



## Volkswagen Polo

### Modern yet familiar

Review | Choosing Volkswagen is choosing familiarity, traditional values and functionality. At the same time, even Volkswagen has to keep up with the times. This is even more of a dilemma with a compact car, because despite demand for new technology it has to remain economic and easy to use. Does the sixth generation of the Volkswagen Polo manage to combine trusted values with new technology?

There's more than just keeping up with technology. The 2017 Polo also has to offer a better drive and more functionality. That's why the new Polo is longer and wider than before. As a result the all-new Polo offers more cabin space. At the same time the body is now lower, which means the centre of gravity is lower and that benefits handling.

Despite the growth spurt, the Polo is still a compact and agile car; as it should be in this segment. Also: despite the lower cabin height, head space is still excellent. However, the biggest improvement is in the rear: the space on the back seat is far above average for a car of this size. The Polo offers enough room for four adults and that's an exception rather than a rule with a car like this. The room on the back seat didn't go at the expense of the boot, it grew as well.

"The Polo feels agile, like it weighs hundreds of kilos less than advertised in the brochure"



To make the Polo more fun, it is now available in more colours (14) and themes for the cabin. The test car is executed in "Energetic Orange" with a traditional grey and black interior. Those who'd like to, can even opt for lively patterns and colours on the inside of the car as well.

## Safety

The real progress can be found in the electronics. The new Polo can now be fitted with just about all the luxury and safety features Volkswagen offers in its bigger models. Except for two differences: what comes as standard with the big models, is optional on the Polo. Also, the bigger Volkswagens can steer themselves or at least interfere with steering to avoid an accident, while the Polo is limited to just warning the driver (from a technical point of view all hardware for self steering is present in the Polo, but Volkswagen simply didn't activate the required software).



However, the Polo can autonomously brake for danger; this goes both for other vehicles and pedestrians in front of the car. When reversing out of a parking spot, the Polo will warn for crossing traffic. A camera reads traffic signs and shows the last speed limit it has registered next to the speedometer. A warning light in the wing mirror informs the driver about objects in the dead spot of that same mirror.

The big advantage of all of these systems: they don't have any buttons and don't require any action from the driver to activate them, and that's how the typical Polo driver likes it. A system that explicitly has to be activated is the adaptive cruise-control. Thanks to a radar sensor the Polo can now automatically maintain a safe distance to the car in front, even if it changes its speed.



## Luxury

Next to safety, luxury has not been forgotten. Most prominent are the dials behind the steering wheel which can now be replaced by a gorgeous looking display ("Active Info Display"). Besides looking cool, it allows the driver to choose which information is shown and how it is shown. A beautiful example of this is the combination of map from the satnav with the speedometer and rev counter projected over it.

Contrary to the many safety systems, this is a function that is only worth the extra money if the driver actively uses it.



Also new for the Polo is a high-end audio system. It has been developed together with "B&O" and has a powerful, full sound that doesn't sound artificial. It is important to notice that the sound quality strongly depends on the quality of the source material. A poorly encoded mp3 file will sound poor, while a high quality FLAC file sounds just brilliantly.

## Handling

Thanks to a bigger track width and a lower centre of gravity the Polo handles differently from the previous generation and most rivals. The Polo feels agile, like it weighs hundreds of kilos less than advertised in the brochure. This is noticeable in two ways. When the throttle is released, the Polo keeps "sailing" as if it is weightless.



Also, steering is light yet not lacking in feeling. This makes driving relaxing and pleasant, while at the same time being in total control. The chassis feels stable and balanced, which means the car gives confidence and satisfaction when speeding up. Also important: visibility all around is excellent and that also adds to the confident feeling.

## Petrol

The Polo will be available with a wide range of engines, but for this first drive only three were available. And all three have been tried! To start with the 115 PS / 200 Nm strong 1.0 litre three cylinder. From a low engine speed it is very torque strong, which makes driving easy. When the pedal is pushed to the metal, performance is good and the typical three-cylinder noise is audible (not disturbing, but different from the usual four cylinder).



Because the 115 PS strong "1.0 TSI" performs with so much ease, it is also easy to drive economically. A test drive with 50% city traffic and 50% motorway cost just 5 litres per 100 km (56 mpg).

The same 1.0 TSI engine is also available with 90 PS / 175 Nm. When driving calmly, no difference with the stronger engine can be noticed except for the fact that the 90 PS version is a bit quieter and a bit more refined. That's why the 115 PS version is hardly worth the extra money.

What is a useful investment, is the DSG automatic gearbox. The gearbox ratios perfectly match the characteristics of the engine and thereby lift the entire car to a higher level. Also, the automatic has seven gears, which makes the Polo much quieter at high speeds.



## Diesel

Finally, the 1.6 litres diesel was tried. Despite the modern 1.0 TSI engines, this is a traditional "TDI" like Volkswagen has been building them for decades. However, in the Polo is has an unusual and restless disposition. After shifting gears it always releases so much power, that it's hard to drive smoothly. Despite this, it is easy to drive economically; on the open road 3.0 litres per 100 km (94 mpg) is realistic.

All Polo's have exceptionally "bite happy" brakes. The diesel was even more fierce, making it even harder to drive smoothly. With the other versions the powerful brakes were not a con but rather a pro because they improve the overall feeling of safety.



## Conclusion

Does the sixth generation of the Polo manage to combine the traditional values of the car with modern technology? Yes, Volkswagen succeeded in every way. In the first place because Volkswagen opts for features that make the car safer or more comfortable, not for gadgets.

At the same time the 2017 Polo leaps ahead when it comes to cabin space and handling. The space in the rear is particularly remarkable for a compact car. Thanks to improved dynamics, the Polo isn't merely safer but also more fun to drive. The engines grew smaller and more efficient; the combination of the 1.0 TSI (90 PS) with the DSG gearbox comes highly recommended. ■



# Specifications

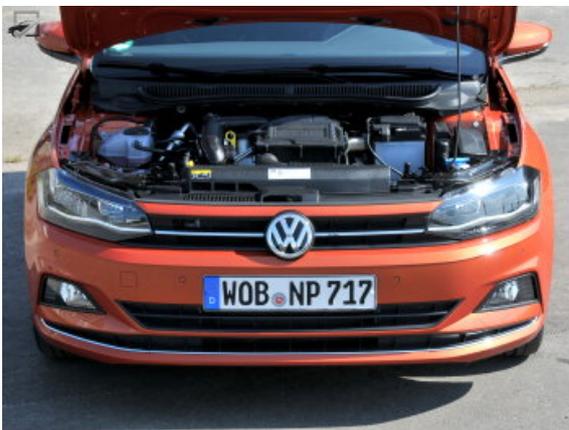
## Volkswagen Polo

### Size and weight



|                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Length x width x height | 405 x 175 x 146 cm |
| Wheelbase               | 255 cm             |
| Kerb weight             | 1.080 kg           |
| Trailer                 | 590 kg             |
| Trailer - braked        | 1.000 kg           |
| Fuel capacity           | 40 l               |
| Luggage space           | 355/1125 l         |
| Tyre size               | 185/65R15          |

### Engine and performance



|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Capacity                | 999 cc            |
| Cylinders / valves      | 3/4               |
| Max power               | 95 PS @ 5000 rpm  |
| Max torque              | 175 Nm @ 2000 rpm |
| Drive                   | front wheels      |
| Acceleration 0 - 62 mph | 10.8 secs         |
| Top speed               | 187 km/h          |
| Average mileage         | 4.6 l / 100 km    |
| Mileage urban           | 5.7 l / 100 km    |
| Mileage extra urban     | 4 l / 100 km      |
| CO2 emissions           | 105 gr / km       |

### Price

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| Price            | Â£ 17,280 |
| Price base model | Â£ 13,855 |