

DOCTOR ON THE ROAD: VOLKSWAGEN ID BUZZ

# The VW bus has got a lot camper

Feeling cool and really buzzing. That's Independent Practitioner Today's motoring correspondent **Dr Tony Rimmer** (right) after his latest road test



THE ELECTRIC car revolution is well and truly upon us. Hardly a week goes by without the release of yet another new EV from either an established brand or a manufacturer fresh to the scene.

Despite relatively high prices, the proportion of EVs to internal combustion engine cars is increasing month on month, albeit slowly.

Now that some supply issues made worse by the war in Ukraine are resolving, you will

notice there are more EVs on the roads near you.

The trouble is that the choice available can be bewildering and the vast majority of EVs are medium-sized SUVs which all have much the same practicalities and attributes.

**Bit of personality**

They all drive in much the same way and so we medics end up choosing on the basis of range and purchase price.

There is obviously a place for

an EV that attracts us in a different way; something with character and a bit of personality. So welcome to the Volkswagen ID Buzz.

The classic VW bus has been around for decades and probably makes us think of trips to the coast in the sunshine, perhaps surfing when we get there.

Campervan versions have been immensely popular over the years and some of us may have been taken by our parents on exciting camping trips

inducing fond memories. You can't help smiling when you see one of these old rear-engined VWs still on the road.

In the same way that the original bus was a development of the then current Beetle, the new ID Buzz shares the same MEB electric platform with its ID3, 4 and 5 siblings.

It shares the same 201bhp motor powering the rear wheels and uses the larger 77kWh battery. The styling is very van-like – there is a commercial van



Back to the future: The over-large VW badge on the front and the bonnet shaped to look like a smile bring back all the right memories



variant – but takes many of the design elements of the classic bus to give it an unmistakable look.

The over-large VW badge on the front and the bonnet shaped to look like a smile bring back all the right memories.

It looks at its best with the optional two-tone paint with white on top and a bright colour such as yellow or orange below. However, this choice costs a hefty £2,790 extra.

Eco-friendly materials

Those cool design features continue on the inside too. Wide comfortable seats, numerous storage pockets and the use of contrasting eco-friendly materials create a light and airy passenger space.

The ID Buzz has five full-size seats and more than double the boot space of the ID4. The rear seats can slide to alter the available legroom and can recline to a decent degree too.

There will be a longer wheelbase version available at the end of the year that will have the option of seven seats and will probably form the base for camper variants.

The driver controls and infotainment system are lifted straight out of the other ID models, so unfortunately still suffer from the same heating and ventilation control frustrations on touch-sensitive slides.

However, all the positive elements remain, so the ID Buzz is an easy car to drive. It is made even easier by the van-like raised driver's



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position, tight turning circle and the abundance of glass to make manoeuvring in tight spaces a straightforward procedure.

Although it weighs 2.5 tonnes, the torquey 201bhp electric motor allows the Buzz to step off smartly and keep up with urban traffic without even trying.

**Calm and smooth**

The ride, even on the optional 21" wheels on my test car, was calm and smooth, but caught out occasionally by sharp ridges and pot-holes.

Body roll is minimal due to the low centre of gravity and the handling is predictable but not sporty.

This VW is at its best on the motorway where it lopes along at

70mph with ease and comfort. You are then only restricted by the range which is a realistic 200–220 miles; potentially frustrating on a long holiday haul.

With a £63,715 starting price, the ID Buzz is expensive even for an EV. However, there is nothing quite like it on the road and it will hold its value really well.

It attracts positive comments wherever you go and it has a cheery character. It is a very practical and very roomy five-seater.

Volkswagen should be congratulated on producing it and I am sure we will see some very interesting variants in due course. ■

*Dr Toy Rimmer is a former NHS GP practising in Guildford, Surrey*

VW ID BUZZ	
Body:	Five-seat SUV
Engine:	Single electric motor, rear-wheel drive
Power:	204bhp
Torque:	255Nm
Top speed:	90mph
Acceleration:	0-62mph in 10.2 seconds
WLTP claimed range:	255 miles
CO <sub>2</sub> emissions:	0g/km
On-the-road price:	£63,715