

### Kona gets an N

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## TEST DRIVE

# Jetta Mk. 7: Bigger, Smaller

## 2019 Volkswagen Jetta

DAN LYONS | text and photos  
Special to the Times Union

**J**etta — Volkswagen's top selling model — is all new for 2019. Five trim levels of the four-door, front-drive sedan are offered: S (MSRP: \$18,545 (manual), \$19,345 (automatic)), SE (\$22,155), R-Line (\$22,995), SEL (\$24,415) and SEL Premium (\$26,945).

The seventh generation compact is now based on VW's MQB architecture. Jetta joins Atlas and Tiguan as well as the entire, Golf family as the latest models

to roll on Volkswagen's modular transverse matrix platform. Compared to the outgoing Jetta, the early 2019 edition is longer (1.7 inches), slightly wider (.8 inch) and taller (.2 inch). Dimensions aside, it's a refined looking ride. Sharp creases dominate the sloping hood, which flows into a wide, trapezoidal grille. The side view shows a high-waisted character line, tracing an upward path at door handle



### 2019 Volkswagen Jetta

MSRP: \$18,545 - \$26,945

level. Another crease runs a near parallel line, at sill level. The coupe-like roofline resolves in a high, short back end.

With diesels no longer a part of VW's engine menu, Jetta's under hood choices are decidedly straight forward. All models are powered by a turbocharged, 1.4L four-cylinder engine. Base Jetta's can be had with a six-speed manual or eight-speed automatic transmis-



**THE JETTA** is Volkswagen's front-wheel-drive compact sedan, offered in five trim levels. The seventh generation Jetta is powered by a 1.4L four-cylinder turbocharged engine. Only the base model offers a manual transmission option.

sion. All other trims are automatic only. The turbo four makes 147 horsepower and 184 lb.-ft. of torque. It has respectable power. Matching the same torque output as the former, 1.8L engine, the 1.4L pulls easily off the line. After the initial roll-off, there's a momentary lull until you hit the rpm sweet spot, and the turbo kicks in. (Peak horsepower doesn't arrive until 5,000 rpm, and the gas pedal has a lot of travel to it, so you really have to *squeeeze* the throttle, until it reacts.)

Overall power flow isn't as smooth as in the 1.8, and the 1.4 is a bit vocal at wide open throttle, but it gets the job done. And, it's impressively efficient with a pint of petrol. EPA fuel economy ratings are 30/40/34,

and I logged 35 in my recent test drive.

Ride quality is good. Jetta remains firmer in this regard than the average for this segment, but it's always comfortable. Handling and steering response are agile enough for easy, everyday driving. Absent any upgrades, it's not as sporty feeling as some past Jetta models, but I'm sure that the option sheet in future versions will expand to include sportier engine and suspension choices.

Jetta's last generation appeared in 2011, and brought with it an additional 2.7 inches inches of rear leg room. Though the Gen 7 Jetta is longer than the model it replaces, it gives back .7 inch of the leg room in back, and front leg room

*Continued on page 2*

The new Jetta Mk. 7 is a good looking, tech savvy, fuel frugal choice in the compact class.



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GIULIA Ti

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