Volkswagen ID.3 Pro S – Road Test

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Robin Roberts (WheelsWithinWales) puts the ID.3 through its paces…

Of the legacy car-makers, Volkswagen has developed a very wide and strong range of new

generation electric models.

It has been working on electric cars for many years so it was probably only natural that modernising its best selling Golf family car would feature in its approach to the future, and the ID.3 fills the sector in which its petrol and diesel hatchback did so well before it led to the e-Golf.

The pure electric ID.3 is a very worthy successor, if expensive – particularly when you look at the price of options, but it's not alone as moving to electric power is not cheap.

More importantly, Volkswagen do it better than most rivals.

The ID.3 was the first VW Group model to utilise their modular electric drive, or MEB, platform, which underpins its entire range and can be altered to support various bodies. It is also likely to see smaller MEB models in future and the company has trademarked an X in the series, suggesting a future SUV derivative or possibly derivatives.

Sensibly the ID.3 is offered with 58 or 77 kWh batteries to suit buyers' requirements and pockets but they are the same size cars and the differences relate to equipment levels.

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Our test car was the more powerful version and the higher Pro S trim includes A/C, powered and heated front seats and mirrors, satnav and traction control.

Volkswagen has revised the exterior styling of the ID.3 for the current series after its launch for 2020 and it now looks smoother and neater both outside and in, and comes with more advanced technology in this class.

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The satnav, for instance, includes a programme to suit the electric power train and

recharging, head up display and voice commands and gets over-the-air updates to keep everything current.

The ID.3 Pro S starts at the push of a button and you simply select D or R to move off but you can vary modes and engine response to accentuate performance or economy as preferred. It has a very good range.

It’s a constant, linear acceleration depending on how much throttle you apply but lifting off introduces strong deceleration as the motor slows and with practice you may avoid using the footbrake. There is no traditional gearbox or changes to concern you.

The braking was very good if you need to use the pedal while the steering gave good feedback at speed and the turning circle was reasonable. The system easily held the car on our regular test slope.

Secondary controls close to or on the steering wheel were convenient once familiar, instrumentation infront of the driver could be changed to highlight features and was pin-sharp. The central infotainment display was of a good size and clear if a bit slow reacting at times.

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Fitted with air conditioning, the interior was quickly warmed on a chilly day backed up by powered window. All windows have heat insulating glass and for winter there are heated washer jets.

The big wipers and bright lights really worked well at night.

Inside, there was plenty of room for driver and passengers with good access for all, lots of oddments space throughout for a family car and a decent size boot with quick folding seatbacks to more than triple capacity.

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The seats were nicely firm, well shaped and supportive with neat drop-down armrests on the front pair for added long journey comfort and the adjustment on the front pair was wide-ranging, matched with an adequate movement of the steering column.

Being an electric car the powertrain noise was low, a distant whirring was noticed but not really intrusive but it did mean the road rumbles and suspension bump-thump was more evident.

The ID.3 Pro S really coped well with speed calming ridges, potholes and coarse surfaces and never really rolled around a corner but securely held on despite being rear wheel drive and powered. Ours had traction control and it was very refined to keep everything in check without any wheelspin apparent.

The test car had the optional interior pack including 30 colour options for the interior lights, heat and sound insulating windscreen, head-up display, LED Matrix intelligent lights, privacy glass, driver assistance pack for reversing and parking, 20-inch wheels and optional three-pin mains domestic charge cable. These and a few more bits added almost £7,400 to the basic price, or put another way 16% over the OTR figure. The total price of the test car is £50,245.

VERDICT

So… the Volkswagen ID.3 Pro S is not a cheap family car by any means, but it’s a very good one and probably what you’d expect from one of leading brands in Northern Europe. It is also worth noting the very good warranty, reassuring with any pure electric car.

For: Excellent roomy family car, lively with very good range, highly equipped Pro S package, good handling and ride, very smooth powertrain. Low tax costs.

Against: Expensive to buy with high option prices, some fiddly controls, road rumbles in

otherwise quiet car.


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FAST FACTS

Model: Volkswagen ID.3 Pro S

Price: £50,245 including options (range runs from £37,255 to £49,855 plus options)

Mechanical: 150 kw/ 204 PS motor, 82 kWh lithium-ion battery, RWD

Max Speed: 99 mph

0 – 62 mph: 7.9sec

Range: 296 miles

Insurance Group: 28E

C02 emissions: Zero

Bik rating: 2%, £ZeroFY, £ZeroSR

Warranty: 8 years/ 100,000 miles

Size: L 4.27 m (14.01 ft), W 1.81 m (5.94 ft), H 1.57 m (5.15 ft)

Bootspace: 385 to 1,267 litres (13.60 to 44.74 cu.ft)

Kerbweight: 1,933 kg (4,262 lb)

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