

Buyers Guide to: Volkswagen Type 2 Split Screen

Useful Info

Also Known As

Type 2, Microbus, Splittie, Samba, Kombi, Bulli

Manufactured

1950 to 1967

Fuel Type

Petrol

Engine Sizes

1200cc, 1500cc

Engine Type

Air-Cooled

Drive Configuration

RWD

Camper Conversion Type examples

Westfalia

Volkswagen Owners Club of Great Britain

www.vwocgb.com

Volkswagen Type 2 Owners Club

www.vwt2oc.co.uk

Just Kampers

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Background

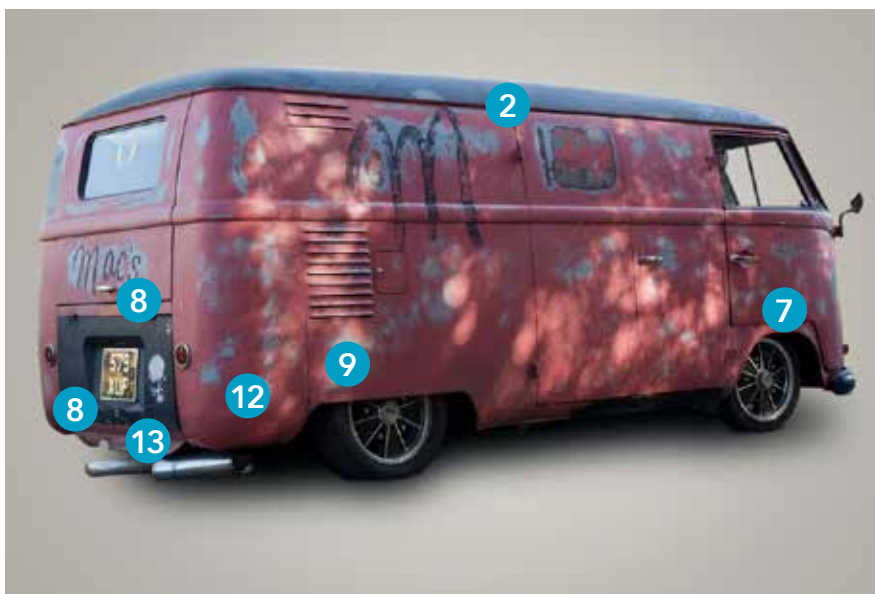
With Beetle production underway, the company turned their attention to a vehicle that would shape a generation. The Volkswagen Type 2 arrived in 1950, its unique design featuring a split front windscreen that earned it the name 'Splittie' amongst enthusiasts. Available in a wide range of variants, from van to pick-up, it was the minibuses that would prove the most enduring with many becoming much-loved campers. Models such as the 21-window and Samba are sought after today, with original examples commanding high prices. Early models lacked power, the 1100cc air-cooled engine producing just 25hp, but an upgrade in 1965 saw a more useful 1500cc, 44hp motor fitted. By the time production ended in 1967, almost 1.5 million had been built.

The Show Car

It wasn't until Series 11 of *Wheeler Dealers* that we got our hands on a proper 'Splittie'. Imported from the US and in solid, rust free condition the exterior mainly needed smartening up so ours got some new chrome, along with replacement window frames. And more tidying was needed inside to really bring back that retro look and fitting new seats and plenty of new parts really improved things. Mechanically, the engine was pretty strong although the gear linkage did need attention. But it was the vague steering that really needed to be sorted, and upgrading to a complete new rack and pinion set up was a bit of a mission. Well worth it though, as it transformed the way it drove and fixed one of the issues with the T2.

Corrosion Hotspots

1. Lower front panel and inner front valance
2. Roof gutters
3. Front screen surround
4. Front roof panel around the airbox
5. Chassis legs front to rear, including outriggers and jacking points
6. Floorpan
7. Door bottoms
8. Bottom of the tailgate/engine lid
9. Inner and outer wheel arches
10. Inner and outer sills
11. Around the side windows
12. Rear corner of the engine bay, including the battery tray
13. Rear inner and outer lower valance



The Checklist

- Every inch of the bodywork for signs of rot. All of the panels are at risk, and it can lurk in inaccessible places. It can prove very costly to sort so get a professional inspection if you're unsure
- The chassis very carefully, focussing particularly on the legs that run from front to rear and the outriggers. Look for evidence of patching and previous welding, and think very hard before taking on a project
- That you're not looking at a bodged restoration. A shiny exterior could be hiding all sorts of horrors beneath and rising values might have tempted previous owners to cut corners. You're better off finding an honest example to begin with
- The quality of any modifications or conversions as not all are done well. An original, unmolested example will likely prove a better bet in the long run
- That sliding side doors aren't loose or sticky in operation. Fixing it isn't especially difficult, though
- For worn and smoky engines. Low power outputs mean they are worked hard, and could be due a re-build. Oil leaks are common, too, but shouldn't be excessive, and like the Beetle you need to check the movement of the crank pulley - too much and it indicates excessive crankshaft end-float
- For signs of poor running. It often means carburettors in need of an overhaul, which is simple to do, but it could be a result of poor modifications
- That there's no smell of fuel in the cabin. It's likely to be coming from perished pipework, and the fuel tank is susceptible to corrosion, too
- That there are no signs of overheating. It's crucial that the thermostat and cooling flaps operate correctly
- The gearbox for an obstructive shift, or unusual noises. Worn layshaft bearings lead to whining, but a specialist can overhaul the 'box at a reasonable cost
- For clutch judder on hard used examples. Parts are inexpensive but labour costs will soon mount
- That the suspension has been lubricated properly on early models. Previous owners may not have been aware of the need for regular fettling, and it will lead to premature wear and failure
- Whether it's been lowered and whether the work has been done properly
- The brakes are working okay and that there's no pulling to one side. Lack of use can lead to seized components, although an overhaul is straightforward and cheap
- For excessive free play in the steering. The idler pin wears and a special tool is required to fix it. If it wanders on the test drive, it could point to worn track rod ends
- The condition of the interior. Refreshing a scruffy cabin isn't too difficult, but the costs will soon mount. Threadbare seats and a tatty headlining are common problems. At the same time, elevating roofs will need careful checking for damage or evidence of water leaks
- The quality of camper conversions. The electrics need particular care as they may have been bodged by inexperienced DIY-ers, so ensure it all works properly