



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4238)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 252

Date Received

07-JUN-2004 7:04 PM '04

Repository

Reference No.
10075791

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City LONG BEACH

State MS

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? YES NO
In the absence of an authorization, you will provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner _____ Date 07/13/2004

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

3VWBB21C91M

Make

VOLKSWAGEN

Model

BETLE

Model Year

2001

Date Purchased
03/2001

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number
MR. BOBBY'S IMPORTS

Engine:
No. Cylinders

4

Fuel Type:

GASOLINE

Original Owner

Dealer's City
GULFPORT

State MS

Zip Code 39501

Transmission Type

Auto

Antilock Brakes

Cruise Control

Powertrain

Vehicle Component Code

034400 SERVICE BRAKES, HYDRAULIC; FOUNDATION COMPONENTS

Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s)

07-JUN-2004

Failure Mileage

62,000

Failure Speed

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make

Tire Model (Name or Number)

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

DOT No. (Example: DOTM18ABC038)

Original Equipment
 Prior Repair

Failure Location:

Tire Component Code

Tire Failure Type

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make:

Date Manufactured:

Model No./Name:

Seat Type:

Installation System:

Child Seat Component Code:

Failed Part:

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies).)

Crash

Yes No

Fire

Yes No

Number of Persons Injured

0

Number of Deaths

0

Reported to Police

N

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).

Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

WHILE APPLYING THE BRAKES CONSUMER HEARD A LOUD KNOCKING NOISE FROM REAR. CONSUMER DROVE THE VEHICLE TO DEALER FOR INSPECTION, AND MECHANIC DETERMINED THAT REAR BRAKES, AND ROTORS NEEDED TO BE REPLACED DUE TO CORROSION. *AK

TEN PAGES ENCLOSED

① OWNER'S REPORT, PAGE 1

② OWNER'S REPORT, PAGE 2

③ SERVICE MANUAL, 46-3

④ QUICK REFERENCE DATA

⑤ OWNER'S MANUAL, PAGE 7

⑥ OWNER'S MANUAL, PAGE 20

⑦ REPAIR INVOICE

⑧ Letter to VW of America, 24 JUNE 2003

⑨ Letter to VW of America, 7 JULY 2003

⑩ "CERTIFIED" RECEIPT & "RETURN" RECEIPT

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a Manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
Reference No. 10075791

Long Beach, MS

Volkswagen New Beetle
VIN: 3VWBB21C91M

In June 2003, I noticed a metal on metal rubbing sound coming from the rear of the VW. I inspected the rear brakes and determined that the pads needed replacing. During the disassembly I determined that the brake rotors also needed replacing. I acquired the replacement parts and did the repairs myself. I also thought it would be a good time to inspect the front brakes.

I did inspect the front brakes. The front brake pads looked OK, but I decided to do some measurements just to be sure. The measurement on the front brake pads matched the vehicle specifications for NEW brake pads. I thought this to be quite strange. The mileage on this VW at the time was 62,000. How could the front brake pads show no signs of wear at this mileage while the rear brake pads wore to the extent that the brake rotors were damaged beyond repair. I decided to investigate.

Enclosed pages 46-3 and the New Beetle Quick Reference Data were copied from the Volkswagen New Beetle Service Manual by Bentley Publishers. These pages clearly indicate the tolerances for brake pad wear, 14mm being new with a wear limit of 7 mm.

The enclosed page titled Warning and Indicator Lights (page 7) was copied from the 2001 New Beetle Control and Operating Equipment booklet that came with the car. Also included here is page 20 of the same booklet that instructs the owner to have the front brake pads inspected by a VOLKSWAGEN workshop. They also recommend that the rear brake pads be inspected at the same time. Let me add at this point that the dash indicator light identified on page 7 did not illuminate.

After I processed the above information, I determined that there was something wrong with the braking system on my VW. I took the VW to the dealer where I had bought it. I explained my problem. The dealer put the VW in the shop and returned the VW an hour or so later. They could find no problems with the braking system. I have enclosed a copy of the repair invoice. I asked how I could drive 62,000 miles with no apparent wear on the front brakes while the rear brakes had worn to the extent of damaging the rotors? They responded that the rear brakes wear out before the front brakes.

Not satisfied with such service, I wrote to Volkswagen of America in Auburn Hills, Michigan. Enclosed is a copy of that letter. Several weeks after I made this mailing I received a phone call from Volkswagen of America. After a spirited discussion, the answer I received was that the rear pads wear out faster than the front pads because the rear pads are smaller than the front pads and the rear pads are made of a material

that is not as hard as the front pads. I asked that they put that explanation in writing and they refused to do so.

I then documented that conversation in a written statement and sent it to Volkswagen of America, certified mail, return receipt requested. I am sending copies of these three documents. I did not get a response from Volkswagen of America.

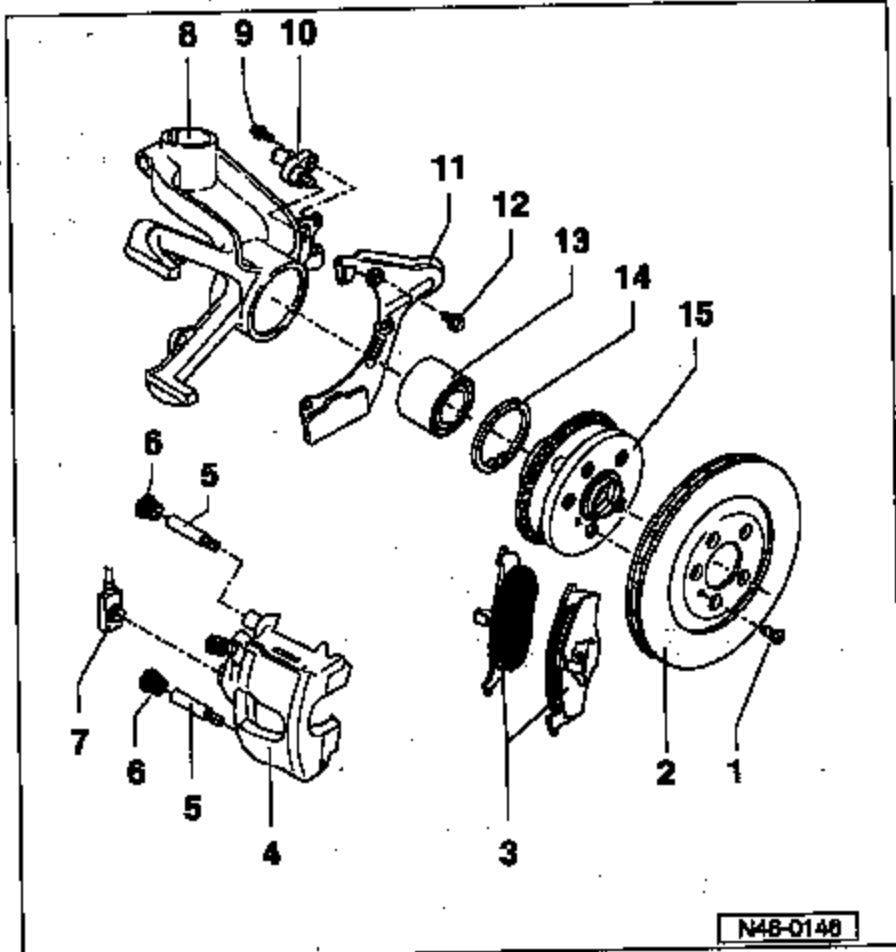
If Volkswagen of America is correct in stating that the rear pads wear out faster than the front pads, then why is there a dash warning light that indicates that the front pads are worn and need to be inspected? The front brake pads obviously have a sensor telling the dash warning light to illuminate. If, as Volkswagen says, the rear pads wear out faster than the front pads, should not that sensor system be located on the rear braking system? Volkswagen of American knows that there is something wrong with my braking system and they refuse to tell me about it.

Therein lies the basis for my complaint. I am still looking for an acceptable answer to my question. How can I drive 62,000 miles in my VW with no apparent wear on the front brakes? Perhaps you can get an answer for me.

**Front brake assembly
(FS III caliper)**
NOTE —

The minimum brake rotor thickness specification is stamped into the rotor's hub and also listed in the appropriate illustration.

1. Screw
 - Tighten to 4 Nm (35 in-lb)
2. Brake disc
 - Diameter: 280 mm (11.02 in.)
 - Thickness: 22 mm (0.866 in.)
 - Wear limit: 19 mm (0.748 in.)
 - When worn always replace on both sides
 - Remove brake caliper before removing disc
 - Never remove brake discs from hub by using force. If necessary use penetrating fluid, otherwise brake discs can be damaged.
3. Brake pads
 - Thickness 14 mm (0.551 in.)
 - Checking thickness, see 0 Maintenance
 - Always replace all pads on one axle at same time
 - Wear limit: 7 mm (0.276 in.) including backing plate
4. Brake caliper
 - Do not loosen hydraulic line when replacing pads
5. Guide pin
 - Tighten to 28 Nm (21 ft-lb)
6. Protective cap
7. Brake hose with union and banjo bolt
 - Tighten to 35 Nm (26 ft-lb)
8. Wheel bearing housing
9. Socket-head bolt
 - Tighten to 8 Nm (71 in-lb)
10. ABS wheel speed sensor
 - Before inserting sensor, clean hole inner surface and coat with grease (VW part no. G 000 850)
11. Splash shield
12. Bolt
 - Tighten to 10 Nm (7 ft-lb)



13. Wheel bearing
 - Replace each time after removing
 - Pressing out and in, see 40 Front Suspension and Drive Axles
14. Circlip
15. Wheel hub with rotor
 - Removing and installing, see 40 Front Suspension and Drive Axles

N48-0148

NEW BEETLE QUICK REFERENCE DATA

1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002

WARNING —

Your common sense, good judgment, and general alertness are crucial to safe and successful service work. Before attempting any work on your Volkswagen, read the warnings and cautions on page vii and the copyright page at the front of the manual. Review these warnings and cautions each time you prepare to work on your Volkswagen. Please also read any warnings and cautions that accompany the procedures in the manual.

Engine (Repair Groups 10, 13, 15a, 15b, 15c, 17)

Engine codes	
AEG, AVH, AZG	2.0L gasoline, 8-valve
ALH	1.9L turbo diesel (TDI)
APH, AWP, AWV	1.8L turbo gasoline, 20-valve
Cylinder compression pressures (new engine)	
1.8L, 2.0L engines	10-13 bar (147-191 psi)
1.9L (ALH) engine	25-31 bar (368-456 psi)
Engine oil capacity (with filter change)	
1.8L engine	4.4 liters (4.6 qt.)
1.9L engine	4.5 liters (4.8 qt.)
2.0L engine	4.2 liters (4.4 qt.)
Engine oil drain plug	
Tightening torque (all)	30 Nm (22 ft-lb)

Cooling System (Repair Group 19)

Coolant mixture	50% anti-freeze/50% distilled water
Coolant type	VW G12 Coolant/antifreeze
System capacity	
gasoline engines	5.0 liters (5.3 qt.)
diesel (ALH) engine	6.0 liters (6.3 qt.)

Fuel Injection (Repair Groups 20, 23, 24)

Fuel injection system	
1.8L, 2.0L (AVH, AZG) engine	Bosch Motronic ME7.5.1
1.9L (ALH) engine	Turbo direct injection (diesel)
2.0L (AEG) engine	Bosch Motronic 5.9.2
Fuel requirements	
1.8L (APH, AWP)	unleaded gasoline 90 AKI (plus/mid)(min)
1.8L (AWV)	unleaded gasoline 83 AKI (super)(min)
1.9L (ALH)	diesel #2 CN 45 (min)
2.0L	unleaded gasoline 87 AKI (regular)(min)
Fuel tank capacity (approx.)	14.5 gal. (55 liters)

Ignition System (Repair Group 28)

Spark plugs	
1.8L engine, manufacturers number	NGK PFR 6 Q
1.8L engine, VW part no.	101-000-063-AA
2.0L engine, manufacturers number	NGK BKUR 6 ET-10
2.0L engine, VW part no.	101-000-033-AA
Spark plug electrode gap	
1.8L engine	0.80 mm max. (0.031 in.)
2.0L engine	0.90-1.10 mm (0.035 to 0.043 in.)
Spark plug tightening torque	
Gasoline engines	30 Nm (22 ft-lb)
Firing order	
4-cylinder engine	1-3-4-2

Manual Transmission (Repair Groups 30, 34)

02J transmission	
Oil type	VW synthetic oil, G50, 75W/90
Oil capacity	2.0 liters (2.1 qt.)
02M transmission	
Oil type	VW synthetic oil, G51, 75W/90
Oil capacity	2.3 liters (2.6 qt.)
Clutch hydraulic fluid type	Brake fluid DOT 4

Automatic Transmission (Repair Group 37)

01M transmission	
Transmission lubricant	VW synthetic ATF
Final drive lubricant	VW synthetic oil, G50, 75W/90
Transmission capacity	
Initial fill capacity	5.3 liters (5.8 qt.)
Drain and refill	3.0 liters (3.2 qt.)
Final drive capacity	0.75 liters (0.8 qt.)

Brake System (Repair Groups 45, 46, 47)

Brake fluid type	FMVSS 118 SAE DOT 4
Brake pad wear limit, front and rear	7 mm (0.276 in.)

Power Steering System (Repair Group 48)

Fluid type	VW hydraulic fluid G 002 000
Fluid capacity	0.7-0.9 liter (0.74-0.95 qt.)

Air Conditioning System (Repair Group 87)

Refrigerant type	R-134a
Refrigerant quantity	700 g + 50 g (24.7 + 1.8 oz.)
Refrigerant oil type	VW PAG SP-10
Refrigerant oil quantity	135 cc (4.8 oz.)

Wipers and Washer (Repair Group 92)

Windshield washer reservoir capacity	6.2 liters (6.8 qt.)
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Warning and indicator lights

Symbol	Symbol color	Name	See page
	Yellow	Airbag system	11
	Green	Turn signals	14
	Red	Engine oil pressure	13
	Red	Generator	13
BRAKE	Red	Brake (US models)	15
	Red	Brake (Canada models)	15
	Blue	High beam	15
	Red	Safety belt	19
	Blue	Engine coolant temperature	16
	Red	Engine coolant level, temperature	16
ABS	Yellow	Anti-Lock Brake System (US models)	18
	Yellow	Anti-Lock Brake System (Canada models)	18
	Yellow	Malfunction Indicator Lamp (MIL)	12
	Yellow	Electronic immobilizer	15

Symbol	Symbol color	Name	See page
	Yellow	Rear fog lights*	20
	Yellow	Fuel level too low	11
	Red	Rear lid	20
	Red	Emergency flasher	39
	Yellow	Rear window defogger	40
	Yellow	Anti-Slip Regulation*	14
EPC	Yellow	Electronic Power Control* (Gasoline models only)	14
	Yellow	Glow plug (Diesel models only)	14
	Yellow	Front brake pads worn*	20
	Yellow	Rear spoiler*	11

Notes

If one of the lights marked with comes on while you are driving, move a safe distance off the road. Turn off the engine, turn the emergency flasher on and use other warning devices to alert other motorists. Go to listed page in your booklet for explanations.

Some of the lights mentioned are on certain models only and may be options on other models.

16- Rear fog light*

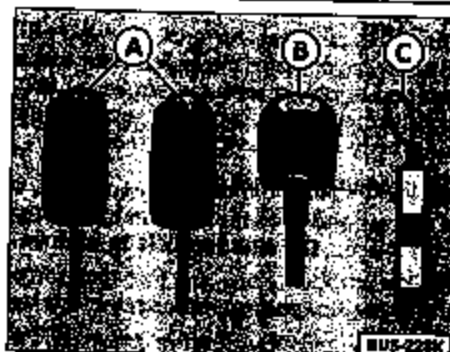
The indicator light comes on when you switch on the rear fog light. For more details, see page 38.

17- Rear lid

The warning light comes on when the ignition is on and the rear lid is open. The light should go out when the rear lid is closed properly.

18- Front brake pads worn*

Have the front brake pads inspected by a VOLKSWAGEN workshop. We recommend that you have the rear brake pads or linings inspected at the same time.

Keys

Three keys and a key tag are provided with your VOLKSWAGEN:

- Two master keys with remote control **A**
- One valet key **B**
- One tag **C**

Do not leave your vehicle unattended with the key in the ignition lock. Entry by unauthorized persons could endanger you or harm the vehicle. Always lock all doors and take the key.

A - Master key with remote control

This key fits all locks on the vehicle. This key allows you to open/close your vehicle and to set the alarm*. To fold the key out, press the release button.

To fold the key back into place, press the release button again.

Push the red button to activate the panic function. The horn sounds and the turn signals will flash for approximately 30 seconds.

For more information see page 29.

Do not leave children unattended in the vehicle especially with access to the remote control. The remote control could be used to lock the doors delaying access to the children in an emergency.

To replace batteries of the remote control:

Your authorized VOLKSWAGEN Dealer can change the batteries for you.

Long Beach, MS
24 June 2003

Volkswagen Consumer Relations
3800 Hamlin Road
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

Re: 2001 Volkswagen Beetle
VIN 3VWBB21C91M

Dear Sir:

I own a 2001 VW New Beetle with 62,000 miles. I bought this car new. In late May 2003, I had obvious problems with the rear brakes on this car. A quick inspection revealed that the brake pads were worn to the point of having to replace such pads. I also had to replace the brake rotors. I did this replacement myself. After completing my project on the rear brakes, I inspected the front brakes. The brake pads seemed OK, but I measured the thickness of the pads just to compare it to the specifications contained in my Volkswagen New Beetle Service Manual, 1998-2002 by Bentley Publishers. Page 46-3, Section 3 indicates that the front pads should be 14mm thick when new. The thickness of the brake pad that I measured on my VW was 14mm, and this after 62,000 miles and the complete wearing out of the rear brakes.

A review of the VW Owners Manual, Booklet 3.1, page 20, Item 18 -Front brake pads worn, says in full "Have the front brake pads inspected by a VOLKSWAGEN workshop. We recommend that you have the rear brake pads or linings inspected at the same time."

With the above information available to me, I suspected that there may be something wrong with my VW's braking system. I took my VW to my local VW service department and explained the situation. I specifically asked that they explain how a pair of front brake pads could show no sign of wear while the rear pads were worn to the point of ruining the brake rotors. The first reaction I received was that the rear pads on Volkswagens wear out before the front pads. I did not believe it then and I do not believe that now. When my car was returned to me, the diagnosis was that there were no problems with the brakes. I am sending a copy of the invoice for that service. I am totally disappointed with such service.

What I expect from Volkswagen: (1) A complete and accurate diagnosis of the braking system on my 2001 VW New Beetle; (2) If there is a problem found with the braking system, repair of the faults found at Volkswagen expense and reimbursement for the parts I had to purchase in order to replace the rear pads and brake rotors, and (3) if there is no problem found with the braking system, an explanation of how my VW can experience 62,000 miles with no apparent wear on the front brake pads.

I anticipate a speedy reply.

Sincerely,

Long Beach, MS
7 July 2003

Volkswagen Consumer Relations
3800 Hamlin Road
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

Re: Case # 30299318

Dear Sir:

This is to document the conversation held on 3 July 2003 between Maureen D..... in Customer Service and myself. The telephone number that I called was 800/822-8987.

I asked for an explanation of how I could drive my 2001 VW New Beetle 62,000 miles with no apparent wear on the front brake pads. Ms. Maureen said she talked with the service manager, John, at Gulfside Imports in Gulfport, Mississippi. Ms. Maureen reported the following to me:

The rear pads wear out faster than the front pads because the rear pads are smaller and are made of a material that is not as hard as the front pads.

When I asked her if I could get that explanation in writing, Ms. Maureen said I could not.

If I did not understand that above conversation correctly, please inform me at the above address. Absent any response from you, I will assume that my recollection of the said conversation is correct.

As you can understand from the above, my question was not answered.

Sincerely,

**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**