

THIS CAR IS LIKE AN IMPERFECT FRIEND!

By *Tim Saunders, Motoring Correspondent*

The Volkswagen T-Roc is a reasonable sized Sports Utility Vehicle suited to an active family. We should get on fine then.

True to VW design it is smart, sleek and clinical both inside and out; something to be proud of – the architecture of the bodywork gives much interest thanks to the lines and general boxiness. Gone are the days it seems of sweeping curves.

On the road it's fun to drive, fast when required and in fact if the driver is too zealous with their right foot the front wheels can lose their grip on the road. There's a good driving position. Its six speed manual gearbox is smooth to operate and a pleasure to use. The cruise control on the other hand is one of the more complicated to operate, so much so that it's too awkward for me and I give up.

Inside, it's comfortable and practical. There's a neat drawer underneath the driver's seat providing some useful storage. But it's very black indeed, which seems the way these days in terms of both interiors and economic forecasts.... Not a bit of colour, unless it is the electric blue of the digital displays. But then it is the Black Edition so what do I expect? 'Perhaps there's a Green Edition,' questions Henry (5) who loves anything of this colour, especially dinosaurs. The soul craves it, like music, good food and drink. These days we all need colour in our lives for our mental

health; far more important than ramming technology down our throats, that frankly much of the time we don't need. If it's possible to add colour inside our homes without breaking the bank then it should also be possible inside the family runabout, which let's face it is an extension of our personalities.

The first time I reverse the T-Roc up our driveway, which does slope uphill, it rolls uncomfortably close to our dining room wall. Thankfully my reactions allow for us to make a hasty, if rather speedy, exit. The auto hold function does not seem to work in such a situation no matter what I do, which is unnerving. There is an electric parking brake.



Tim Saunders is an advanced motorist and journalist. He has always been passionate about motoring and regularly reviews cars from the leading manufacturers. His first report on a BMW 520i was published in the Dorset Echo when he was 17 (just after passing his driving test) in 1995. He went on to become business and motoring editor at the Bournemouth Echo.



In the operating manual Volkswagen devotes a chapter to Cyber Security on page 182. Who would have thought this necessary a few years ago? It alerts the driver to the fact that when connecting a mobile phone to the vehicle's system, if it is contaminated with malware, this could infect the car and ultimately pose a risk to driver safety and worse. That's a bit frightening.

The T-Roc is a capable car, whose boot accommodates a typical weekly shop.

Overall, I do like it as I do an imperfect friend. Drive it yourself and see what you think but leave that phone at home.

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FACTS AT A GLANCE

T-Roc Black Edition 1.5 TSi 150 PS 6spd manual

Price: OTR price: £25,525 / Price as tested: £28,340

0-60mph: 8.4secs

Fuel: Petrol

Power: 150bhp

Top speed: 127mph

Watch the video at www.testdrives.biz