



Happy Camper: VWs and the Great Outdoors

There was a time when VW Buses and Vans were common-place on the roads and at state parks. Today, every Air Cooled VW Camper is unique. Many may have similar features; however, no two are completely alike. Mid America Motorworks looks at the different options available with VW Campers, from the first Split Window Campers of the 1950s to the Westfalias, Vanagons and more.

Introducing the Split Window

Volkswagen's Type 2 goes by many names: Transporter, Kombi, Bulli, Microbus, Splittie, Bus or Camper, depending on where you are and who you talk to. The Split Window model, released in 1950, was the first Type 2 released. The Split Window quickly gained vast popularity and 150,000 were sold in the first decade.

Camper Features

Most Volkswagen campers featured the same basic layout and design elements needed for a modest camping trip, taking the VW Bus from transportation to destination. Common features included:

- Seats that can be converted to beds
- A folding table and seat
- Privacy curtains
- Ample storage cabinets
- Auxiliary lighting
- Kitchenette, complete with a camp stove, ice box and basin





No Overhead (Space)

The biggest downfall to the Volkswagen camper was the low ceilings and the limited space. As a result, many different roof upgrades quickly became available as aftermarket options.

Dormobile Roof

Hinged on one side to rise up from the other side, the Dormobile Roof allowed for an eight and a half foot ceiling height while camping. It also allowed for the accommodation of bunk beds inside.

One Sided Pop-Top

This was one of the most popular roof conversions for the Westfalia. This pop-top was hinged at either the back or the front and lifted from the opposite end. The raised end and sides typically featured a transparent window or screen, creating additional light and more air flow.

Full Pop-Top

Today, the most common roof conversion is the full pop-top. This option lifts on all four sides and the height can be adjusted to accommodate even the tallest campers. The majority of the roof may raise or just a portion. This option is ideal because it provides the most support available, which ensures that it will be reliable for many years of use. The roof height is constant throughout the interior of the camper, which helps with ease of mobility when navigating the interior.



Creature Comforts

Many conversions and additions are available to combat the limited space inside the camper, add a little more comfort and extend the living space outward.

Top quality canopies can nearly double the living space available to the VW enthusiasts, and many feature bug screens as well as flooring components. When not in use, they are easily stored in plentiful space that the camper provides.

A variety of interior features are available to personalize your Camper and add those little comforts that mean so much. Engine Bay Covers are available to add extra seating and style to your VW. Interior paneling will restore your VW's nostalgic looks.

Volkswagen Campers are one of the most ideal camping options in existence because of their customizability, ease of driving and stellar gas mileage. They have everything a true camper could possibly need while on a trip, except, of course indoor plumbing. However, if one truly wanted to add this feature, there are options available on the market today.

