



**NP-08-65**

**#79**

**Volkswagen  
1200 "split window"  
(1951)**

**Minichamps  
430 052001**

**Period:** 1938-2003

**Built:** 21,529,464  
of which 527,541 split window

**Engine:** 1.1-litre 4-cyl boxer

**Power:** 25 PS

**Top speed:** 100 km/h

**Price:** unknown

**Predecessor:**

none

**Successor:**

Volkswagen Golf Mk I

**Date acquisition:**

15/05/1998

Approx. first plate    Approx. last plate

**ND-05-55**

**KP-16-LG**



**Volkswagen. Das Auto.**

The story of the Volkswagen Beetle's origins is often told. In 1934 Adolf Hitler gave engineer Ferdinand Porsche the mandate to develop a "people's car" and had a factory built in today's town Wolfsburg. The result was the Volkswagen Type 1, affectively known as the Beetle. Only 210 civilian Beetles were built before World War II broke out. During the war, the factory converted to building military vehicles, and it took until 1947 before the factory reverted to building regular Beetles at full scale. The Netherlands were among the first export markets and – despite the clear link to Adolf Hitler – the car became a runaway success. In fact, the Beetle turned out to be the most produced car of all time: more than 15 million were built in Germany until 1978 and a further 5 million in Mexico until 2003.

This model by Minichamps is an early Beetle recognizable from the split rear window. In the Netherlands, these first Beetles were therefore colloquially known as the "brilkevers" (spectacled beetles). On later Beetles, the rear window first, in 1953, became an oval of the same dimensions as the split windows, and finally a full-size rear window from 1958.

In the 1950s and 60s the Beetle could be seen – and heard – everywhere. As Volkswagen's newsroom noted: "[The] sound is as unmistakable as the Beetle's silhouette: it buzzes, it puttters – all against a background of soothing fan noises – a feeling of euphoria which has underscored our mobility for decades and which was the accompaniment for our independence and for growing prosperity during those years. The unmistakable noise of the Beetle left its mark on the sound backdrop of German streets. And in other places, as well, the air-cooled Beetle Boxer was the lead instrument in the noisy traffic concert".

"No other automobile has had such a social effect," wrote Arthur Railton in "The Beetle", his ode to the car. "It has become a part of our folklore. People wrote books about it, issued magazines featuring it, produced films with it as an almost human star ... The Beetle was the centre of hundreds of jokes and a symbol for caricaturists ... for the rebellion against the Establishment". The Beetle was not flashy and pompous. But it was also more than just pure practicality. Right from the start, the Beetle was a status symbol of classlessness - both materially and intellectually. In the middle of the 1960's, the VW advertising arm was already serving just this uniqueness of the Beetle, which sales strategists today call "USP" (Unique Selling Point): "You can't tell what its driver is by looking at the car. For example, whether he is lucky with women or on the stock market. Or even both. Whether she owns property in Switzerland. Is one of the prominent figures in national politics. Reads Plato in the original Greek."



The Type 1 and Type 2 Volkswagens were extremely popular in the Netherlands of the 1950s and 1960s.



The Beetle is one the most recognizable car shapes of the 20th century and one of the most important cars in mobilizing the masses after WW II.



The rear window grew larger over the Beetle's long production run.