

Handle any situation

Sharpen your driving skills at the Volkswagen Driving Academy

By Wendy Pos

“Doing the High Performance Driving Course taught me a big lesson,” says Anthony Kyprou, who drives a Volkswagen Polo. “Like many youngsters out there, I drive way too fast and, for the way I drive, I discovered that my driving ability was not nearly as good as it should have been. If you’re going to drive fast, you need to have advanced driving skills to be able to handle your vehicle. Learning about the capabilities of your car, how to brake safely, how to react in the corners, and being more aware of other traffic, has made me a much safer driver. It was also great fun to experience full-action speed around the course – to test yourself and the car!”

Jakes Jacobs, manager of the Volkswagen Driving Academy, says that the courses teach techniques that people don’t learn when doing

their driver’s licence. “People don’t realise what a potential death trap a car can be,” says Jakes. “If you can teach people to identify hazards and react quickly enough, 90% of the work is done.

“The Academy is not a racing school. We teach people the skills to drive a car properly. People generally drive too fast for what their driving ability allows. If you’re going to drive faster, you need to be twice as safe, and you need to be in full control. Every person doing the course learns to adapt their speed to the conditions on the road, and to their driving capabilities.

“One of the principles we focus on is forward vision. We find people do not look ahead – at least not enough for the speeds they’re doing. It’s important to look further ahead in order to anticipate hazards.

“Another important skill is how to control a skid scenario. The course gives people the opportunity to experience what a skid actually feels like, so that if ever they’re in that situation, rather than being caught unaware, they’ve got the confidence to handle it. Some people also think that if their tyres start squealing the car’s going to roll. This is not always the case and, by reconstructing emergency situations, we equip people to be more prepared.”

Other important driving skills taught include applying brakes correctly, how to use the gears, and how to approach, negotiate and accelerate in a corner. “Ninety percent of the people who come on the course want to prove how well they can drive,” says Jakes. “They learn a lot about their driving abilities.”



**CONTACT THE VOLKSWAGEN
DRIVING ACADEMY**

Tel: (011) 466-9127

Fax: (011) 466-0521

E-mail: info@vwda.co.za

Website: vwdriving.co.za

THE COURSES

High Performance Driving Course

R1 500 per person (excl VAT)

This full-day course teaches you to react quickly and safely on the road. After learning about vehicle dynamics, a range of driving skills are taught, including varying your speed effectively according to different road and traffic conditions. You will experience emergency simulations on the skidpan, and have the opportunity to put your high performance driving techniques to the test on the race circuit.

Touareg 4x4 Off-Road Course

R1 500 per person (excl VAT)

With the latest 4x4 technology, the Volkswagen Touareg is the ultimate off-road animal. This course gives you the opportunity to take it through its paces on the challenging off-road track – even if you've never driven off-road before.

Skidpan Course

R500 per person (excl VAT)

Learn about the different kinds of skids that can occur – and what you can do to avoid these all-too-common emergencies. For Volkswagen owners, you'll also learn how to get the most from your car's safety systems.

Hijack Prevention Course

R300 per person (excl VAT)

You'll learn about the tactics and methods of hijackers, then put into practice the tried-and-trusted 'incident prevention formula'. Sharpen your reactions by learning to recognise potential danger, and learn how to defend yourself. You will have the opportunity to put these skills to the test in confrontational situations in and around your vehicle.

Combination Course

R750 per person (excl VAT)

This course teaches skid control and how to avoid a collision or hijacking.

Defensive Driving Course


R550 per person (excl VAT)

With two hours of practical in-car instruction, you'll learn how to avoid sudden dangers and gain the confidence to deal with potential hazards.



CORPORATE TEAM BUILDING

It's a great bonding experience – and a great way to release some work stress. After some advanced driving tuition, staff can put their new racing

skills to the test in the latest Volkswagen models on the racetrack and skidpan. All events, as well as catering can be tailored to your company's needs (full and half-day options available). 

VOLKSWAGEN AND ARRIVE ALIVE

Volkswagen was one of the first sponsors to assist in the development of the Arrive Alive website, www.arrivealive.co.za, and provided valuable information on a wide range of road safety topics – safe driving techniques, in particular. Adv Johan Jonck, developer of the Arrive Alive website, believes that advanced driving courses go a long way to making our roads safer. "Road safety is a major concern," he says. "We need to pay attention to those aspects that we do have control of. We have little control of things like road conditions, other drunk drivers or forces of nature, but sharpening our own driving skills and learning how to act swiftly and skilfully in emergency situations are things everyone can do to improve their safety on the road. With the increasing number of 'moving violations' on our roads, we need to prepare ourselves to act with skill when confronted with emergency situations on the road.

"I had the privilege of going around Kyalami with Jakes Jacobs of the Volkswagen Driving Academy, and had a preview of the skills that I believe every driver should acquire. The academy not only offers well-qualified instructors and an excellent venue, but also a variety of courses, thereby providing something for every driver – and the ability to gain experience, skills and knowledge on more than one aspect of safe driving."

