

VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 2.0 TDI

by Tunit

Volkswagen's
new Passat 2.0
TDI takes the
Tunit tonic!



For a car slated by the infamous Clarkson as "the motoring equivalent of Belgium" Volkswagen's new Passat seems to be selling remarkably well. In fact for "something you simply won't notice" (Clarkson's words again) we are seeing a remarkable number of these impressive and well-built saloons and estates already populating the roads of Britain. To my eyes, and apparently many new owners, the

simple, but elegant, lines are far from boring and, as we already know, neither is the performance offered by the superb 2.0 TDI power unit that's the choice of most. (or should we say all?), sensible drivers. It's another of today's cars where you have to ask the question "Why, would anyone buy one of these with with a petrol power unit?" But there's no doubt that Volkswagen are sometimes a little conservative, particularly

when it comes to UK RHD model availability. Much of Europe has already been enjoying the option of an even more sparkling 170bhp 2.0 TDI engine in the Passat for some while – and yet we don't even know yet when it will be available here in Britain. But, for those impatient for this cracking top-of-the-range diesel model, or the similarly awaited 170PS variant of the Golf GT TDI, there's a Tunit engine conversion



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available now for the 140PS (138bhp) 2.0 TDI engine that offers all the performance of the 170PS (168bhp) models, and more, at a much lower cost than the £900 odd price premium that the factory cars will inevitably carry, when they eventually arrive. The vital before and after figures for the Tunit conversion were all recorded on their high tech 1,000bhp rolling road dynamometer and, as usual with the 2.0 TDI engine, the standard figures came out well above Volkswagen's modest factory figures, with 152bhp recorded at 4,200rpm and peak

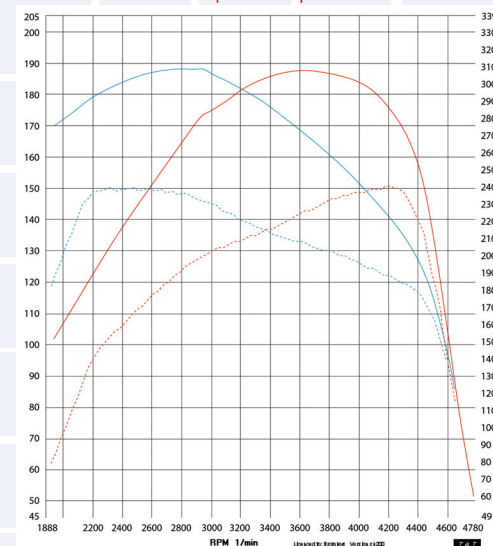


The TDI engine responds well to tuning.

torque coming out at 238bhp at 2,200-2400rpm. Now the 170PS 2.0 TDI engine in the Passat is modestly specified at 168bhp at 4,200rpm and 258 lb ft at 1,750-2,500rpm – and we would therefore expect the standard engine to actually produce around 175bhp and maybe around 265-270 lb ft of torque on the dynamometer, with the gains over the 140PS engine coming from an uprated fuel injection system that employs piezoelectric injectors to give more precise and efficient injection.

So the challenge for the Tunit development

Passat Torque and bhp results



team was to match these last speculative real-life figures, and hopefully surpass them – which, as I have come to expect from Tunit, they did in storming style! Peak power, after fitting and briefly tweaking the Tunit conversion, was recorded at 187bhp at 3,700 rpm, and torque at a truly stump-pulling 306 lb ft at 2,800rpm. Now that torque figure and the way that the torque curve fills out at mid-range engine speeds is what really transforms the Passat. Just as we have similarly experienced with Golf 2.0



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TDIs given the same treatment, there's a massive flexibility reminiscent of a 2.5litre or even bigger engine, giving instant response over a very wide engine speed range. It's a "point and squirt" car for swift and safe overtaking and the overall performance level feels almost on the same level as the 2.0T petrol Golf GTI, but without any need to resort to engine speeds above 4,000rpm to achieve really swift progress, when it's

safe to do so. With a long-legged sixth gear it has to be a real mile-muncher on long journeys, with that extra torque meaning even less necessity to drop down a gear for hills and many overtaking manoeuvres. With this level of performance you would probably want to have the Passat's 15mm lowered Sport Suspension, or the Sport Pack, standard on the Sport model variant and optional on the S and SE, which adds



wider alloys and tyres. But thinking of such things really does highlight the excellent value of the Tunit conversion at just £400 + VAT, representing around half the cost of those £795-995 Sports Packs.

Tunit are always very pleased to hear from you and their helpful technical advisors will talk you through the many options from their huge range of conversions for just about any diesel on the road. Contact them on 0845 0588648, or take a look at their comprehensive web site www.tunit.com for details of their product range, exactly what you can expect to get from a Tunit conversion on your car, and contact details for one of the many nationwide Tunit Distributors close to you.

Many thanks to ever-helpful Mersey Hire of Chorley, who are diesel car rental specialists with 12 locations throughout Lancashire, for loan of the photographed car. Call them on 01925 243636."

