

Published based on [Shootout - Volkswagen Polo vs Fiat Grande Punto](#).

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[caption id="attachment_19096" align="aligncenter" width="500" caption="Volkswagen Polo vs Fiat Grande Punto - Click above for high resolution picture gallery"]



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Few people would disagree that the **Volkswagen Polo** and the **Fiat Grande Punto** are the two best hatchbacks one can buy in India today. Both cars have their USPs which make them a desirable option for buyers, but when it comes to choose between them, its extremely difficult to get a winner. If you are in this dilemma, fear not, as we intend to answer this very question in this road test review comparison between the Volkswagen Polo and the Fiat Grande Punto. So grab some pop corn and soda, this is going to be a long one!

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Styling - The Volkswagen Polo looks very well proportioned. It is a mini-Golf lookalike with the overall no nonsense, simplistic design. The front looks sharp with the distinctive new Volkswagen family face, whereas the side shows a distinctively sporty front overhang and extremely short rear overhang. The rear shows a broad shoulder line with the Polo's tailgate being opened with the VW logo. The rear does look a bit old fashioned but overall a pleasing car to the eye, specially in the colour red.

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The Fiat Grande Punto was born exactly six years ago and still looks like a masterpiece. If the Polo looks stunning, than the Punto simply looks super-stunning (such a word doesn't even exist, but as you know, the looks of the Punto can't be described). The mini-Maserati front and the bold side profile are totally eye catching. The rear could have been better, but we aren't complaining. The Grande Punto looks smashing from all angles, in all colours. If there is one car we would buy for pure looks, without even bothering to know the specifications and features, it would undoubtedly be the Grande Punto.

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Both look equally stunning when viewed from side. The Polo features an in-built rear spoiler. Fuel tank opening on different sides for both the cars.

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Interiors - If the styling competition was swept away by the Fiat and you're expecting it to perform on similar lines when it comes to interiors, I have some bad news. The Volkswagen's interiors are much better. Both cars feature 3-spoke steering wheels, but the Punto's dashboard does show its age. The Polo's dashboard design is simple yet elegant, the Punto, whereas looks slightly confused. The black color doesn't really offer airiness in the cabin, something the beige interiors in the Polo manage very well. But when it comes to function, the Punto performs much better.

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Both cars feature foldable keys, but that is all that is common. The Punto is so well loaded with features. For starters, there are audio controls on the steering wheel, Bluetooth connectivity, climate control air-conditioner and electrically operated outside rear view mirrors. The omission of such features on the Polo are very surprising to say the least. Volkswagen will launch an updated version with the addition of a few features but at that time, we will also have the Punto Evo, which has a better looking interior than the Polo. Come to the plastics and one feels that Fiat could have used better quality plastics, come to the Polo and it excels in plastic quality and feel. Everything feels solid and on par with a D-segment car while the Tata influence seemed to reflect on the Punto!

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Ride, Handling, Braking - Both the cars featured here ride on 15-inch wheels and have one of the best ride and handling combination. But there has to be one car, which is better than the other. It was difficult initially to judge as both the Punto and Polo are so close in terms of handling and ride balance. However, the Grande Punto emerges as the winner here. The Punto is sharper than the Polo and no matter what, it just never gives up. Whether you're throwing the car through a set of curves, or you're driving over potholes, the Punto feels right for the job. Mind you, the Polo is no less and handles beautiful too, but tends to lose grip on very sharp turns.

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Both the cars feature anti-lock brakes with decent sized tyres. The Punto has wider rubber at 195mm, whereas the Polo makes do with 185mm rubber. Again the Punto is the better decelerating vehicle and stops dead in its track at any given speed without a hiccup, mind you, the Punto is heavier than its competition here. In the Polo though, the car tends to lose its line slightly with the anti-lock system working over time to keep things in check.

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Performance - Theoretically it would be unfair to compare these vehicles as both feature very different powertrains. The Polo makes do with 3-cylinder engines, which when read on paper feels slow and noisy. The Punto on the other hand feels decently fast on paper. But come on the road and things change dramatically. The Polo feels the bigger engined car and the Punto seems to lag a bit. The petrol Polo is very revv happy. Although slightly coarse, the Polo's petrol unit never feels underpowered. On the Punto 1.2, you do feel the lack of thrust. Fuel efficiency of the Polo petrol is much better than the Punto 1.2 petrol, with the car easily returning 14 kmpl compared to the 12.5 kmpl, the FIRE engine offers.

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The Polo TDi again features a 3-pot motor, which is very torquey with a hint of initial turbo lag. Power delivery is linear and the car feels quick once the turbo spools up, albeit a bit vocal. Do we even need to talk about the 1.3 liter Multijet unit which does duty in the Punto? In 75hp form, it feels decent and never underpowered. In 90hp form, it feels quick and in-gear acceleration times are vastly improved. Still want more? We even tested a 105hp Punto, you can read more about it [here](#). Both these engines are very closely matched but the Multijet is more silent of the two. We choose the Punto 90hp over the Polo for the more power and overall refinements of the national engine of our country.

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As can be seen above, the Swift (Our Support Vehicle) is still the king when it comes to engine performance and managed to keep up with us through out the test. But both the Polo and Punto outdo it on the corners. The clutch feel on both the cars is light and well calibrated. The Polo feels so much better going through the gears. The shift action is butter smooth, making the Polo's transmission easily the best for small cars in the country. The Punto's shift is decent as well, nothing that we complain about but certainly not butter smooth like the Polo.

Volkswagen Polo	Prices (OTR, Mumbai)	Fiat Grande Punto	Prices (OTR, Mumbai)
Trendline 1.2L (P)	5,26,683	Active 1.2	4,96,670
Comfortline 1.2L (P)	5,84,902	Dynamic 1.2	5,31,924
		Emotion 1.2	5,68,681
		Active 1.3	5,95,990
Trendline 1.2L (D)	6,41,990	Emotion 1.4	6,26,688
		Dynamic 1.3	6,34,649
Highline 1.2L (P)	6,93,088	Emotion 1.3	6,83,552
Comfortline 1.2L (D)	7,00,209	Emotion Pack 1.4	6,93,789
Highline 1.6L (P)	7,10,660	Emotion Pack 1.3	7,47,242
Highline 1.2L (D)	8,08,394	Emotion Pack 1.3 90HP	7,86,079

Conclusion - Volkswagen offers the Polo in 7 variants, across three engine options. Fiat offers three engine options too but across ten variants. Both these cars appeal to a different class of buyers, but ultimately, it comes to whether you think from the heart or the head. The Polo would appeal to those who want a no nonsense hatchback which would return very good mileage, never break down and offer excellent quality. Servicing a Volkswagen is much more expensive than a Fiat, but you know the dealership will do a better job than what Tata Motors would, as Fiat cars are like step siblings in a Tata workshop.

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However, if your the kind of person who thinks from his heart, than the Grande Punto is for you. The Punto is slightly cheaper to buy, much cheaper to service and almost equally cheap to run (the diesel). It also offers you more for what you pay and turns heads where ever it goes. Simply for this reason, if we had to chose between the two cars, it would be the Fiat Grande Punto that would win our vote every single time. Its sad but a car of this potential does not do numbers it should and hopefully once Fiat sorts out the chink in it's armour, the Punto has what it takes to be a best seller, it's done it internationally and there is no reason it shouldn't in India.

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