

2010 VOLVO XC60 T6 AWD



The XC60 gives Volvo a foothold in this year's bustling luxury compact SUV (sport utility vehicle) segment. This new Volvo is based on a modified version of the Land Rover LR2 platform (both companies belonged to Ford when the vehicle was designed), which makes it similar in size to the Audi Q5 and Infiniti EX35. The XC60 is offered with all-wheel drive and a turbo engine, two-wheel drive without the turbo, and all-wheel-drive without the turbo.

Interior and cargo area

Access is easy but you have to steer clear of the wide doorsills and the grime they collect. The front seats are extremely comfortable, as is usually the case with Volvo products. Headroom is good, and there's ample legroom, though the wheel well limits space somewhat on the right. The passenger-side seatback folds but not flat, because the head restraint rests on the dash and the large torso and thigh bolsters prevent it from folding completely flat. This is usually a very popular function, but it's not very useful in this particular vehicle.

The rear bench seat is comfortable for two; the middle section provides neither the comfort nor the room for a third person. The 60/40-split seatback folds flat to the floor, and the centre armrest folds to reveal a ski pass-through.

The relatively spacious cargo area measures 98 cm behind the bench with the seatback up, 180 cm with the seatback is down, 113 cm wide and 74.5 cm high, with more storage under the floor. The rear hatch opens wide.

Convenience and safety features

The cabin is very well finished in quality materials. Soundproofing is just adequate. There is ample cabin storage.

Gauges and controls are well laid out and everything is illuminated at night. A glaring omission is the lack of the temperature gauge. The rain sensor can be cancelled, which is good because it's not always efficient. The air conditioner functions well but has to be set at 18°C to obtain 20°C.

The roof rails are mounted flush to the roof and can't be used without crossbars. Even with crossbars, it's too bad you cannot use the roof rails to attach items more securely.

Photo: Volvo

Our tester was equipped with Volvo's new City Safety system. The system will apply the brakes if the driver fails to react to slow-moving traffic at speeds under 30 km/h. If tire grip is sufficient, it can avoid a collision if the speed difference is below 15 km/h and reduce the impact if the speed difference is between 15 and 30 km/h. The system uses a laser sensor mounted behind the windshield and "sees" cars in front of the vehicle only. It does not react to the presence of people, bicycles, poles, walls, etc., and its effectiveness is reduced by rain, snow or a dirty windshield. The system displays a high level of technological know-how and though it's effective in certain conditions, it isn't indispensable. It is bundled with the technology package, which costs \$4,100. In a similar vein, the optional adaptive cruise control system functions smoothly and competently, and contributes to smooth highway driving.

Safety equipment includes dual front, side and side curtain airbags; four-wheel disc brakes with ABS and emergency brake assist; stability control; five head restraints; and good headlights. As an option, there's even a system that detects when the vehicle is weaving between the lane lines and alerts the driver, who may have dozed off. While visibility is generally very good, it is limited on a three-quarter-rear angle. Distances are hard to judge when backing up, and because the tinting of the rear-view mirror and rear window is quite dark, visibility via the mirror isn't the best, especially on a cloudy day.

Engine and transmission

The turbocharged 3.0-litre in-line six-cylinder engine produces 281 horsepower and 295 pound-feet of torque, providing very lively, well-felt acceleration and pickup. With maximum torque available starting at 1,500 rpm, there is practically no turbo lag, acceleration is smooth and linear, and the engine climbs easily through the gears. This engine is very well suited to the vehicle.

The six-speed automatic transmission functions so smoothly that gearshifts are barely perceptible. The all-wheel-drive system divides torque 95/5 front-to-rear in normal driving and reverses the torque split as conditions require. The system reacts relatively quickly.

On the road

Our test vehicle was equipped with the optional 4C system that offers Comfort, Sport and Advanced shock absorber settings. Comfort mode offers a very smooth, compliant ride that sometimes allows the vehicle to roll a bit. Sport mode delivers more stability and a nice blend of firmness and suppleness. Advanced mode is more suited to smooth roads, as ride and road holding suffer on rough surfaces. The XC60 is competent on twisty roads but leans most in Comfort mode. In all modes, it drives with a sturdy feel. With 23 cm of ground clearance the XC60 can be driven in some off-road trails. It is the lack of a low range ratio that will limit its prowess.

Though a bit heavy at low speed, the power steering is stable, precise and relatively quick. It delivers very little road feel. Braking is smooth and powerful and resists well to fade.

Inspection

Our inspection at a CAA-Quebec technical inspection centre showed that the XC60's platform is sturdy and well protected against corrosion. Grime easily enters the engine compartment. The windshield washer fluid tank is placed front and left in the engine

compartment. That's unsafe for roadside fill-ups and disappointing from a safety-conscious company like Volvo. Debris can reach and damage the air-conditioner condenser, as well as the power steering, transmission and turbo exchanger coolers, through openings above and below the front bumper. The all-wheel-drive system's electronic module placed in the rear is unprotected. The engine's overhead camshafts are chain driven.

Conclusion

When fitted out with the full array of safety systems, the XC60 is Volvo's safest vehicle, as well as comfortable and fun to drive. However, it costs as much or more than the XC70 and is less spacious. Customers will therefore have to choose between the XC70's spaciousness and the XC60's styling and more compact format. The XC60 is also available with a 3.2-litre engine and without all-wheel drive, which lowers the bill.

PROS: comfortable seats, lively turbocharged engine, powerful brakes, smooth transmission, road compartment, functionality

CONS: wide doorsills collect grime, three-quarter-rear visibility, hard to judge distances when backing up, roof rails flush to roof, openings above and under front bumper, electronic module unprotected

2010 VOLVO XC60

Engine: 24-valve, 3.2-litre 6-cylinder; turbo, 24-valve, 3.0-litre 6-cylinder

Horsepower: 235hp at 6,200 rpm; 281 hp at 5,600 rpm

Torque: 236 lb-ft at 3,200 rpm; 295 lb-ft from 1,500 to 4,800 rpm

Transmission: 6-speed automatic

Suspension: fully independent

Brakes: disc/disc

Wheelbase: 277.4 cm

Length: 462.8 cm

Width: 214.2 cm (with mirrors)

Height: 171.3 cm

Weight: 1,872 to 1,928 kg

Tires: 235/65R17; 235/55R18; 235/60R18

Maximum towing capacity: 1,500 kg

Airbags: dual front, plus two side and two curtain airbags

Fuel consumption with turbo engine:

Natural Resources Canada rating:

City: 13.5 L/100 km (21 mpg)

Highway: 9.1 L/100 km (31 mpg)

Test result: 12 L/100 km (24 mpg)

Test temperature: 14°C to 26°C

CO₂ emissions: 5,529 kg/20,000 km

Fuel tank capacity: 70 litres

Fuel requirement: regular grade gasoline

Acceleration:

0–100 km/h: 7.6 seconds

60–100 km/h: 5.6 seconds

Competition: Acura RDX, Audi Q5, BMW X3, Land Rover LR2, Infiniti EX35, Mercedes GLK 350

Warranty:

- Full basic coverage: 4 years/80,000 km
- Powertrain: 4 years/80,000 km
- Surface corrosion: 1 year/unlimited km
- Perforation damage: 12 years/unlimited km
- Emissions control system: 4 years/80,000 km (full coverage); 8 years/130,000 km (catalytic converter, electronic control module, onboard diagnostic system).

Factory replacement parts:

- Rear bumper: \$998
- Front brake disc: \$158
- Brake pads: \$127
- Muffler: \$534
- Front fender: \$431

Price according to trim level:

- 3.2 FWD: \$39,995
- 3.2 AWD: \$44,495
- T6 AWD (Introduction): \$45,495
- T6 AWD: \$49,995

Main options:

- Convenience package: \$1,995
- Luxury package: \$3,050
- Tech package: \$4,000 (T6 AWD: \$3,600)
- Navigation system: \$2,625
- Park assist camera with navigation system: \$3,725

Price as tested: \$59,685

Freight and preparation: \$1,715

Dealers: Quebec: 13 Canada: 56

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