

Date _____ Mileage _____ Price _____ Seller _____

What matters most: This engine only stays healthy with regular motorway driving. Ask for the car's typical use pattern and check for DPF and EGR trouble codes before visiting.

BEFORE THE VIEWING

- Recall status (3 critical recalls)**
Contact Volkswagen with the VIN to check three safety recalls: fuel filter cracking (leak risk), Takata airbag inflator, and the Dieseltgate software update. All repairs are free regardless of age.
- Service records and oil spec**
Look for complete records with oil changes every 15,000 km or 12 months using VW 507.00 specification oil. The wrong oil spec accelerates soot buildup in the DPF and turbo.
- Ask about driving pattern**
Ask the seller whether the car was used mainly for motorway or city driving. Short urban trips cause the DPF, EGR, and turbo to clog with soot. Motorway use keeps all three healthy.

AT THE CAR

- Tyres and exterior condition**
Standard sizes are 175/70 R14 or 185/60 R15. Check tread depth and sidewall age (DOT date code). Uneven front wear can point to worn suspension bushings, which are common on higher-mileage Polos.
- Cold start and exhaust smoke**
Start the engine fully cold. A puff of white or grey smoke is normal, but thick white or blue smoke lasting more than 10-15 seconds can point to turbo seal wear or failed DPF regeneration.
- Oil and coolant check**
Pull the dipstick (yellow handle, front of the engine bay) and smell the oil. A strong fuel smell can point to failed DPF regeneration cycles dumping diesel into the sump. Check coolant is at the max mark.
- DPF warning light**
Turn the ignition on without starting. Check the dashboard for any DPF, engine, or glow plug warning lights. A flashing glow plug light often points to EGR valve problems on this engine.

DURING THE DRIVE

- Extended motorway drive (20+ min)**
Drive at 80-100 km/h for at least 20 minutes. This may trigger a DPF regeneration, which you will notice as a slight fuel smell or a rise in idle speed. If the DPF light comes on, the filter may be heavily blocked.
- Turbo response and sounds**
Accelerate firmly through the rev range. Listen for metallic whining or excessive whistling, which can point to worn turbo bearings or sooted-up vanes. The turbo should spool smoothly from around 1,800 rpm.
- Idle smoothness and low-rev response**
At traffic lights or in slow traffic, pay attention to how the engine idles. Rough idle, jerking below 2,000 rpm, or brief power hesitation can point to worn injectors or a clogged EGR valve.

NOTES

THIS CAR AT A GLANCE

Three-cylinder diesel Polo, built 2009-2014. The emissions equipment clogs easily on short trips, making driving pattern the key reliability factor.

KNOWN WEAK POINTS

EGR valve failure

Carbon buildup blocks valve, causes limp mode

€300-700

DPF clogging

Clogs on short trips, needs motorway driving

€400-1,500

Turbo vane sooting

Vanes stick from gentle driving, turbo fails

€800-2,000

Injector failure

Delphi piezo injectors lose calibration

€500-1,500

Dieseltgate update effects

Software fix worsens DPF and EGR wear

€0-500

