

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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Volvo XC60
T8 PHEV

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • TECHNOLOGY • PEOPLE • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS

Volvo XC60 could be seen as a synthesis of the full history of Volvo in the US, with echoes of a great many handsome, reliable sedans, wagons, even famous P1800 performance coupes and three-door shooting brakes, all rolled into one—the very definition of a crossover, you might say. XC60 is Volvo’s global best-seller by far, while in the US, where bigger often sells better, it runs neck and neck with the XC90, with the XC60 edging out the 90 for top spot here last year. This unit arrives highly credentialed. We had the XC90 in our prior issue and had grown interested in its size category and relativity. For as anyone can see, the XC90 is the big one in the lineup, the XC60 the middle, and an XC40 the small one. Sounds like that most basic formula—full-size, midsize and compact—papa, mama and

baby bear. But it’s not. In line with multiple measures—from government ratings to market positioning goals, to such wild cards as row count—things have grown complex, especially as many lineups go well beyond three sizes. Volvo, at least in the US, still has just three. And while the bigger Volvo XC90’s traditional two-box design suggests SUV, while the 60 and 40 are clearly crossovers, the XC90-60-40 family overall seems so unified. Well, by today’s definitions—which some might think are too fluid and others may think are too rigid—despite being the biggest of three and having three rows, the big XC90 is officially midsize, the XC60 compact and the XC40 subcompact. We suspect most people—owners included—might never suspect any of this. Would it make our XC60

feel smaller to us than it otherwise might? We reflected on this all again, as we drove the mid... um, middle-sized XC60 this time around. For this one, you see, is a compact. (And that smallest third one, XC40, which one might otherwise have thought would be the compact, is a subcompact. But anyone will still shop the three as small, medium and large. So just how big is this middle-size-of-the-pack compact? This riddle would run through our week. Our particular XC60 is an Ultra, a top trim that appears to be dead center in the upper-powertrain T8 set—about \$70 grand amid five T8s from about \$60 to 80 grand, clearly a value spot—only by virtue of two specialty versions this year (one style, one performance) that slot above it by price. (The full XC60 lineup, including a lower priced, bit high-

er fuel mileage B5 hybrid group of four, runs roughly \$50 to 80 grand.) No matter how you parse it, this hot little PHEV sits in a very sweet spot. Partly statistically and somewhat subjectively, the smaller XC60 can have advantages as a compactish-midsize two-row over a midsizeish-fullsize three-row XC90. Many specs are the same (power-suspension-etc) or largely the same (approach-departure-breakover-etc) between the two sizes. The same powertrain is quicker in the smaller, lighter XC60, and, though smaller overall, there are also slight legroom and cargo advantages in XC60 as a two-row. Creature comforts include a readily accessible massage system. Clearances are also greater in the XC60. Towing is the same for both. Sounding pretty attractive so far? Well, it is. The smaller size, along with T8’s extra plug-in hybrid punch, can launch the XC60 like a bolt of energy. Its front-based drivetrain can be revealed a little by that torque, but is promptly balanced by

electric power to the rear. Handling is also nimble and convenient, as you would expect from its size. Suspension is sophisticated up front and simpler but clever in the rear, while ours had optional air suspension, which worked flawlessly. Call this a crossover, which it is, or call it sport and a utility, and you also hit the mark. The XC90 arguably has a bigger utility quotient, while the XC60 has a sportier look, although it bears its appropriate share of both factors. If we had to make a non-case-specific tentative choice, we might say if you don’t need a third row, you’re probably going to like everything about the XC60 best, if it works for your own physical size (we’re over six-foot, and still liked it), unless you just really crave the larger presence of the XC90. No wonder this is their global best-seller. ■ The global best-selling Volvo XC60 is built in a number of places, ours in Sweden. But starting very soon, US units will be built in South Carolina.

When less is more

SMALLER XC WILL APPEAL TO MANY

BY JOE SAGE



SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY	Torslanda, Sweden
ENGINE/TRANS BUILD	Sweden / Japan
PARTS CONTENT	Swed 35% / Fin 15% / US/Can 0%
ENGINE	2.0L 4-cyl trans GDI, alum/alum
HP/TORQUE / ENGINE	228 hp / 400 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.3:1
BATTERY	Li-ion, 18.8 kWh nom / 14.7 usable
ELEC MOTOR	107 kW / 309 Nm
DRIVELINE MAX POWER	±455 hp / ±335 kW / ±709 Nm
TRANSMISSION	8-spd automatic
DRIVETRAIN	AWD = FWD + rear elec motor
ZERO-TO-100 KM/H (62 MPH±)	4.9 sec
TOP SPEED	180 km/h (108 mph±)
SUSPENSION	(OURS: opt active air susp; (STANDARD): F: dbl wishbone, coils, hydraulic shocks, stblzr bar; R: integral axle w transverse composite leaf spring, hydraulic shocks, stblzr bar
STEERING	elec pwr assist rack & pinion
BRAKES	*F: 400x38mm; *R: 320x20mm
*check w dealer; specs only go to 20-in wheels	
WHEELS	(opt) 22-in matte black diamond cut alloys
TIRES	265/35 R22 102V M+S (ours: Pirelli Scorpion Zero all-season)
GROUND CLEARANCE	±8.23 in
APPRCH / DEPART / BRKVER	21.2 / 23.4 / 20.8°
TURNING CIRCLE	±37.4 ft
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	±185.4 / 112.8 in
HEADROOM (F/R)(pano sunfr)	±39.72 / 38.03 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	±41.54 / 38.0 in
CARGO CAPACITY	±21.1 / 49.26 cu.ft
WEIGHT	±4189-4740 lb
TOW CAPACITY	±4960-5291 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	rec'd 95-98 oct unl / ±18.76 gal
MPG	elec 63 MPGe (comb) / gasoline 28 MPG (comb)

BASE PRICE	\$70,950
ULTRA INCLUDES: Harman Kardon premium audio, interior high-level illum, 20-in diamond cut alloy wheels, tailored dash, Crystal Geartronic shifter by Orrefors, air purifier, laminated side door glass, HomeLink, front passenger seat memory, 4-way pwr lumbar support (front seats), graphical heads-up display, power front cushion extension, vented front seats, Pilot Assist:incl in Ultra	
CLIMATE PRO PKG	750
WHEELS: 22-in five-double spoke matte black diamond cut alloys	1475
ACTIVE AIR SUSPENSION	1800
BOWERS & WILKINS AUDIO	3200
FRONT SEAT MASSAGE	600
DESTINATION CHARGE	1295
TOTAL	\$80,070

2026 VOLVO XC60 LINEUP

B5 HYBRID	
Core	\$49,700
Plus	54,300
Ultra	59,650
Black Edition	60,800
T8 PLUG-IN HYBRID	
Core	\$61,150
Plus	65,600
Ultra	70,950
Black Edition	72,050
Polestar Engineered	79,800