

Volvo replaces stodgy S80 with sleek S90 luxury sedan

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Volvo has replaced its stodgy S80 sedan with the sleek, elegant and quiet S90, which has industry-first safety features designed to reduce or mitigate collisions with deer and other large animals.

The 2017 S90 is the first car of any kind to incorporate the Large Animal Detection system, which uses radar and camera recognition. The car has many other safety features, as well, including a standard Run-Off Road Mitigation system and optional "bending" headlight beams that impressively illuminate where the driver is steering the car, even in U-turns.

The technology extends elsewhere, too. For example, the S90's vertical, tablet-like display screen in the middle of the dashboard uses infrared technology, so the touchscreen reacts even when a driver wears gloves.

The five-passenger luxury sedan, which is available in all-wheel drive, is roomy for those in the front and back, and the seats are among the most comfortable in the industry.

The interior, with light walnut wood inlays as part of an optional Inscription package, is particularly stunning and Scandinavian in design.

The S90's base price is \$3,555 more than the 2016 S80, making it Volvo's most expensive base model.

A base, 2017 S90 with front-wheel drive and 250-horsepower,

turbocharged, [four-cylinder engine](#) has a starting manufacturer's suggested [retail price](#) of \$47,945. That includes the destination charge.

The lowest starting retail price, with delivery charge, for a 2017 S90 with all-wheel drive is \$53,945, and this model has a 316-horsepower, supercharged and turbocharged, four-cylinder engine.

These prices, however, are lower than those of other imported mid-size luxury sedans such as the 2016 BMW 528i, which has a starting retail price of \$51,195 with rear-wheel drive and a turbocharged four-cylinder engine.

The U.S. government reports that some 2017 S90s are among 43,766 Volvos being recalled. And Consumers Reports predicts that the vehicle's reliability will be worse than average.

The safety recall involves an air conditioner drainage hose that might leak water into the car's interior and, over time, affect the workings of the air bags and engine management systems.

In addition, the federal government does not yet list results of S90 crash tests.

The S90 uses the same platform and many of the same components as the current generation Volvo XC90 SUV. But the S90 drives and rides like a solid and refined car that for the most part shields passengers from feeling bumps in the road, particularly when it is set to comfort drive mode for a softer ride.

There are three other modes and all provide different shifting, steering and engine settings.

The comfort ride, albeit with some body roll during cornering, and some

jolts from when the optional, 20-inch wheels and tires hit potholes, mixed with the quiet and serene interior for peaceful drives.

But the system that helps keep the car in its lane can be annoying, with its strong tugging sensation. And the steering in the test-driven S90, overall, didn't feel as precise as expected.

It also took a bit of time to get used to starting the S90. Drivers must turn a small knob that's in the center console.

The comfortable front seats in the test-driven S90 T6 AWD Inscription model were covered in supple Nappa leather and heated and ventilated, and they were to die for, especially during longer trips. But even the back seats are well padded.

The S90's front seats offer an SUV-like 42.2 inches of legroom, but there is plenty of seat travel to move front seats up a ways to accommodate long-legged passengers in the back who already get nearly 36 inches of legroom.

Headroom in the front and back seats is decent, at 38.7 inches and 37.8 inches, respectively. The 17.7 cubic feet of trunk space is commendable, too.

The test-driven car weighed just over 4,000 pounds, yet the high-end turbocharged and supercharged four-cylinder engine, which was only 2 liters in size, delivered spunky power.

Maximum torque of 295 foot-pounds came on by 2,200 rpm and held to 5,400 rpm.

Even with aggressive driving and a lot of city travel, fuel economy in the test-driven S90 averaged near the federal government's city/highway

estimate of 25 mpg. With a tank that holds 15.9 gallons of gas, the test-driven car could travel close to 400 miles without a refill.

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