

1974 Volkswagen 181 Thing

4dr Convertible • 4-cyl. 1585cc/46hp 1bb1

#1 Concours condition

\$52,000

↗ +176.6%

#2 Excellent condition

\$35,200

↗ +158.8%

#3 Good condition

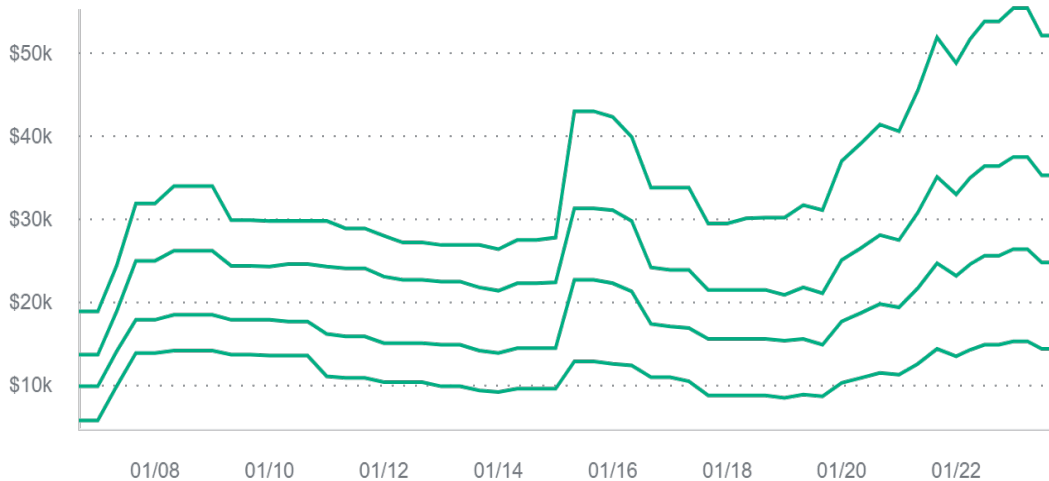
\$24,700*

↗ +152%

#4 Fair condition

\$14,300

↗ +150.9%



Model description

The Volkswagen Type 181 "The Thing" was an updated version of the German military's Type 82 Kubelwagen. Rather than using the Type 82's mechanical setup, however, the Thing rode on a combination of a Beetle driveline and a Type II Transporter suspension. Like the rest of the VW lineup, the Type 181 placed the air-cooled, 1584-cc engine in the rear and use the motor's 46 hp to drive the rear wheels.

While the Beetle had charm, the Thing was much more utilitarian. Nary a curve on the car, it had a removable top, a folding windshield, and hose-it-out practicality. While it would never be confused for a jeep, Land Rover, or Land Cruiser on the trail, it could manage to stray off the pavement, and was particularly fun on the beach.

Much like during its two-year production run, the Volkswagen Thing today is a quirky, eye-catching ride. Its bright and wild 1970s colors, combined with the convertible's boxiness make it stand out in a sea of uniform cars. Models from 1974 are slightly more desirable due to their 55 hp, though condition and color tend to drive value more than model year. Top of the pecking order is the visually unique Acapulco Edition, which is decked out in a blue-and-white striped Surrey top. Cars that retain their original hard top are also popular. Keeping a Thing streetable is not difficult given their commonality with the ubiquitous Beetle, and prices tend to be reasonable as a result. Consequently, buyers can afford to be choosy.

Body styles

4dr Convertible

*Please note: All prices shown here are based on various data sources, as detailed in [About Our Prices](#). For all Hagerty clients: The values shown do not imply coverage in this amount. In the event of a claim, the Guaranteed Value(s)® on your policy declarations page is the amount your vehicle(s) is covered for, even if the value displayed here is different. If you would like to discuss your policy, please call us at 877-922-3391.

Engine types

4-cyl. 1585cc/46hp 1bbl

1971-1975 Volkswagen Type 181 Thing stats

Highest sale	Lowest sale	Most recent sale	Sales
\$65,625	\$3,628	\$19,425	439

Vehicle's condition classification**#1. Concours**

#1 vehicles are the best in the world. Imagine the best vehicle, in the right colors, driving onto the lawn at the finest concours. Perfectly clean, the vehicle has been groomed down to the tire treads. Painted and chromed surfaces are mirror-like. Dust and dirt are banned, and materials used are correct and superbly fitted.

#3. Good

#3 vehicles drive and run well but are not used for daily transportation. The casual passerby will not find any visual flaws, but these vehicles might have some incorrect parts. #3 vehicles could possess some, but not all, of the issues of a #4 vehicle, but they will be balanced by other factors such as fresh paint or a new, correct interior.

#2. Excellent

#2 vehicles could win a local or regional show. They might even be former #1 vehicles that have been driven or have aged. Seasoned observers will have to look closely for flaws but will be able to find some. The paint, chrome, glass and finishes will all appear as excellent. The vehicle drives as a new vehicle of its era would.

#4. Fair

#4 vehicles are daily drivers, with flaws visible to the naked eye. The chrome might have pitting, the windshield might be chipped and perhaps the body has a minor dent. Imperfect paintwork, split seams or a cracked dash might be present. No major parts are missing, but there might be non-stock additions. A #4 vehicle can also be a deteriorated restoration.