

Volkswagen Passat B8 2.0 TDI

2014-2023 · 2.0 TDI EA288 (150-240 hp) 4-cylinder turbocharged diesel

Est. annual maintenance cost: €850-1,550

Date _____ Mileage _____ Price _____ Seller _____

What matters most: The EA288 engine is durable, but the AdBlue system and DPF are the weak links. A car with motorway miles and full service history is a much safer buy than a city-driven one.

BEFORE THE VIEWING

Recall status (brake booster)

A safety-critical recall affects cars built between February 2018 and July 2019 for a brake booster push rod that can detach. Contact a Volkswagen dealer with the VIN to confirm this and other recalls are completed.

Service records and timing belt

Ask for full service history. Oil should be VW 507.00 spec. The timing belt is due at 210,000 km or every 5-7 years. If overdue, budget around 600 to 1,000 euros for belt, water pump, and tensioners.

DSG fluid change history

If the car has a DSG gearbox (automatic), ask whether the transmission fluid has been changed every 60,000 km. Volkswagen calls it a lifetime fill, but skipping changes leads to expensive mechatronic unit problems.

AT THE CAR

Tyres and exterior condition

Standard tyre sizes are 215/55 R17 or 215/60 R16. Check tread depth and the four-digit date codes on the sidewalls for age. Look for uneven inner-edge wear on the fronts, which can point to worn suspension bushings.

Cold engine startup

The engine should fire within 2-3 seconds from cold. Listen for a metallic rattle from the lower engine area at idle. On manual cars, this can point to dual mass flywheel wear. Press and release the clutch to see if the noise changes.

Oil level and condition

Check the oil level on the dipstick. If it is above the maximum mark, diesel fuel may have contaminated the oil from failed DPF regeneration cycles. The oil should not smell of fuel. This is one of the most telling checks on this car.

Coolant level and AdBlue warnings

Open the bonnet and check the coolant expansion tank. Low coolant or a brownish colour can point to water pump or gasket issues. Inside the car, turn the ignition on and look for any AdBlue countdown warnings on the dashboard.

DURING THE DRIVE

DSG shift quality when warm

After 15 or more minutes of driving, pay attention to how the automatic gearbox shifts in stop-and-go traffic. Harsh or jerky shifts at low speed, especially when the gearbox is fully warm, can point to mechatronic unit wear or old fluid.

Turbo response and power delivery

Accelerate firmly from low revs in a higher gear. The turbo should build boost smoothly without hesitation or sudden power loss. An EPC warning light or limp mode during the drive can point to a sticking turbo actuator.

Dashboard warnings under load

Watch for the engine management light, EPC light, or glow plug warning during the drive. On the motorway, check whether the car holds speed smoothly at 120 km/h. Any pulsing or hunting at cruise speed is worth noting.

NOTES

THIS CAR AT A GLANCE

Diesel mid-sizer, built 2014-2023. The EA288 engine is solid, but AdBlue and DPF systems add cost, especially on city-driven cars.

KNOWN WEAK POINTS

AdBlue system failure

Heater, NOx sensors, or dosing module
€400-1,500

DPF clogging

From short-trip driving, needs regen
€400-2,000

EGR valve carbon buildup

Rough idle, power loss after 100k km
€500-1,200

DSG mechatronic unit

Harsh shifts, limp mode (DQ250/DQ381)
€1,000-3,500

Water pump failure

Common between 80,000-120,000 km
€300-800

