

Communiqués

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The new Volvo S40 - more dynamic looks and liberated storage space

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- Increased differentiation between the S40 and V50
- New S40 front with lower, broader stance
- Sportier new grille creates a tougher V50 look
- Slimmer tail lamps and new rear bumper
- Larger and more practical storage space
- New real wood inlay - Nordic Light Oak
- Fresh new Spring Green upholstery

A number of distinctive design cues take the new Volvo S40 a visual step closer to the new S-range look as first shown on the all-new Volvo S80. At the same time, the V50 approaches the new V-range and the all-new V70 without compromising on its original compact and sporty attributes.

"When it comes to the exterior, we're aiming for increased differentiation between the two models. The interior refinements have focused on liberating smart storage space," says Volvo Cars Design Director Steve Mattin.

Starting with the new S40, the source of the inspiration can be seen clearly when the compact sedan is viewed from the front.

The new colour-coordinated soft nose creates a broader, lower stance thanks to a new grille with a larger Volvo iron mark, new headlamps and a lower air intake that sweeps across the entire front unlike the current model's three-part design.

"The new, lower and more horizontal appearance radiates smooth power. This impression is reinforced when the car is seen from the side. At the rear, it is the shape of the new tail lamps and the new bumper that further boost the dynamic appearance," says Steve Harper, who has been responsible for the design of the new Volvo S40 and V50.

Sportier V50 grille

The new black egg-crate grille with its larger Volvo iron mark emphasises a sporty language. The new headlamps and the three sculpted lower air intakes are other details that give the new colour-coordinated soft-nose V50 front an increased impression of solidity.

"Here, we've created visual vertical elements in order to further emphasise the new grille," says Steve Harper.

Slimmer tail lamps

The lower part of the tail lamp panel on both the S40 and V50 is 30 millimetres higher than before and the lamps themselves have an entirely new graphic layout. The brake lights are now of LED type and the position marker lamps emphasise the car's shoulders.

The new bumper features integrated reflectors in the lower corners and the lower, broader design language is supplemented with the more horizontal lines of the exhaust tailpipe.

"The improved shape and position of the exhaust tailpipes is a good example of how a little extra visual touch can create a highly potent impression," says Steve Harper.

Freeing up storage space

When refining the interior, the design team transformed itself into something of a liberation movement for storage space.

"The criticism of the current models' limited storage space served as high-octane fuel when the

time came to sketch the new interior of the S40 and V50. We weren't entirely satisfied until we felt we had exploited every single available cubic centimetre in an efficient way," relates Steve Harper. The team concentrated its efforts on two areas: the door sides and the centre stack. The entire lower part of the front door inside panels was redesigned. The audio system loudspeakers were reshaped to free up space for a new, larger storage compartment with space for an A4 format book, an upright soft drinks can or a water bottle lying down. As an added bonus, space was also freed up for an extra Dynaudio loudspeaker (only for Premium Sound), which adds even more spice to the audio experience.

Larger and more intelligent centre console

The already iconic super-slim centre console is available in additional decor versions such as the Nordic Light Oak real wood inlay, and the theme now flows smoothly with similar elegant soft curvature surfaces all the way to the rear seat. The storage space between the seats has also been refined with the help of Scandinavian design tradition's most renowned hallmark - smart functionality. The handbrake has a more compact design, which in turn has freed space for more generous storage capacity.

Sliding cover and flexible armrest

The sliding cover over the larger storage compartments, in which there are also two holders that provide secure support for large and small cups, is complemented by an improved flexible armrest for the driver. This also has a built-in feature that the design team playfully call the "hamburger table".

"We've even utilised the small spaces that are usually simply covered over when they're not housing controls for options or accessories. Now instead, the space has been converted into a handy compartment, for instance for a mobile phone. After all, the phone is not something we should be using while driving, anyway," explains Steve Harper, and adds:

"And on the back of the console there is another little jewel: a flip-up holder for a 1.5-litre bottle within easy reach of passengers in the rear-seat."

New upholstery and green highlight colour

New design details in the instrument panel and air vents also contribute to the interior refinement in the new S40 and V50.

The upholstery range has been expanded both at base level and for the more exclusive options, for instance with a new, finer grained leather. At base level there is a green 'accent' colour fabric with the poetic name of Spring Green.

"The green upholstery is entirely in line with the increasing demand for personalised choices by our customers. We started with blue and red upholstery in the new Volvo C30, and now we are introducing green in the new S40 and V50. I'm sure it's going to be very popular," says Steve Harper.

Mots clés:

S40, Press Releases, Product News, 1995

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