheapest fuel station nearby.

On top of that "Mirror Link" is available on the Passat. Mirror Link mirrors the output of an Android smartphone on the display of the car. In that way the phone turns into the brain, while the car only displays the information. This is a clever solution for cheap runabouts, but it feels rather misplaced on the Passat.



Handling

Volkswagen states that the new Passat has a stronger personality than before and therefore suggests a test route with many hairpins and twisty mountain roads. However, it clearly becomes apparent that this isn't the Passat's strong point. Yes, handling is excellent but

this isn't a sporty or exciting car at all. What is impressive though, is that the Passat performs with so much ease.



It doesn't matter what the cornering speed is, the Passat simply doesn't falter. Even when driving over bad road surfaces the Passat is stable and quiet as if driving over brand new tarmac. This makes the driver feel superior to other cars, but it is also a risk. Because the Passat tries to create a distance between the driver and its mechanics, it isn't clear where the limits actually are. When the driver finally does exceed the limit it comes as a big surprise.

Diesel

As usual, the Passat is available with a 2.0 TDI engine. This old war horse has been refined once again and now delivers even better performance at even lower costs. The engine makes an effort to be unnoticeable. It does its job quietly and unnoticeably. As long as the engine speed is kept above 1,200 rpm the diesel engine always packs enough of a punch.



Even on a highly demanding route and without even trying to drive eco friendly, the Passat 2.0 TDI consumed just 4.9 litres per 100 km (factory figure: 4.1 litres per 100 km).

BiTurbo

Next to the "good old" 2.0 TDI a brand new "2.0 BiTDI" is available. As the name implies, it is equipped with two turbos that work sequentially. A small turbo assists at low engine speeds, because at that moment not enough exhaust gasses are available to drive the bigger turbo. When the engine speed increases, the big turbo takes over. In this way "turbo lag" (a sudden explosion or lack of power) is avoided and it makes the engine more powerful overall.



The BiTurbo develops 240 PS and a torque of no less than 500 Nm. To prevent the Passat BiTDI from ripping tarmac apart (0 to 62 mph takes 6.1 seconds) the car is fitted with four-wheel drive as standard. A dual clutch automatic transmission also comes as standard.

From the outset there is no doubt that this is the strongest diesel available on the Passat. The reaction on the throttle is simply fierce and the slightest movement of the right foot is enough for instant acceleration. On top of that, the BiTDI performs with much more ease than the basic diesel engine, which adds to a feeling of superiority that was unknown to the Passat up to now.



However, with the Passat it isn't about more power or impressing others. The BiTurbo makes the car more comfortable as well. When going slowly the BiTurbo is just as impressive! And when driving calmly this

powerhouse is surprisingly frugal. Even on a highly demanding route the test car used 5.9 litres per 100 km (factory figure: 5.3 litres per 100 km). That's just one litre more than the TDI for 100 extra horsepower.

Conclusion

Does the eighth generation of the Volkswagen Passat set the standard once again? Yes, without a doubt. That's because the Passat perfectly adapts to the modern times. For example, the new Passat exudes self-confidence while being understated at the same time. The Passat is fast and luxurious, yet looks elegant and modest; exactly the way it should be in 2014.

From a technical point of view the Passat isn't innovative or revolutionary. Instead, the Passat makes state-of-the-art technology available to a larger audience, while at the same time making the car more refined than ever before. The Passat also brings premium styling and build quality to the masses. And that's exactly how a new standard is set.



Specifications

Volkswagen Passat 2.0 BiTDI GT 4Motion DSG

Size and weight



Length x width x height	477 x 183 x 146 cm
Wheelbase	279 cm
weight	1.621 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	2.200 kg
Fuel capacity	66 l
Luggage space	586/1152 l
Tyre size	215/55R17

Engine and performance



Capacity	1968 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	240 PS @ 4000 rpm
Max torque	500 Nm @ 1750 rpm
Drive	Four wheel drive
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	6.1 secs
topspeed	240 km/h
Average mileage	5.3 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	6.4 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	4.6 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	139 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 33,755
Price base model	Â£ 22,715