

Volvo XC60

Communications Assistant, Chris Girling, has recently taken the Volvo XC60 for a test drive and he shares his thoughts on the car.



In recent years there has been a considerable rise in the popularity of the SUV among disabled motorists. This is due, in large part, to the comfort that is obtained through their lofty ride height. With this in mind, we thought it would be useful for us to review one of Volvo's most popular SUVs, the Volvo XC60.

Aesthetics

Whenever I think of Volvo I still think of the very simple and functional looking estate from the 1980s. However, when I glanced around the Volvo showroom recently, I could see that the brand is catching up with its competitors on the styling front and the XC60 is certainly helping the cause. Regardless of the angle you take when looking at this car it is sure to grab your attention. It has a number of eye catching features including the angler grooves in the door panels, the sleekly cut headlights and its sturdy looking alloys. Driver and passenger safety definitely comes top of the list at Volvo and build quality is a key aspect of this. As is typical of a Volvo,

each panel of this car looks like it has been built to last. In 2017 the Volvo XC60 was awarded a 5 star NCAP safety rating and right from the outset it's easy to see why.

The high standard of contemporary design continues on the interior. Even in the mid-range R-design, the instrument panels have been given a plush chrome finish and the stitching on the partial leather seats looks elegant. There is also a lot of space in the front of this car which, from a design point of view, stops it from feeling cluttered with controls and instrumental panels and helps the occupants to relax and enjoy the drive.

The Drive

The XC60's ride quality is improved by its size and ride height, but even so it is exceptionally smooth at all speeds. I also found that the seats provided an unrivalled level of comfort. Crucially the seats are also very supportive which is particularly good for drivers with back complications or core stability impairments. Despite this superior comfort the car feels

planted to the road and it is stimulating to drive. The XC60 is one of the very few cars in which changing the driving mode has a considerable impact on the performance. The car has three driving modes, Comfort, Dynamic and Eco. It was the switch between Comfort and Dynamic mode which was most impressive, it gives the car a noticeable boost of acceleration which is useful when you are occupying the fast lane on a motorway or dual carriageway. In terms of safety features the model I tested has speed limiting cruise control, front facing sensors which alert drivers if they stray too close to oncoming traffic or obstacles and a rear parking camera fitted as standard, but you will find that the upcoming 2019 XC60 boasts even more in this regard.

Functionality

The on-board satnav in this car is very easy to navigate because drivers can input their destination either by using the 9-inch touchscreen to physically write the address into the system or by using the keypad. The map display



CAR REVIEW



INFORMATION

Model tested: Volvo XC60 D4 R-design
AWD Diesel
Guide price: £41,000
Is it available on Motability: No
Height: 1,658mm
Length: 4,688mm
Width: 2,117mm
visit www.volvocars.com/uk
or contact your nearest Volvo
dealership for more information.

STAR RATING

Performance: 5/5 ★★★★★

Style: 4/5 ★★★★★☆

Comfort 5/5 ★★★★★

Practicality: 4/5 ★★★★★☆

Functionality 4/5 ★★★★★☆

is clear and easy to read, but it is the secondary display located in the centre of the driver's instrument panel that gives the XC60's system an edge over many of its competitors. All of the essential information appears on this display which is again great from a safety perspective because it means that the driver can keep their eyes on the road at all times.

Volvo have made a big effort with this car to ensure that every drive is as enjoyable as possible and one of the first things I noticed in that regard was the immersive feel of the XC60's audio system which has been achieved by the intricate placement of the in-car speakers. The XC60 also has a Spotify app built into its infotainment system which means you can find music easily without having to connect your phone. By using the Volvo on Call app you can get a lot more out of the XC60. This app allows Volvo owners to send scheduling reminders to their car, upload destinations to their car's navigation system, set the car's heating levels and more.

Space and Accessibility

When it comes to getting in and out of the XC60 it would be difficult for full time wheelchair users to transfer into without the aid of a hoist simply because it sits very high off the ground. However, once you are inside there is plenty of space. As one would expect with a car of this size, there is a copious amount of room in the boot for any mobility equipment you may have. It is also worth knowing that the rear seats in the XC60 can be folded completely flat to create more space.

Specifications and Pricing

The model I tested was the Volvo XC60 D4 R-design AWD Diesel, the price for this model starts at £41,000 and unfortunately it is not available on the Motability scheme. This does make it one of the most expensive cars that I have reviewed for the magazine, having said that, it is also the first SUV that I have featured. On the plus side, the new XC60 is available on Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) for just under £534 per month with a deposit of £3,000. It is

also worth keeping in mind that cheaper variants of the XC60 are available and if this car isn't an option for you the Volvo XC40, a smaller SUV, is available on the Motability scheme. When it comes to the technical specifications of this car the 4 cylinder engine produces 190bhp and a top speed of 127mph. 0 to 62 mph is completed in a relatively slow 8.8 seconds but this helps the car to achieve a combined mpg of between 48.7 and 51.4, depending on the size of the alloys, which is very respectable for such a large car.

Verdict

There are very few downsides to this car, even in the areas where one might expect a larger car to falter, such as handling and fuel consumption, the XC60 performs very well. The only off putting thing about this particular model is its starting price of £41,000. The biggest selling points of this car and the things that help to justify the cost are its supreme comfort, surprisingly good handling and the attention to detail. All things considered the XC60 is a fantastic luxury SUV.

