

# Volvo C70

**Featured model: 2.4T GT Convertible Automatic**



**T**HIS VOLVO FOR ALL SEASONS IS the soft-top variant of the C70 Coupé we waxed lyrical about on its debut. But while both cars are mechanically identical, the Convertible has considerably more body stiffening, as well as a bevy of electric motors and gizmos to power the hood. The result is that it's a whopping 112kg heavier than the tin-top. It's also less aerodynamic and in this case has power-sapping automatic transmission (an £1100 extra).

Full marks, then, for performing in the lively way it does – if not for its thirst for fuel. But then this smooth and torquey, light-turboed engine has always been a favourite with us. We like the slick and creamy auto shifts, as well, but a sequential override would be nice.

Sporting types will appreciate the firmish suspension that gives taut control. It results in some fidgeting over broken-topped B-roads, but gives a generally respectable ride. What lets the Convertible down badly, however, is the awful scuttle shakes and window rattles that occur on poorer surfaces. So much for body stiffening – we expect better from Volvo.

This does no favours to the Convertible's cornering prowess on bumpy bends, but it handles with tenacious tyre grip, and thankfully, there's no torque steer on hard acceleration. It's also good to know that selectable traction control and reassuringly powerful brakes are on call.

Experimenting with the numerous seat and steering wheel adjustments gives a comfortable driving position, but the

Convertible has a real dual personality. With the hood up, rearward vision is severely hampered and anyone with claustrophobic tendencies should avoid the back seats. It's quite roomy and comfortable back there, but airy it ain't.

Keep a fascia switch pressed for just 25sec, though, and presto! the soft-top automatically folds neatly away. Suddenly you can forget the climate control – all is sweetness and light, with the optional windbreak keeping flying tresses in check. And the driver can see all round, too.

The C70's fit and finish remain impressive and Volvo's pick-your-own combination of trim and equipment applies. Our car's GT pack added further to the goodies galore.

You need to travel light in this car because luggage space is severely restricted by the hood housing intruding deep into the boot. Slim cases and soft bags are called for. Loading is awkward, as well.

### VERDICT

**You pay a high price for wind-in-the-hair motoring, Volvo-style – in more ways than one. But if you can live with the C70 Convertible's considerable drawbacks, you'll enjoy glamorous open-top cruising when the sun shines, as well as the reassurance of Volvo's top quality engineering beneath its seductive styling. More conservative sporty types should consider the less alluring but far more civilised C70 Coupé**

### AT A GLANCE

*considering size, price and rivals*

<b>Overtaking ability</b>	★★★★○
<b>Space/practicality</b>	★★★○○
<b>Controls/displays</b>	★★★★○
<b>Safety</b>	★★★★★
<b>Handling/steering</b>	★★★○○
<b>Comfort</b>	★★★★○

### SPECIFICATION

**engine** 2435cc, turbocharged 5-cylinder, petrol; 193bhp at 5100rpm, 270 lb ft at 1600-5000rpm; belt-driven double overhead camshafts, 20 valves

**transmission** 5-speed stepped automatic with torque converter; front-wheel drive; 28.9 mph/1000rpm in 5th, 22.2 in 4th

**suspension** front: independent damper/struts, coil springs, lower wishbones and anti-roll bar. Rear: semi-independent by Delta link with coil springs, trailing arms and anti-roll bar

**steering** hydraulic power assistance; 3.0 turns lock-to-lock; 11.9m diameter turning circle between kerbs (17.1m for one turn of the wheel)

**brakes** ventilated discs front, solid discs rear, with electronic anti-lock and brake force distribution controls

**wheels/tyres** 7in alloy with 225/50ZR16 tyres (Michelin Pilot SX MXX3 on test car); temporary (steel) spare

### LIKES ...

huge choice of trim, equipment, extras  
ski-bag for ... er, skis, long things  
left/right side temperature controls  
"home-safe" driveway lighting

### and GRIPES

rain pours on to seats when doors open  
seatbelt slips off your shoulder  
spiteful corners of screen (hood down)  
seats stiff and awkward to tip/slide

### THE C70 RANGE

**size and type** upper medium (premium priced) Coupé and Convertible  
**trim levels** select your own

**engines** turbocharged petrol: 5 cylinders/2.0 litre/163bhp, 5/2.4/193, 5/2.3/240; diesel: none

**drive** front-wheel drive, 5-speed manual; (5-speed stepped automatic available with all engines)

OVERTAKING ABILITY		★★★★○			
<i>This eager, smooth and mellifluous motor is one of our favourites. It's no T5, but respectably swift, even though auto 'box blunts its performance. The adaptive five-speeder is an almost seamless shifter</i>					
acceleration in seconds	auto shift to 5950rpm	manual hold to different rpm			
20-40mph	3.0	using manual override produces no benefits			
30-50mph	3.7				
40-60mph	4.3				
50-70mph	5.3				
<b>30-70mph</b>	<b>9.0</b>				
<b>max speed in each gear</b> (*using auto shift to 5950rpm for best acceleration)					
gear	①	②	③	④	⑤
<b>speed (mph)</b>	37	58	90	135	133

SPACE AND PRACTICALITY		★★★○○○			
<i>Spacious up front, cosy behind. It's a proper four-seater, though, with reasonable room in all directions in the rear, except width. Boot space very poor because of hood stowage, but a load rack is on offer</i>					
<i>in centimetres (2-door convertible)</i>		<b>inside</b> († with hood raised)			
<b>outside</b>		front - legroom	92-108		
length	472	- headroom	92-99†		
width - inc mirrors	206	rear - typical leg/	95/		
- mirrors folded	182	kneeroom	73		
height (hood raised)	142	- headroom	94		
load sill height	18/72	- hiproom	106		
<i>(inside/outside)</i>		<b>load space</b> (all seats in use)			
<b>steering</b>		<i>(litres/cu ft)</i>	315/11.1		
turns lock-to-lock	3.0	load length	79		
turning circle (metres)	11.9	full length to fascia	No		
easy to park/garage?		load width	113-120		
<i>(with hood raised)</i>	★★★★○	load height	26-47		

**CONTROLS AND DISPLAYS** ★★★★★

*Large dials clearly legible through reach/rake-adjust wheel. High air con controls to hand, as is superb big-buttoned Dolby audio. Facia switches not ideal behind wheel. Vision awful with hood up*



SAFETY		★★★★○			
<i>Usual Volvo thoroughness: anti-whiplash and side impact protection and in this case pop-up rollover bars, belt tensioners all round, sills, rear body and screen reinforced. Good brakes but not fade-free</i>					
braking		dry road stopping distance from 50mph (with standard ABS)			
pedal feel	★★★★○	pedal load		distance	
in emergency	★★★★○	unhurried 10kg		43m	
handbrake	★★★★○	sudden 26kg +4kg ie 30kg		25m best stop 26m ABS on	

**EURO NCAP CRASH TEST RATINGS**

C70 Convertible not yet tested

SECURITY FEATURES			
central locking	✓	deadlocks	✓
remote control	✓	alarm	✓
auto window closure	✗	immobiliser	✓
		luggage security	
✓ standard		0 factory option ✗ not available	

**HANDLING AND STEERING** ★★★★★

*Smooth, light steering and no torque steer, but poor turning circle. Big, grippyMichelins and traction control keep power under control, but this is a car in which to dawdle rather than door-handle*



**COMFORT** ★★★★★

*Ride firm but not jarring – lots of scuttle shake, though. Leather seats slippery between side bolsting, but comfortable. Superb electric hood operation/sealing/optional windbreak. Clever climate control*

**FUEL ECONOMY** ★★★★★

*Expect mid-twenties mpg overall and about the same when driving gently, due to torque converter slip. Best consumption on a main road cruise. Easy-filling tank. Highest tax band and group 16 insurance*

AA test results (mpg)		official figures (mpg)	
worst (hard/urban)	15	urban	17.7
best (gentle/main roads)	24/32†	extra urban	34.9
<b>overall mpg on test</b>	<b>24½</b>	<b>combined</b>	<b>25.7</b>
realistic tank capacity	60 litres	CO <sub>2</sub> emissions	263g/km
typical range	325 miles	car tax band	D
†with torque converter locked up			

HOW THE C70 CONV COMPARES	engine cyl/cap/power (no/cc/bhp)	revs at 70mph (rpm)	30-70mph through gears (sec)	30-70mph in 5th/4th gears (sec)	fuel economy (mpg)	brakes*- best stop from 50mph (m/kg)	maximum legroom - front (cm)	typical leg/ kneeroom - rear (cm)	steering turns/ circle (m)	overall length (cm)
<b>VOLVO C70 2.4T CONV (AUTO)</b>	<b>5/2435/193</b>	<b>2420</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>auto</b>	<b>24½</b>	<b>25/26</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>95/73</b>	<b>3.0/11.9</b>	<b>472</b>
Alfa 156 2.0TS (saloon)	4/1970/155	3310	7.8	22.6/15.7	31	26/22	106	95/76	2.2/11.4	443
Mazda MX5 1.8	4/1839/140	3560	8.1	21.4/14.7	32½	25/20	110	NA	2.7/9.6	398
Toyota Celica 1.8 VVT-i	4/1794/140	3130°	8.1	23.7/18.0/14.1†	35	25/14	113	81/66	2.9/10.6	434
Vauxhall Astra 2.2i Coupé	4/2198/145	3220	8.0	17.8/13.5	32½	24½/12	109	95/73	2.9/10.5	427
All rivals equipped with manual transmission		°in 6th gear		†in 6th/5th/4th		* all with ABS				