

METRIC CONVERSIONS

Article Text

1987 Volkswagen Quantum/Quantum Syncro

For Volkswagen Technical Site

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Sunday, March 19, 2000 01:47AM

ARTICLE BEGINNING

GENERAL INFORMATION

METRIC CONVERSIONS

METRIC CONVERSIONS

Metric conversions are making life more difficult for the mechanic. In addition to doubling the number of tools required, metric-dimensioned nuts and bolts are used alongside English components in many new vehicles. The mechanic has to decide which tool to use, slowing down the job. The tool problem can be solved by trial and error, but some metric conversions aren't so simple. Converting temperature, lengths or volumes requires a calculator and conversion charts, or else a very nimble mind. Conversion charts are only part of the answer though, because they don't help you "think" metric, or "visualize" what you are converting. The following examples are intended to help you "see" metric sizes:

LENGTH

Meters are the standard unit of length in the metric system. The smaller units are 10ths (decimeter), 100ths (centimeter), and 1000ths (millimeter) of a meter. These common examples might help you to visualize the metric units:

- * A meter is slightly longer than a yard (about 40 inches).
- * An aspirin tablet is about one centimeter across (.4inches).
- * A millimeter is about the thickness of a dime.

VOLUME

Cubic meters and centimeters are used to measure volume, just as we normally think of cubic feet and inches. Liquid volume measurements include the liter and milliliter, like the English quarts or ounces.

- * One teaspoon is about 4 cubic centimeters.
- * A liter is about one quart.
- * A liter is about 61 cubic inches.

WEIGHT

The metric weight system is based on the gram, with the most common unit being the kilogram (1000 grams). Our comparable units are ounces and pounds:

- * A kilogram is about 2.2 pounds.
- * An ounce is about 28 grams.

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Torque is somewhat complicated. The term describes the amount of effort exerted to turn something. A chosen unit of weight or force is applied to a lever of standard length. The resulting leverage is called torque. In our standard system, we use the weight of one pound applied to a lever a foot long, resulting in the unit called a foot-pound. A smaller unit is the inch-pound (the lever is one inch long).

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*   A meter kilogram is about 7.2 foot pounds.
*   A foot pound is about 1.4 Newton-meters.
*   A centimeter kilogram (cmkg) is equal to .9 inch pounds.
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Pressure is another complicated measurement. Pressure is described as a force or weight applied to a given area. Our common unit is pounds per square inch. Metric units can be expressed in several ways. One is the kilogram per square centimeter (kg/cm²). Another unit of pressure is the Pascal (force of one Newton on an area of one square meter), which equals about 4 ounces on a square yard. Since this is a very small amount of pressure, we usually see the kiloPascal, or kPa (1000 Pascals). Another common automotive term for pressure is the bar (used by German manufacturers), which equals 10 Pascals. Thoroughly confused? Try the examples below:

- | UNIT CONVERSION | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|--|
| TO CONVERT | TO | MULTIPLY BY | |
| LENGTH | | | |
| Millimeters (mm) | Inches | .03937 | |
| Inches | Millimeters | 25.4 | |
| Meters (M) | Feet | 3.28084 | |
| Feet | Meters | .3048 | |
| Kilometers(Km) | Miles | .62137 | |
| AREA | | | |
| Square Centimeters (cm ²) | Square Inches | .155 | |
| Square Inches | Square Centimeters | 6.45159 | |

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VOLUME			
Cubic Centimeters	Cubic Inches	.06103	
Cubic Inches	Cubic Centimeters	16.38703	
Liters	Cubic Inches	61.025	
Cubic Inches	Liters	.01639	
Liters	Quarts	1.05672	
Quarts	Liters	.94633	
Liters	Pints	2.11344	
Pints	Liters	.47317	
Liters	Ounces	33.81497	
Ounces	Liters	.02957	
~~~~~			
<b>WEIGHT</b>			
Grams	Ounces	.03527	
Ounces	Grams	28.34953	
Kilograms	Pounds	2.20462	
Pounds	Kilograms	.45359	
~~~~~			
WORK			
Centimeter Kilograms	Inch Pounds	.8676	
Pounds/Sq. Inch	Kilograms/Sq. Centimeter	.07031	
Bar	Pounds/Sq. Inch	14.504	
Pounds/Sq. Inch	Bar	.06895	
Atmosphere	Pounds/Sq. Inch	14.696	
Pounds/Sq. Inch	Atmosphere	.06805	
~~~~~			
<b>TEMPERATURE</b>			
Centigrade Degrees	Fahrenheit Degrees	$(^{\circ}\text{C} \times 9/5) + 32$	
Fahrenheit Degrees	Centigrade Degrees	$(^{\circ}\text{F} - 32) \times 5/9$	
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CONVERSION FACTORS (Cont.)

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<b>INCHES</b>	<b>DECIMALS</b>	<b>mm</b>	
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1/64	.016	.397	
1/32	.031	.794	
3/64	.047	1.191	
1/16	.063	1.588	
5/64	.078	1.984	
3/32	.094	2.381	
7/64	.109	2.778	
1/8	.125	3.175	
9/64	.141	3.572	
5/32	.156	3.969	
11/64	.172	4.366	
3/16	.188	4.763	
13/64	.203	5.159	
7/32	.219	5.556	
15/64	.234	5.953	
1/4	.250	6.350	

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END OF ARTICLE