

2008 Volvo C30

by Gary Dickinson

INTRODUCTION

The all-new Volvo C30 is the smallest and most expressive car in Volvo's model range. With its solid body, dynamic chassis, coupled with the powerful turbocharged T5 engine, it offers a very exciting driving experience.

The new C30 is the only Volvo to offer total free will through its special Custom Build ordering process. A one-time charge of \$300 opening up 17 exterior colors and 12 interior color combinations. With so many choices, it will be hard to find any two C30s that are exactly alike, especially when the laundry list of over 30 individual options is considered.

While style and performance are important, safety remains at the cornerstone of Volvo's brand values. The new C30 features Volvo's patented front structure. Divided into zones, the frontal structure incorporates different deformation properties with the outer zones accounting for most of the deformation in a frontal collision. The more the collision forces approach the passenger compartment, the less the material is deformed. To ensure that each zone has the right characteristics, the quality of the steel has been varied.

Four different types of steel are used. Apart from normal body steel, three different grades of high-strength steel are used: High Strength Steel, Extra High Strength Steel and Ultra High Strength Steel. Different steel grades also are used in the rear to help protect occupants in the event of a rear-end collision.

OVERVIEW

Volvo has always been an industry leader on the safety front and I was very impressed with the C30's array of safety features. In addition, this car is very fun to drive. The engine performance is excellent with plenty of quick but smooth acceleration. Passing performance and fuel economy are also exceptional.



TESTED VEHICLE

Vehicle: 2008 Volvo C30.

Class: 2 door hatchback.

Engine: The 2.5 liter DOHC inline turbocharged 5-cylinder engine yields 227 HP at 5,000 RPM and 236 lbs-ft torque at 1,500-5,000 RPM.

Transmission: 6-speed manual.

Suspension: Front—McPherson struts with coil-over springs, stabilizer bar. Rear—Multilink independent with coil springs, stabilizer bar and dynamic sport suspension.

Brakes: 4-channel ABS with EBD and EBA.

Base MSRP: \$22,700.

Tested Vehicle MSRP with options: \$23,920 (which includes a destination charge of \$745).



TEST DRIVE

☺ **Acceleration:** Zero-60 MPH tested at 6.5 seconds, 55-65 MPH passing performance tested at 2.2 seconds.

☺ **Steering:** Well weighted with good on center response.

☺ **Handling:** Very well controlled even on high speed maneuvers.

☺ **Ride:** Very comfortable ride.

☺ **Braking:** Sure and responsive.

☺ **Transmission:** Extremely smooth and accurate manual shift operation.

☺ **Interior Noise:** Wind and engine noise are well muffled.

☺ **Test drive mileage:** 30.0 MPG (highway driving); EPA estimates 28H/19C.

INTERIOR

☺ **Room:** Roomy cabin with plenty of shoulder room, leg room and headroom.

☺ **1st Row Seats:** Seats provide comfortable back but limited thigh support.

☺ **2nd Row Seats:** Acceptable leg and shoulder room for two passengers.

☺ **Ventilation:** Controls are small, hard to reach and difficult to manage.

☺ **Storage:** Somewhat limited interior and trunk storage space.

☺ **Fit and Finish:** No interior fit or finish problem found.



VEHICLE CAPACITIES

Seating: 4

Cargo Volume: 20.2 cu. ft.

Base Curb Weight: 3,201 lbs.

Towing Capacity: 2,000 lbs.

Fuel Tank: 15.9 gallons.



Test Drive is conducted and written by the Motor Watch staff, who contribute their own unbiased and unfettered comments in order to meet our mission: "To help save consumers time and money, and to help save motorists lives."