

Re: are Volkswagens off–topic?

2) Should I get another VW? The 5–cylinder 2.5l looks interesting.

3) Manual or automatic? Shifting keeps me amused and feels macho, and an automatic would make me feel like a little old lady, but these hills are hell on clutches and manual gearboxes.

And why did they call them Rabbits in the first place, then call them Golfs, and now call them Rabbits again?

John

I have driven manual transmission vehicles exclusively since 1970, and never had a problem with a transmission. Clutches, yes, and a broken tooth in a differential once, but never in a tranny. I have had a 1965 Chevy Malibu, 1961 and 1966 Ford vans, 1972 and 1977 Toyota Corollas, a 1982 Toyota pickup, a 1986 Isuzu Trooper, and presently a 1997 Saturn SW1 and a 1998 SL1. Most of these vehicles had over 200,000 miles when I sold or junked them, generally because the frames were rotting away. I never changed the tranny lube. I have never owned a VW, but they seem to have a good reputation. It is possible that a manufacturing defect could have caused the broken tooth, but your comment on the synchronizers makes me wonder if there was another problem. Usually when my vehicle has had problems shifting, I have found problems with the clutch, causing poor disengagement and harsh shifting. If your vehicle is otherwise in good shape, and you like it, I would suggest getting a used or rebuilt tranny (and a new clutch). It would be a good idea to disassemble those

components

to see any other clues to their demise. In general, I would rather give money to a hard–working local mechanic than buy a new vehicle from manufacturers who refuse to offer high efficiency vehicles, and insist on pushing their zoom–zoom–zoom mentality.

Good luck,

Paul

The only transmission I ever had a problem with was when I had my 5 speed 1985 MPFI Camaro, at about 220,000 km's. I drove the *crap* out of that car (stuff like kicking it to the floor in 1st and doing a burnout, 0–100 km/h in about 5.5 seconds, sometimes a little better if the fuel injection was just right for the weather and could quickly hit 100 km/h in 2nd gear, wide open launches where everyone in the car is slammed to and glued to the seat,

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etc), and eventually 2nd gear's syncro went bad (sheared the 8 or 10 alignment pins right off of it!). When the syncro went bad, trying to get it in second gear, probably too quickly a few times, I smashed the tips off the shift fork! This caused shifting into first to be progressively unreliable, and finding second was getting rare (but going from 1st to 3rd was no big deal, as the car had enough power to not need second at all, unless the extra performance was wanted). Being on a low budget at the time (student) I took a syncro and a shift fork from an S-10 transmission and fixed it. The newer transmissions went to a Borg Warner T-5 "World class", from the standard T5, which were built stronger, and used better 3 piece syncros.