



VW Passat SE Business 1.6 TDI 120PS (7 Speed DSG)

By Tim Barnes-Clay, Motoring Journalist – tweeting @carwriteups.

A few years ago if you had asked a director to give up their large company car and accept a smaller, more fuel-efficient alternative, you may have been looking for a new job soon afterwards.

Now things are different, and greener cars are now a perfectly acceptable executive option.

The eighth generation VW Passat is a good example of what constitutes a frugal yet upmarket managerial motor. In fact, it bridges the gap between the upper medium and premium class.

The ever-popular German mile-muncher takes on not only a refreshing appearance, but also adopts the latest technologies and efficiency measures to make it one of the most advanced and economical of cars in its sector.

All Passats offer a high level of standard features with highlights including Post-Collision Braking System and mis-fuelling prevention; Adaptive Cruise Control, Pre-Crash system, Driver

Profile Selection, Ergo Comfort seats and front and rear parking sensors on SE and above; and Discover Navigation on the SE Business.

Smooth, solid and classy are words that come to mind for the Passat in 1.6-litre TDI SE Business guise. The cabin is nicely appointed, with lots of rubber and soft touch materials but very little in the way of cheap plastics.

The VW feels well-built, and the seats are comfortable. And, as you would expect from a Passat, leg and headroom are very good, while the boot is gigantic.

Behind the wheel, the Passat feels punchy enough, but it is quite a heavy car, so don't expect rocket-ship acceleration. The 2.0-litre engine will be a much better match for the body if being first off the lights matters to you.

Volkswagen offers a choice of two transmissions with this Passat. There is a six-speed manual or there's the seven-speed DSG twin clutch box - as



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fitted to my test car. This works fantastically well with this four-cylinder engine, but it does add around £1600 to cost of the car.

Nevertheless, for £25,715 on the road, the 1.6 diesel, mated to the DSG gearbox, is great value for anyone wanting a sophisticated, fuel saving, commuting machine that doubles up as a roomy family car. Let's face it; an official average consumption of 70.6mpg isn't going to cripple you financially.

Indeed, now I've experienced the Passat, I can certainly understand why it beat the BMW 2 Series Active Tourer, Citroën C4 Cactus, Ford Mondeo, Mercedes-Benz C-Class, Nissan Qashqai and Renault Twingo for the coveted European Car of the Year 2015 title.

PROS 'N' CONS

- Economical ✓
- Classy ✓
- Refined interior ✓
- Large boot ✓
- Acceleration X

FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 128 mph
- 0-62 mph: 10.8 secs
- Combined mpg: 70.6
- Engine layout: 1598 cc, 4 cylinder, 16 valve turbocharged diesel
- Max. power (bhp): 118
- Max. torque (lb.ft): 184
- CO2: 103 g/km
- Price: £25,715