

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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## HOT SMALL VOLVO

**C30: PERFORMANCE  
IN A SMALL PACKAGE**



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# 5-CYLINDER 6-SPEED 227-HORSE 28-MPG-HWY POCKET ROCKET

By Joe Sage



**D**oes anyone remember the Mazda GLC? Anyone? Anyone? Bueller? (Same vintage, give or take a year.) In this era of so many vehicles being named with alphanumeric, it's hard to remember that one actually stood for something: Great Little Car. Whether totally justified in the case of that old Mazda, it's a phrase that keeps echoing in our minds on this small Volvo.

You might not be someone who has thought about Volvos regularly, and you might not usually think about small cars (though at today's gas prices, almost everybody is at least thinking about them by now). Then again, even if you're not a Volvo person, you might find yourself highly interested in the Volvo C30. And even if you don't think about a small car for yourself, you may find this one particularly compelling.

- We test drove the Volvo C70 hardtop convertible last spring, and we were pleasantly surprised to realize this was one of those test cars that, if it didn't have to leave after a week, could become a welcome permanent addition to anybody's fleet. From its clean controls, to its smooth-performing in-line 5-cylinder turbo, putting out 227hp (and remembering that this engine is an exact match in specs to the top-performance Audi S-car setup of the mid-'90s), the C70 was very easy to make friends with. (If only it weren't front-wheel-drive.) The C30 has that same powertrain in a noticeably smaller and much lighter package, and boy does it respond.

- Needless to say, such a

small car is going to have to hold its own in the mean streets of metro Phoenix. With this much power and control on tap, we found no worries in this department. Every time we test a small car, we find the same thing at red lights: our more aggressive neighboring vehicles, which for some years would be almost all of them, instinctively jockey for the other lane (or hover aggressively on the rear bumper), waiting for the green. With some small cars, we can understand why. With some others, such as the Honda Fit, we've found there was enough power (per weight) on tap to hold our own, reasonably, when the light turns green.

At 227hp, 3201 pounds and 167.4 inches in length (320 pounds less and 8.5 inches shorter than the S40 sport sedan), the Volvo C30 does more than hold its own. This little rocket is ready to rock. Corvette

KEEP RIGHT >>





in the rear-view mirror? Not a problem. With a stated 0-to-60 time of 6.2 seconds (6.6 seconds with an automatic), the Volvo is gone. We're not promoting street racing; we're simply saying you won't get mowed down for being small. In fact, you won't even be thinking about it. (Giant SUV in the rear-view mirror? You'll have the power, but the higher level of aggression is inherent with the size.)

We knew we liked this car, so we checked with the manufacturer to see whether anyone else had noticed. Yes, they have. Here are some of the awards the Volvo C30 has received to date:

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**Volvo C30 awards to date, United States:**

Ward's Interior Design Award 2008  
"Ideal" Category Win - AutoPacific 2008  
2008 Best New Small Car - *Autobytel*  
2008 All-Star - *Automobile Magazine*  
Most Spirited 2007 - *American Woman Road & Travel*  
Best EU Import - SEMA 2006

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**Volvo C30 international awards:**

Best Purchase 2008 - *Quatro Rodas* - Brazil  
Best in category "Besten Autos 2007" - Germany  
3rd place Award in category - Switzerland  
International "red dot design award" - Germany  
Golden Steering wheel - 2006 - Germany  
Best compact - *Auto Zeitung* - Germany  
Best design - *Auto Bild Magazine* - Germany  
World's most beautiful car 2006 - Italy

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The Volvo C30 for 2009 has a base price of \$23,800, plus \$825 destination charge. The upgraded/upstyled R-Design starts at \$25,950 plus destination. A Preferred Package for \$1595 adds premium sound system, power driver's seat, keyless drive, trip computer and front fog lights. A Climate Package for \$675 brings heated front seats, headlight washers and rainsensor wipers. Another list of stand-alone options, including a 5-speed Auto-stick transmission, power glass sunroof, Sirius satellite radio, off-black interior, Bluetooth™ and such can push the price over \$30,000, if you go for enough of them, but this is still a very competitive price for what it delivers. Beyond that, Volvo offers a system of Custom Build Options, in the dozens, from alloy wheels to alarms to advanced climate control, spoilers, special colors and much more; there is a \$300 Custom Build charge for any buyer who orders from this list, whether they order just one item or dozens. Go online at [www.volvocars.com/us](http://www.volvocars.com/us) and build your own—you'll get the idea.

You very well may also get the fever. Volvo has pleasantly surprised us several times lately. In particular, the C70 hardtop convertible (with this same engine) and the C30 are two we could easily put in our own garages for a long time to come. ■

