



HB-50-LS

#270

**Volkswagen
Golf GLS (Mk I)
(1981)**

**Minichamps
400 055100**

Period: 1974-1983
Built: 6.99 million

Engine: 1.5-litre 4-cyl.
Power: 70 PS
Top speed: 156 km/h
Price: fl. 19,039 / £ 1,457

Predecessor:
Volkswagen Beetle
Successor:
Volkswagen Golf Mk II

Date acquisition:
06/06/2018

Approx. first plate Approx. last plate
56-DF-72 **KV-24-TK**





Volkswagen. Das Auto.



The Golf Mk1 built on the template set by “first-movers”.

Benchmarks. The cars that define a vehicle class, not just for a short time but over several decades and across model generations. A Golf is a Golf. And an Opel Kadett, or Astra, is a Golf rival. In the automotive world, there is perhaps no greater honour than to be considered the class benchmark, but – ironically – benchmark accolades do not always originate from first-mover advantage and pioneering design and engineering. The Golf was a class act from the start, but it was clearly inspired on models by rival brands that helped lay the foundation for the Golf’s winning design and engineering template.

By the late 1960s Volkswagen found that the appeal of its uber-successful Beetle was starting to wane. For decades, Volkswagen factories had been churning out Beetles by the bucketloads, but it was undeniable that the Beetle’s old-fashioned mechanical setup – dating back to the 1930s – was outclassed by mechanically superior rivals’ such as the Fiat 128 (1969) and Peugeot 204/304 (1965/69) with modern transversely mounted front engines and front wheel-drive layouts, and outshined by fashionable and practical hatchbacks such as the Simca 1100. So in 1970 Volkswagen tasked Giorgetto Giugiaro to design its new compact car. The story goes that on his first visit to Volkswagen’s R&D department, Giugiaro found a completely disassembled Fiat 128. AutoCar explains (30/10/2021): “The reason was that the 128 was the first mainstream four-wheel drive car that successfully brought together all the latest contemporary technology – particularly in its drivetrain and chassis – that not only made it a thoroughly enjoyable car (...) but also signposted the most cost-effective and logical way for a large manufacturer to exploit the growing trend towards FWD machinery.” Giugiaro went on to design a car he considered one of his very best: a crisp two-box hatchback with sharp corners and clean flat surfacing.

So the 1974 introduction of the Golf marks the beginning of Volkswagen’s second era. Ever since its introduction, the Golf has appealed for its elegant but unpretentious design – with the thick C-pillar as one its hallmark design features. Although the Opel Kadett was more popular, at least in the Netherlands, it lacked the classless appeal of the Golf. What’s more, its engineering, most believed, was generally not as clever and thorough as a Golf’s. Evidence of the Golf’s robust build is its longevity: of 16,454 Golfs sold in the Netherlands in 1983, 8.5% were still registered as of 2020. This Minichamps model is a post-facelift model characterized by the chunkier rear-light clusters, in top-of-the-range GLS trim (sporty GTI aside) in a fresh apple green called Santongrün.

**Wise people
bought a Golf:
likely to last
longer than
its rivals.**



The chunky C-pillar has become a Golf hallmark.