

1940s WWII Kübelwagen Typ 82

The Kübelwagen was Germany's answer to the Jeep. The Kübelwagen used a VW chassis and engine, with a stamped steel body. It wasn't pretty but it did the job, carrying up to four soldiers. It had only two-wheel drive but, due to its light weight, and with the engine over the rear drive wheels, it churned through sand and mud without too much trouble. The VW Beetle-based dune buggies of the '60s proved that. Plus, it was so light, its passengers could manhandle it out of the rare bit of trouble it might get into.



I just had to review this one for my own edification. Made in Czechoslovakia (before it became the Czech Republic), this image is a TINPLATE model with die cast small parts and accessories. But that doesn't mean it's cheap. I'm amazed at the level of detail they managed to put into this baby. Aside from how nicely the various body components look (painted in desert tan), the windshield (with a clear acetate insert) folds down; both front doors open and close with little catches (!); the engine compartment lid opens, as well as the lid for the compartment behind the rear seat; and there's a rear suspension. The steering wheel turns the front wheels. The image comes with a plastic top-up convertible top, as well as a top-down boot. These parts are the ONLY plastic small parts—all the rest are die cast metal, including the steering wheel. Other extras include a pair of shovels and a machine gun with mount (the mounting socket and ammo box are attached to the image). Also included is a thin, corrugated-copper strip that can be inserted into a slot in the machine gun and bent to go to the ammo box—a nice touch. Overall, this is a remarkably detailed image for a tinplate car. Forget those dinky friction-drive numbers with the painted on details—this one rivals the better die cast images.

It comes right down to the reason we collect die cast models—what does it look like on the shelf? This little gem really delivers for the collector of 1:24 images. It was one of a set of tinplate military images. Too bad it's so woefully out of production and will soon be extremely hard to obtain—it's a keeper.

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