

auto BIOGRAPHIES

Volvo V40

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GONE ARE the days of ‘wardrobe on wheels’ or ‘only teachers drive those’ jokes. **Volvo now has some seriously stylish cars in its stable - and the V40 is the latest one.**

Like all Volvos it is well built but this has a definite athletic appearance about it. From the twin tailpipes to the low profile tyres on 18 inch rims the V40 D4 SE obviously means business.

But does it deliver? Absolutely. The 1984cc five cylinder, 20 valve oil-burner churns out 175bhp, so 0-62 comes in a rapid 8.6 seconds. The wide car sits low on the road and takes corners on rails. The diesel rattle is barely noticeable, even on start up, and, as with all Swedish-made cars, the seats are ultra supportive on long commutes.

The V40 isn't just about performance and grip though; it also provides enough space for four-up. The boot, although not massive, is decent enough to shove in everything a young family might need – from a week's worth of shopping to a couple of baby buggies and all the gear that goes with young kids.

Of course, safety is never an issue with Volvo and the V40 is no different. It is the safest car in its class, having achieved the highest score ever recorded by EuroNCAP in recent crash tests. This is thanks, in part, to pioneering technologies such as the world's first pedestrian airbag and Volvo's autonomous braking system, City Safety,

which also now qualifies for reduced insurance premiums.

And, as you might expect with a diesel turbo, the £24,795.00 V40 D4, on test here, is an efficient motor. On average it can return up to 65.7mpg, so it certainly endorses Volvo's thinking that it “offers the solution for drivers who want a premium vehicle experience with low emissions and low running costs, but who don't want to sacrifice equipment, styling or safety features”.

Put simply, the V40 delivers unprecedented choice in the premium hatchback sector without compromise. It's a great car; not the cheapest – but you get what you pay for - usually.

FAST FACTS

- *Max speed: 137 mph*
- *0-62 mph: 8.6 secs*
- *Combined mpg: 65.7*
- *Engine: 1984 cc cylinder 20 valve turbo diesel*
- *Max. power (bhp): 175 at 3500rpm*
- *Max. torque (lb/ft): 324 at 1750-2750 rpm*
- *CO2: 114 g/km*
- *Price: £24,795 on the road*

PROS 'N' CONS

- QuickV*
- HandsomeV*
- EconomicalV*
- SafeV*
- Not the cheapest X*