



## Volkswagen Up! GTI

### Not really fast, still real fun

review | In 2016, the Volkswagen Up! was revamped. The Up! got a "1.0 TSI" engine and became so lively that many were already talking about the "Up! GTI". Volkswagen's engineers, however, wanted none of that. They responded to such utterances with a meaningless reply and a mysterious smile. Now it is clear why: there was more to come and now Volkswagen is presenting the Up! GTI.

The arrival of the Volkswagen Up! GTI is only logical. The basic idea behind a GTI is: put a big engine in a small car for extra fun. And if there is one model at Volkswagen that is already small, agile and lively by nature, it is the Up!

### The adjustments

So it didn't take much to turn a standard Up! into an Up! GTI. And that is good news: because the Up! is an economical model and it should stay that way, even if it says GTI on it. The modifications start with a bigger turbo and a different engine management on the existing "1.0 TSI" engine. With this, the power increases from 90 hp / 160 Nm to 115 hp / 200 Nm.



To add cachet to the press presentation, the test drives took place in and around Monaco. When the test car takes off there, the test driver almost immediately looks in the mirrors. Nearby, a very exotic sports car must be driving, because there is an imposing sound. If that sports car cannot be located, there must at least be a heavy motorbike close to the test car.

None of that. The sound appears to come from the test car! Because sound contributes to the feeling of speed, under the windscreen of the Up! GTI, a "vibrating fork" (not a speaker!) has been placed under the windscreen, amplifying the engine sound in the interior. This literally and figuratively sets the tone: the Up! is all about feeling. The Up! GTI doesn't have to be actually fast, as long as the car feels fast; and in this it succeeds with flying colours.



This is why the engine is especially eager, so that

pressing the accelerator deeper leads to an immediate response. In absolute terms, the Up! GTI with its sprint from 0 to 100 km/h in 8.8 seconds is not a distinctly fast car. This makes the Up! GTI may be faster than the first Golf GTI from 1976, but by now the bar is much higher. These days, a little business car out performs a car like the Up! GTI, without ever noticing the little Volkswagen's anger. The difference is, the driver of the faster business car didn't have half as much fun as the Up! GTI driver.

## Fun

The driving pleasure comes not only from the lively engine (which is a better description than "powerful engine"), but also from the lively handling. To make the Up! GTI more sporty, the suspension has been lowered by 15 mm and the car has been fitted with larger rims (17 inches). The former ensures a lower centre of gravity and thus more stability. The second makes for sharper steering, as the sides of a tyre are flexible and thus slow down the reaction to the steering wheel.



The Up! GTI also features a prominent roof spoiler. According to Volkswagen, this is for extra downforce, but in practice it is mostly for show. After all, the Up! is not a rear-wheel-drive car, so extra pressure on the rear wheels is less important. Besides, a spoiler like this is only useful at very high speeds, which the Up! GTI will rarely, if ever, reach. But again: it greatly enhances the look of the car, so the spoiler is certainly not inappropriate.



When it comes to handling, the difference between the standard Up! and the Up! GTI is less obvious than in performance. In fact, the standard Up! is also a delightful throwback car. And the standard Up! also has fine handling. The difference is only noticeable when the GTI really gets up to speed. That's when the GTI bites down just a bit better and the GTI is especially more satisfying.

## Top model

Yet the Up! GTI not only as a fun car, but also as a top-of-the-range model. Besides the increased engine power, the powerplant also got more torque. In practice, this makes for more agility, which is also noticeable in daily traffic. It makes it easier to maintain a low speed in a high gear, which provides extra

comfort (at which point it is a shame that the artificial engine noise cannot be switched off).



Moreover, the Up! GTI has a sixth gear, which increases comfort and lowers consumption. A day of strolling in Monaco and yacking in the mountains around Nice cost 6.2 litres per 100 km, which is modest considering the frankly uncivilised driving style.

The Up! GTI is the first Volkswagen whose official consumption has been determined according to the new "WLTP" standard (Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicles Test Procedure) and partly for this reason, its test consumption is close to the norm (5.7 litres per 100 km). Also good to know: the Up! is the second Volkswagen with a particulate filter for petrol engines.



The feeling that the Up! GTI is a true premium model is also reinforced by its rich equipment. For instance, air conditioning, seat heating, cruise control, parking sensors and a radio with smartphone integration are standard. A funny pattern on the dashboard, sports steering wheel and the distinctive tartan pattern on the seats also make this smallest Volkswagen a real GTI.

## Conclusion

The Volkswagen Up! is now also available as a GTI. Thanks to an eager engine, a lively chassis and exciting styling, the Up! is a real GTI in every respect. A pleasant bonus is that the Up! GTI also offers more comfort. This is because the engine was not only made stronger, but also offers more agility.

To keep the price modest, Volkswagen has also kept the modifications modest. Therefore, don't expect a full-blooded sports car at a bargain price. The Up! GTI is mostly about fun and less about hard numbers. In short: the Volkswagen Up! GTI is not really fast, but it is really fun. ■



# Specifications

## Volkswagen Up! GTI

### Size and weight



Length x width x height	360 x 164 x 148 cm
Wheelbase	242 cm
Kerb weight	1.070 kg
Trailer	unknown
Trailer - braked	unknown
Fuel capacity	35 l
Luggage space	251/951 l
Tyre size	195/40R17

### Engine and performance



Capacity	999 cc
Cylinders / valves	3/4
power	115 PS @ 5000 rpm
Max torque	200 Nm @ 2000 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	8.8 secs
Top speed	196 km/h
Average mileage	4.8 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	6 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	4.1 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	110 gr / km

### Price

Price	Â£ 17,950
Price base model	Â£ 7,995