

# THE 1979 VW RABBIT



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**STILL  
YEARS AHEAD  
OF ALL  
THE REST.**

# FOR OPENERS, VW TURNED AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY TOSY-TURVY.

When we introduced the Rabbit four years ago, it was loaded with innovations that sent a lot of other car makers back to their drawing boards.

To begin with, the engine was turned sideways. This didn't seem to bother the thousands of drivers who lined up to buy one of those "new fangled" Rabbits. Because what they were interested in was all the extra room made possible by our "transverse" engine.

Even today, many drivers find it hard to believe that the roomy Rabbit—with a spacious interior built for four adults and all their luggage—is bigger inside than 15 other cars in its class.\* In fact, fully 87% of the Rabbit is devoted to people and luggage space.



87%



When it comes to handling, Rabbit's precise rack and pinion steering system gives the driver a positive road feel and a reassuring responsiveness to commands. The front-wheel drive literally puts you around curves. And the weight of the engine over the drive wheels adds to Rabbit's sure-footed traction and directional control.

Underneath it all, the suspension is independent, front and rear. Rugged McPherson struts in front effectively absorb road shocks without transmitting them to other wheels. And an innovative "independent stabilizer" rear axle combines the smoothness of four-wheel independent suspension with the firm tracking of a rigid axle.



All this innovation left other car makers with a lot of catching up to do. And while they were coming up with their "tooty car" Rabbit look-alikes, we were coming up with dozens of improvements to the car that started it all.

The powerful 1.8 liter overhead cam engine had been carefully refined to make it smoother, quieter and more reliable. Large disc brakes were added in front for quicker, surer stopping. And while space does not permit us to list all the hundreds of improvements incorporated on the Rabbit over the past four years, one deserves special mention.



Seat belts that "bur themselves on".

The driver and front seat passenger simply open their doors, sit down, close the doors and presto! The belts are securely in place. This advanced passive restraint system was developed by Volkswagen engineers and introduced way back in 1975. Today, these seat belts are standard equipment on Rabbit "L" models†, and available as options on "C" model Rabbits.

Our "automatic" seat belts are a simple, workable alternative to air bags. By 1984, passive restraint systems will be mandatory on all cars. Volkswagen offers you and your family this feature right now.

# NOW HERE'S WHAT WE'RE DOING FOR ENCORES.

For 1979, Rabbit is available in a rainbow of vibrant new colors. There are handsome new rectangular headlamps and a good looking black grille up front, and door handles that are black with a gleaming metallic inlay.

Inside, there are good looking new, color-coordinated interiors. Special provisions for stereo speakers built into the front doors. A handsome new velour carpeting on the floor. And on the dashboard, special side-window defogger outlets to help prevent misting.

There are even AM and AM/FM radios included at no extra charge on Rabbit "C" and "L" models. And a wide variety of new special equipment packages to help you turn our Rabbit into your own very personal Rabbit.



Color-coordinated interiors  
Fully padded headliner  
Black door handles with gleaming metallic inlay

Swiveling sunvisor

AM/FM push-button radio (Rabbit "L")  
AM radio (Rabbit "C")

Handsome rectangular headlamps  
Good-looking black grille

Self-adjusting rear drum brakes

**THE 1979 VW RABBIT.  
WAY OUT IN FRONT  
WITH ROOM TO SPARE.**

**VOLKSWAGEN  
DOES IT AGAIN.**

\*Based on 1979 EPA guide.

†Based on 1979 EPA estimate with manual transmission. Your actual mileage may vary depending on where and how you drive, your car's condition and optional equipment. 1979 data not available at press time. Ask your local dealer for a free copy of the EPA/NEA Guide to Buying a New Car. Excludes taxes.

†Dealer installation.

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## AN INTERIOR THAT'S WAY OUT IN FRONT WITH ROOM TO SPARE.

With some economy cars, saving on gas means cramping your style. Rabbit, on the other hand, is roomy enough for some of the tallest professional basketball players to drive or ride in comfort. In fact, there's as much leg and hip room as some mid-size cars.



**VW engineers draw a line around four passengers and their luggage. The shape was a Rabbit.**

If you look closely at a Rabbit, you'll find that it's somewhat higher than some of the look-alikes.

VW engineers gave Rabbit this extra height because it allows all four adults inside the car to sit up straight at an angle conducive to relaxed, comfortable riding.

As you can see in the above sketch, when VW engineers drew the outline of a Rabbit, they created an ideal interior for four persons — big enough for everyone to sit in comfort, but no bigger than necessary so that Rabbit could fit easily into tight parking spaces.

But creative space engineering is only the beginning of the Rabbit comfort story. It continues with full-size front bucket seats that are orthopedically

designed to give you proper support. Attractive, durable upholstery that's as comfortable as it is good looking. And controls that are conveniently placed and easy to reach—lights, high beams, turn signals, and wiper/washer are all controlled through a pair of levers mounted on the steering column.

To give you a panoramic view in all directions, Rabbit 2-door has a total of 25.9 square feet of glass. That's more than you'll find on a Cadillac Seville.



**Beneath the hatch you'll find a spacious cargo compartment that converts your Rabbit into a "mini wagon".**

Between the back seat and the hatch, Rabbit has a generous 15 cubic foot cargo area — again, more than in the Cadillac Seville. And with the "C" and "L" model Rabbits, you can flip the rear seatback and nearly double the luggage compartment.

There's actually room back there for a medium size chest of drawers or a 4-foot grandmother clock.

**PERFORMANCE  
THAT'S WAY OUT  
IN FRONT  
WITH ROOM  
TO SPARE.**



Every aspect of Rabbit's design and engineering makes its existence to the car's great performance and handling. Even the styling glass is a part.

Rabbit's clean, uncluttered lines were "fine tuned" in the giant VW wind tunnel at Wolfsburg — the largest bimetrically equipped facility of its kind in Europe. There, VW engineers paid close attention to small details, as for instance, the design of the car channels. They are positioned on the Rabbit so as not to increase wind drag or noise, yet effectively carry water away from the windshield.

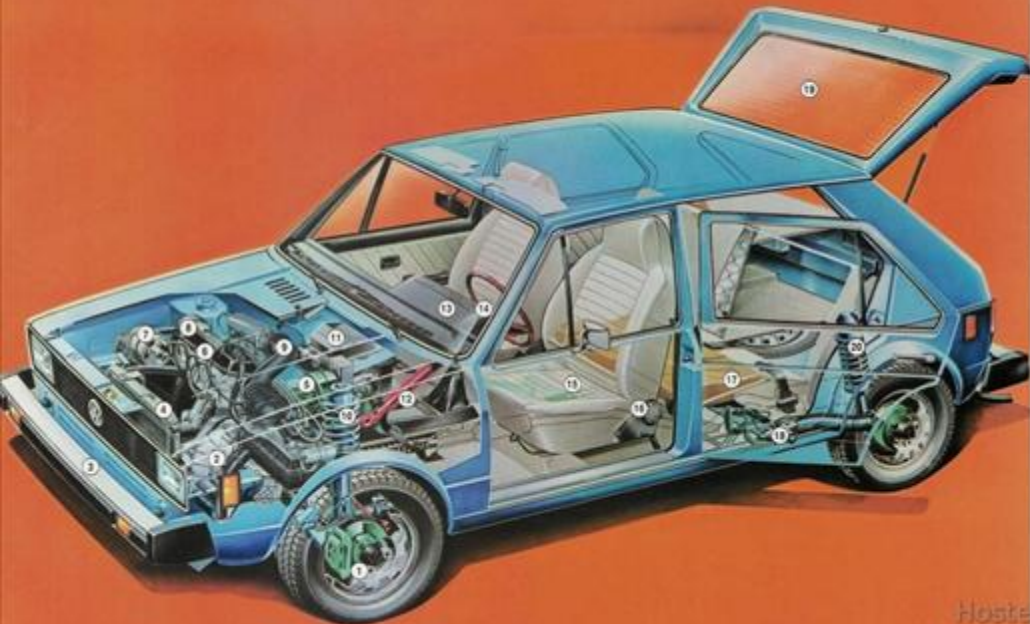
This painstaking research resulted in the design of an aerodynamic body with minimum wind resistance. To the driver, this means better performance and decreased gas consumption as the car moves easily through air rather than fighting it.

Behind the wheel of a Rabbit, you feel a rich surge of power as the 1.5 liter overhead cam engine comes to life. As you negotiate sharp curves, rack and pinion steering, 4-wheel independent suspension, and Rabbit's peppy performance give you an exhilarating sense of precision. And this is further enhanced by the excellent directional control achieved through placing the engine over the front drive wheels.

If you have the feeling that you are driving something closely akin to a sports car, you're right. Ordinary Rabbits — with some minor modifications — are racing in a popular new Rabbit/Bilen Cup competition series under the auspices of SOCA at tracks all across the country.

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## WAY OUT IN FRONT WITH ADVANCED SAFETY ENGINEERING.

Safety engineering in the Rabbit falls into two distinct categories:

Active safety features that make the car more maneuverable and help drivers avoid accidents; Passive safety features that help minimize injuries when an accident is unavoidable.

One of the most important ways in which a car's design can help drivers avoid accidents is in the areas of visibility. Two-door Rabbit provides 25.9 square feet of glass, and pillars that are carefully designed to minimize blindspots.

1. Floating caliper front disc brakes with negative steering roll radius. Single piston caliper reduces the number of connections and in turn lessens the possibility of brake fluid leakage. Reduction of contact area minimizes excessive heat transfer into brake fluid for greater fade resistance.
2. Transverse mounted 4-speed fully synchronized transaxle with double-printed drive shafts to front wheels. Transverse placement of transmission eliminates the need for beveled ring gear and pinion. The use of direct gear drive reduces friction and wear common with conventional designs.
3. Energy absorbing bumpers front and rear with hydraulic dampers are designed to protect the vehicle in up to 5 mph frontal or rear end collisions.
4. Closed and pressurized cooling system with thermostatically controlled electric radiator fan. Radiator covers of efficient, fast heat dissipating aluminum core. Cross-flow design with integrated recovery tank. Electronically operated radiator fan only runs when needed,

5. Dual diagonal hydraulic brake system with disc/drum combination. The dual diagonal placement provides the vehicle with a back-up system. In case of failure, it maintains braking for one front wheel and one rear wheel. This, in combination with negative steering roll radius helps maintain directional control while braking.
6. Front-mounted, transverse, 4-cylinder, water-cooled engine. Transverse engine placement provides the vehicle with an added energy absorbing zone in the event of a frontal collision. Furthermore, the steering provides good forward visibility through the short, slanted front hood.
7. 12-Volt, 35 amp alternator. Battery charging takes place even at low idling rpm.
8. Four-belt driven overhead cam with large cup-type valve lifters. Low noise level spur-belt drive and overhead cam

placement provides 1.8-liter engine with quiet, peppy performance. Large cup-type valve lifters minimize wear and lengthen required service intervals.

9. Optional CIS fuel injection. This injection system provides the Rabbit engine with the proper fuel/air mixture throughout its operating range. Cold starts are easy and takeoff is without hesitation. The engine runs more efficiently providing economical performance and a clean exhaust.
10. McPherson struts, also called coil/shock absorber struts. The long-travel coil/shock absorber struts provide the Rabbit with a comfortable ride combined with sporty handling characteristics.
11. Flow-through ventilation with a 3-speed blower and an efficient heat exchanger. The combined fresh air/heating system provides the vehicle with a highly efficient flow-through ventilation, assisted by a 3-speed blower. Air escape outlets are located in the front doors on the 2-door, and in the rear doors on the 4-door. This placement of the air outlets

Other active safety features include superb tracking achieved with 4-wheel independent suspension; exceptional directional control when braking where roll resistance to the front tires is uneven (such as with one wheel off the road), through the use of negative steering roll radius; dual diagonal braking systems to provide a back-up if one system should fail; precise rack and pinion steering; and the firm, sure grip of tort wheel drive.

Passive safety in the Rabbit begins with up to 5-mph impact bumpers with hydraulic elements and continues with

front and rear energy absorbing safety zones to help protect the passenger compartment cell. This is a unitized steel cage fortified with thousands of spot welds. The roof is supported by six steel pillars, and the doors are reinforced with steel guard beams.

Inside the Rabbit, many hard surfaces have been padded to help protect occupants. And in the Rabbit "L" model,\* you'll enjoy the added convenience of Volkswagen's innovative passive restraint system — front seat belts that "put themselves on" for you.

12. Rack and pinion steering with double-printed safety steering column. Precision, direct action steering is self-adjusting and maintenance free. Double-jointed steering column minimizes transfer of impact forces in the event of a front end collision.
13. Foam injected, leatherette covered dashboard with instruments and controls placed directly in driver's line of vision.
14. Wide-hub safety steering wheel with energy absorbing steering column. Design of steering wheel allows center hub to collapse or give way in the event of a collision.
15. Anatomically designed front bucket seats for maximum body support. The use of high resilience foam rubber in the seat cushion provides seating comfort for long distance driving. Large bolsters on seat cushion and back rest provide maximum body support while cornering.
16. Racking mechanism on seat backrest

17. Flip-down rear seat mechanism ("C" & "L" models only) permits the rear passenger compartment to be used as a cargo area.
18. Rear hatch with electrically heated rear window defogger ("C" & "L" models only). The large hatchback opening provides easy access to Rabbit's rear trunk and the spare tire below the trunk floor. Heating elements in the window ensure clear vision by eliminating ice or moisture build-up.
20. Coil/shock absorber strut combination provides the rear end with a long travel suspension for a comfortable sporty ride.

\*Detailed illustration.

**RABBITS  
AROUND THE WORLD.**



**ARRIVE IN A  
RABBIT,  
AND YOU  
COULD BE AT  
HOME IN  
DOZENS OF  
COUNTRIES.**

Since its introduction in 1974, Rabbit has replaced the Beetle as the true international car.

Today, people in well over 100 countries — with climatic conditions ranging from tropical to sub-freezing — are choosing Rabbits as the ideal

answer to their transportation needs.

Here is just a sampling of the world-wide records and achievements of Rabbits during the past year:

**Rabbits on ice.**

At the Norwegian ice-racing championships in Oslo, Rabbit GT's swept the first four places, ahead of Renaults and Subarans. Six of the first ten cars were Rabbits.

**Rabbit Diesel finishes  
at the head of its class  
in Monte Carlo Rally.**

Four Rabbit Diesels participated in a new Diesel class at the Monte Carlo Rally. A French team—Claude Laurent and Jacques Marche—won their class with a Rabbit, in an exciting finish, after taking the lead from a Citroen CX D on the last leg.

**Rabbit is #1 in Japan.**

Seeking advanced engineering, spaciousness and comfort, 17,655 Japanese — five thousand more than the previous year — ignored high duties and taxes and chose Rabbits instead of Japanese domestic models available at considerably lower prices.

**The proliferating Rabbits.**

Rabbits are now produced in 5 countries around the world and sold in more than 100. At the present rate, the two million Rabbit will roll off the assembly line less than four years after the production start-up in 1974. In comparison, the Beetle took a dozen years to reach the two million mark.

The venerable Beetle, though, still holds the world record for the most cars produced — more than 18 million over a period of some thirty years.



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# FOR 1979, THERE ARE MORE WAYS THAN EVER TO HAVE YOUR RABBIT.

## EXTERIOR

Chrome bumper (not with black top)  
 Chrome bumpers with rubber strip and guards  
 Chrome rubber grille  
 Chrome rubber grille  
 Rubber panel moulding in front  
 Rubber panel moulding in rear  
 Chrome hub caps and wheel covers, front and rear  
 Full wheel covers

## INTERIOR

Reclining bucket seats (Rabbit L, 4-door model)  
 Integrated headrests, front  
 Adjustable headrests, front  
 Cloth or cloth and vinyl  
 Provision for stereo speakers in door panels  
 Sealed lower windows, all 4 right  
 Armrests, front and rear  
 Door comfort switch for courtesy light, left only  
 Door comfort switch for courtesy light, both front doors  
 Cloth handles on passenger side and rear of vehicle  
 Multi-point hub steering wheel  
 Floor-mounted steering wheel  
 Wood applique on dash and around instruments

## CUT-PILE CARPETING

Wet/dry carpeting  
 Carpet only on door panels  
 AM radio  
 AM/FM radio  
 Power light package (mount optional)  
 Lane changer package (mount optional)  
 Exterior weather proofing (mount optional)  
 Two-speed windshield wiper  
 Alternator, all positions  
 Ambient temperature sensor  
 Fog lamp, emergency flasher, high-beam warning lights  
 Tip-over switch  
 Side window air vents  
 Individually adjustable air outlets on dashboard  
 2-speed fresh air and heater blower  
 Fresh-through ventilation  
 Fuel gauge  
 Choke temperature gauge  
 Lockable glove compartment  
 Gas spring for rear hatch  
 Program for rear hatch  
 Three-point seats, belt, front  
 Pressure treatment with knee bar  
 Clarity check with licensed dealer  
 Electric rear window wiper

## RABBIT

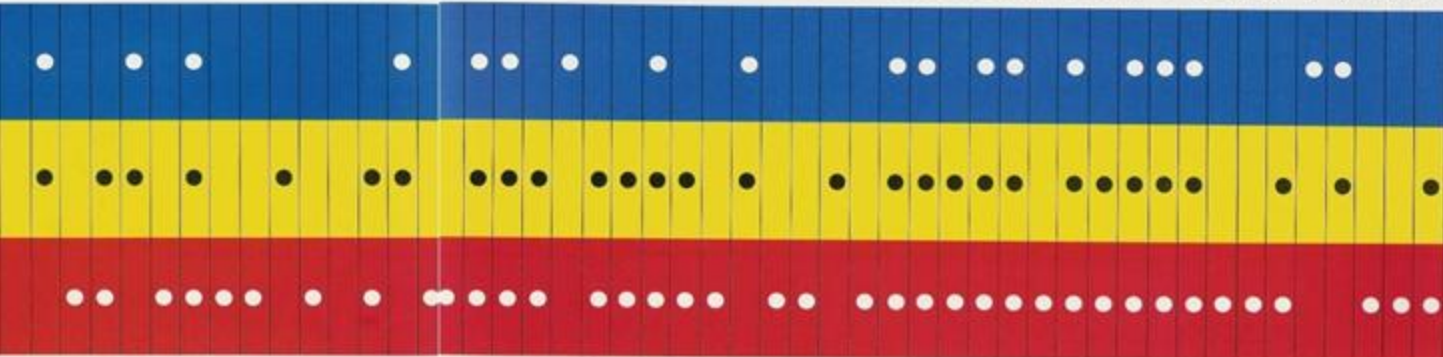
The basic Rabbit, yet far more than basic transportation. All the essential Rabbit engineering features and comforts are included at a price that puts the Rabbit way out in front with room to spare.

## RABBIT 'C'

Includes a wide range of features selected for their appeal to most owners. Standard equipment at no extra charge includes an AM radio, color-coordinated instrument panel and steering wheel, fully reclining front seats, and fold-and-tumble rear seat, day/night rear view mirror, lighted ashtray with cigarette lighter, steel belted radial tires, electric rear window defogger, protective belt line moulding, and many other fine amenities.

## RABBIT 'L'

Includes all the items on the Rabbit 'C', with a host of luxurious extras. There's an AM, FM push-button radio, a precision scenic crystal clock with second hand, wood-grained dash, bright moldings on windows and hatch, full wheel covers, a lockable glove compartment, and much, much more.



\*Delayed Introduction

## NEW OPTION PACKAGES FOR 1979.

Here are nine new option packages that offer economical ways to customize your Rabbit to your own particular needs:

**1. Custom Exterior Package\***  
 (Custom model only)  
 Chrome bumpers  
 Rubber impact strip, front and rear  
 Bumper guards, front and rear  
 Rubber panel moulding, front  
 Bright moulding on hatchdoor  
 Bright window moulding, all around  
 Fuel tank cap lock  
 Bright dip air moulding

**2. Convenience Package\***  
 (Custom model only)  
 Vanity mirror  
 Glove compartment lock  
 Rear ashtray  
 Inside hood release  
 4-way wiper/washer system  
 Floor mats, front and rear  
 Luggage compartment, fully covered—one color  
 Luggage compartment light  
 Rear stoppage switch for luggage compartment light  
 Glove compartment light/map light  
 Engine compartment light

**3. Deluxe Dealer Group\***  
 (Deluxe model only)  
 Luggage compartment light  
 Rear stoppage switch for luggage compartment light  
 Glove compartment light/map light  
 Engine compartment light  
 Name plate "Rabbit L"  
 Bright wheel spinning mouldings  
 Bright dip air mouldings  
 Quarter tone horn  
 Fuel tank cap lock  
 Vanity mirror  
 Remote control window crank light  
 4-way wiper/washer system

Door and side trim panels, upgraded  
 Interior armrests  
 Seat pads and covers, upgraded  
 Luggage compartment trim, color keyed cut pile carpeting  
 Quiet insulation package  
 Pocket in front door trim panels  
 Cut pile carpeting (18 oz.)  
 Cut pile carpeted package (no non pad)  
 Decorative stripes (black) on non pad  
 Shift gate shift knob

**4. Rallye Package\***  
 (Custom model only)  
 175/70SRD steel belted RWL tires  
 Black painted bumpers  
 Black large spoiler, front  
 Black wheel spinning bars  
 Black door handles  
 Black grille (Basic)  
 Black wheel 6x10  
 Chrome hub covers with chromed lug bolts  
 Wheel trim rings  
 Remote control rear, back, left and right  
 Quarter tone horn

Decorative stripe package (optional)  
 Back rear vanity panel  
 Black impact hood  
 4-color rear vanity stripe  
 4-color side stripe  
 Black figure window trim  
 Black rocker panel  
 Sport steering wheel  
 Center console  
 Clock  
 Voltmeter  
 On temperature gauge  
 Dual pod instrument panel with engine turned surface  
 Tachometer  
 Trip odometer in speedometer

Reclining seats, front  
 Styled gear shift knob  
 Rally seat trim, leatherette  
 Seat hinge cover  
 Window sill trim  
 Map pocket in door panels

**5. Special Instrumentation\***  
 (Custom and Deluxe models only)  
 Clock in console  
 Voltmeter in console  
 Tachometer in instrument panel  
 On temperature gauge in console  
 Center console instrument cluster panel wood grain surface with bright edge  
 Fuel pod only, Custom  
 Trip odometer in speedometer (only Custom)

**6. Air Conditioning Package\***  
 (Basic, Custom and Deluxe models only)  
 Air conditioning  
 Battery 54 Ah  
 Alternator 65 AMP  
 Heavy duty fan, 300 W

**7. Heavy Duty Electrical Package\***  
 (Basic, Custom and Deluxe models only)  
 Heavy duty fan, 300 W  
 Battery 54 Ah  
 Alternator 65 AMP

**8. Cold Climate Package\***  
 (Basic, Custom, Deluxe models only)  
 Engine block heater  
 Battery 63 Ah  
 Alternator 65 AMP  
 Heavy duty heat exchanger  
 Extra undercoating  
 Antifreeze to -40°C  
 Heavy duty starter, 1.8 kw

**9. Quiet Insulation Package\***  
 (Custom and Deluxe models only)  
 Complete sound insulation

\*Delayed Introduction

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# THE 1979 VW RABBIT.

# EVEN WITH ALL ITS REFINEMENTS, HERE ARE STILL A FEW THINGS YOU CAN ADD.



Permanent Roof Rack

Rabbit Stripe

Wheel Covers

Bumpers

Fog Lamps

One of the nicest things about the Rabbit is the tremendous flexibility it offers you for creating just the right car to suit your needs.

To begin with, there's a choice of three ways to shift: the standard 4-Speed Manual and a pair of optional transmissions — a 3-Speed Automatic and a sporty new 5-Speed.\*

For fair weather fun, there's a Sliding

Steel Sun Roof\* with wind deflector. And for hot weather comfort, an efficient Air Conditioner. If you cover a lot of highway miles, you'll like the convenience of Auto-Cruise\* to take the foot-work out of driving.

To make driving even more pleasurable, there's a wide choice of Radios, ranging from basic AM to AM/FM Stereo with "topoplayer." And for added versatility, there's a sturdy Trailer Hitch for towing boats, motorcycles or what have you; permanent and removable Luggage Carriers; a Lock-

able Ski Carrier; and Vent Shades to help keep out rain.

There's even a choice of Stripes, including the "wooly" look, the Rabbit Morphism, and a stunning three-tone Rancore effect.

**With the VW professionals behind you, you'll be way out in front with room to spare.**

Nationwide, there is a network of more than 1,000 VW dealers. So

wherever your Rabbit takes you you're never very far from professional care and service.

At every one of those VW dealers, you'll find a team of dedicated professionals. They know your Rabbit from stem to stern. And they know how to keep it performing like the exhilarating, fun-to-drive car you bought in the first place.

Their mechanics are VW trained and certified. And special in-dealer-ship seminars and regional training schools keep them up-to-date on the

improvements we're always adding to our VWs.

To help them do their jobs, there are special VW tools, and a massive inventory of VW parts for your Rabbit. And there's even a nationwide computer network that each dealer can use to locate an out-of-stock part instantaneously at a nearby dealership or at one of our regional warehouses.

That's the 1979 Rabbit. A great car and a great system to support it. 38 years ahead of all the rest.



Auto-Cruise\*



AM/FM Stereo Radio with Telemeter



Air Conditioner



Sliding Door Sunroof with Wind Deflector\*





# THE 1979 VW RABBIT.

Paint	Leatherette	Cloth
Alpine White	Blue	Blue
Whisper Blue	Blue	Blue
Mexico Beige	Tan	Tan
Tabasco Red	Maroon	Maroon
Sun Brite Yellow	Black	Black

Paint	Leatherette	Cloth
Galeon Brown	Tan	Tan
Inari Silver Metallic	Tan	Tan
Tarpon Blue Metallic	Blue	Blue
Diamond Silver Metallic	Maroon	Maroon
Inca Brown Metallic	Tan	Tan

WITH ALL THESE GREAT NEW COLORS...

... IT'S WAY OUT IN FRONT WITH ROOM TO SPARE.

VOLKSWAGEN DOES IT AGAIN



## 1979 VW RABBIT SPECIFICATIONS

### ENGINE:

Type	Water-cooled, front mounted transverse, overhead cam
Cylinders	4 cylinders, in-line
Displacement	88.9 cubic inches (1457cc)

### TRANSMISSION & DIFFERENTIAL:

Type	Fully synchronized, transverse mounted transaxle, front
No. Speeds	4 forward, 1 reverse
Final Drive	Front wheel drive, double-jointed axles
Clutch	Single disc, dry

### CHASSIS & SUSPENSION:

Frame	Unitized body/chassis, bolt-on front fenders
Front Suspension	Independent, coil/shock absorber struts, negative steering roll radius
Rear Suspension	Independent, stabilizer axle with coil/shock absorber struts
Service Brake	Dual diagonal circuit, discs front, drums, rear

Parking Brake	Mechanical, operated on rear wheels
Rim Size	4 1/2 Jx13
Tire Size	155 x 13—Rabbit 155 SR13 steel belted "C" & "L"
Steering	Rack and pinion

### ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:

Rated Voltage	12 volt, 35 Amp alternator
Battery	12 Volt, 45 Amp/hour

### DIMENSIONS:

Wheelbase	94.4 inches
Length	155.3 inches
Width	63.4 inches
Height (Unloaded)	55.5 inches
Ground Clearance (loaded)	4.9 inches
Turning Circle	31.2 feet (curb to curb)

### PERFORMANCE:

Top Speed	93 mph
Fuel mileage*	Highway: 38 mpg City: 25 mpg

\*Based on 1978 EPA estimates for 4-speed manual transmission. Your actual mileage may vary, depending on where and how you drive, your car's condition and optional equipment. 1979 data not available at press time. Ask your local dealer for a free copy of the EPA/FEA Gas Mileage Guide for New Car Buyers.

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