Volkswagen unveils the ID.3, its new mass-market electric vehicle

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- VW has shown us plenty of ID concept cars, but this is the first production version, the ID.3.
  Jonathan Gitlin
- It’s about the size of a VW Golf and, after incentives, will cost a similar amount.
  Jonathan Gitlin
- VW is launching the ID.3 with a 58kWh battery pack, which is good for up to 260 miles of range. But there are also 45kWh and 77kWh versions in the pipeline.
- The interior is funkier than a Golf.
  Volkswagen
- The ID.3 is 167.7 inches (4,261mm) long, 71.2 inches (1,809mm) wide, and 61.2 inches (1,552mm) tall.
  Volkswagen
- VW says it has focused on making ID.3 production carbon-neutral along the entire supply chain.
  Volkswagen
- The ID.3 is driven by a 150kW permanent magnet motor at the rear.
  Volkswagen
- The ID Buggy (left), ID Crozz (middle), and ID Buzz

(right) concepts. The Crozz will go into production next year as the ID.4, and the Buzz will go into production around 2022. Unlike the ID.3, which will be sold in the US.
Jonathan Gitlin

- VW's record-breaking ID.R race car was also on display in Frankfurt.
Jonathan Gitlin

FRANKFURT, Germany—On Monday night, on the eve of this year's Frankfurt Motor Show, Volkswagen debuted the ID.3, its new battery electric vehicle. It's the first BEV to use the company's new modular electric architecture (called MEB), which will underpin new BEVs from VW as well as sister brands Skoda and Seat. It's about the size of a VW Golf, and the base model will sell for around €30,000. But unfortunately for us, there are no plans to sell this particular BEV in the North American market.

In the wake of the diesel emissions scandal, VW has gone all-in on electrification, as it's the only way the automaker will be able to meet stringent new European Union CO_2 targets. To that end, the company has developed a flexible new platform for EVs, which in the past few years it's shown off in a number of concept vehicles, including the groovy ID Buzz microbus and that wacky ID Buggy we drove last month.

But the ID.3 is the first production vehicle to use the new technology. At launch, the ID.3—which uses a single rear-mounted 150kW (201hp), 310Nm (228lb-ft) electric motor-generator unit—will feature a 58kWh lithium-ion battery pack that provides up to 260 miles (420km) of range under the European WLTP testing scheme. In time, there will also be a smaller-battery 45kWh, 205-mile (330km) variant and a 341-mile (550km) 77kWh version.

Unfortunately, VW did not homologate the ID.3 for the United States or Canada, so there are no plans to bring the car to

our shores. Instead, we have to wait until late 2020 for the ID.4, based on the ID Crozz concept, which shares the same MEB parts bin and tool kit but in an American-friendly crossover form factor.

Listing image by Jonathan Gitlin

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