The Most Expensive and the Cheapest VW Golfs!

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Tom Scanlan tries Golf R Cabriolet 2.0 TSI and the Golf S 1.2 TSI 3-door…

Golf R Cabriolet

£38,770 for a Golf? Really!

Alright, it is a cabriolet, it has a mighty 265 PS 2-litre TSI engine and all sorts of smart equipment – except electric seats.

What's it like then?

Well, it sure goes, of course; it's the fastest-ever production open Golf. The car has VW's 6-speed DSG automatic gearbox, giving exceptionally fast changes in the 'sport' setting; very smooth, too. 62mph is available in 6.4 seconds and on an unrestricted Autobahn the top speed is limited to 155mph – heaven knows what that would be like with the hood down. At 'normal' speeds a muted, growling can be detected – a nice noise that promises performance.

The whole, quick though it is, feels beautifully refined.

The Golf R has such reserves not only of power, but also of torque so that it can match those punchy diesel engines. From 2,500 – 5,000rpm, there's 350Nm of torque, so, whatever gear you happen to be in, you can majestically waft past anything in your way – in complete safety.

The Golf R Cabriolet, like all cabs, has the automatically-deploying rollover protection system, front and side head/thorax airbags, and a driver's knee airbag; these are all standard features.

So are the latest stability anti-skid systems to add to the sense of security. That said, the car handles so well that sharp bends seem to present no problem, with the steering accurate and nicely-weighted and the handling so sharp. The R Cabriolet has 235/25 tyres as standard on 19-inch wheels.

The suspension has been well-sorted so that the ride on these big fat rubbers is in no way harsh.

From a practical point-of-view, the Cabriolet is less than perfect in a couple of respects: room in the rear seats, and getting in and out is compromised by the anti-buffeting screen being in the way – so you'd have to remove it. (Access then is reasonably easy with the front seat moved forward.) And, at nearly £39 grand, you don't get electric/memory seats; they're just not available in Golf Cabriolets. A big plus, though, is that the roof can be lowered or raised in only seven seconds.





Fuel economy is reasonable good, with an official combined cycle figure of 34.4mpg. CO2 emissions give the car a J tax band rating (£245).

Yes, it’s the most expensive Golf but great fun.

GOLF S 1.2 TSi 3 Door



VW has also introduced its cheapest Golf to the current Mark VII range, and it's a really super car. It's priced at £16,495 thanks to some paring down of equipment. Power is from VW's 1.2 litre TSI petrol engine. This unit gets our highest praise. To drive this Golf, it's scarcely credible that the engine's maximum power output is only 85PS – you'd never know it.

Performance figures seem equally conservative, with the 0-62mph time measuring at 11.9 seconds, and only 118Nm of torque at 1,400rpm, building to 160 at 3,500rpm.

With crisp, light steering and the easiest of gear-changes from the manual gear-box, the car is most enjoyable and easy to drive. It handles well; it feels very solid, well put-together and safe.

As far as equipment's concerned, I missed nothing from other more expensive cars with more comprehensive features. Everything I wanted was there. I suppose in winter I'd want heated seats but even those aren't vital!

Frugal? Well, 57.6 mpg is the official combined fuel consumption figure and emissions at 113g/km (Tax band C — £30). Obviously, then, this Golf S 1.2 will be quite cheap to run, bearing in mind also the insurance group rating of 7E. It’s a sure winner.



