

## Refreshed Volvo S40 comes at a lower price

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The latter generation has been listed by Forbes as one of the best luxury cars for young affluent drivers. It has also been voted the most popular car among women in the luxury segment in the US market according to J.D. Power and Associates.

The second generation S40 was refreshed in 2008. In Malaysia, the S40 2.4i version was launched by Volvo Car Malaysia Sdn Bhd in late August this year with a new price strategy. Read new price strategy as lower price. The 2.4-litre sedan is locally-assembled in Shah Alam.

Volvo Car Malaysia president Robert Norrman said during the launch: "In a nutshell, the Volvo S40 is simply beautiful - in every sense of the word."

The company is targeting the S40 2.4i at "someone who is young and wants to upgrade from an Asian or Japanese brand, to enjoy a premium, luxury car with better performance and handling". It expects to sell an average of one S40 a day with the new price strategy.

### Packaging

The facelifted S40 offers refined sportiness and increased safety and premium feel. It gets a completely new, sportier and more prestigious front with elements from the new Volvo S80 and V70. The front is now 3mm longer than the previous version. The grille is completely new with an updated, deeper mesh pattern, helping to emphasise the premium feel.

The rear bumper has been redesigned and is unique for the S40 and V50 models respectively. The bumper is now 6mm longer than the previous versions. The Volvo emblem, the so-called "iron symbol", is now 50 per cent larger and found on more locations on the car such as on the wheel rims and the remote control.

The headlamps are completely new, both in their form and their size, and reflect the design language of the larger, new Volvo cars.

The Volvo S40 offers a spacious and flexible interior. Every passenger seat has a fold-flat backrest. With the seats folded down, the load compartment floor is entirely flat. It has ultra-slim, free-floating centre console with illuminated storage compartment behind. The air vents on the dashboard have been redesigned with chrome trim buttons in order to achieve better ventilation in the compartment.

### Mechanical

The Volvo S40 2.4i is fitted with an in-line 5 cylinder engine that provides 170hp at 6,000rpm and 230 torque at 4,400 rpm. It can reach 0-100km/h in 8.9 seconds. Power is transmitted to the road through a five-speed automatic geartronic transmission. According to Volvo Car Malaysia, fuel consumption is a very efficient 9.1 litres per 100km.

## **On the road**

We took the S40 up to Genting Highlands' hilly roads and twisty bends. The car provided a smooth and pleasurable drive. Handling was crisp and lively. The fuel paddle did not have to be hard-pressed to help the car climb up.

The suspension was firm without compromising on comfort, thus providing a pleasurable ride. Ergonomically designed seats offered sufficient lateral support.

## **Competitors**

The S40 competes with European brands such as BMW 3 Series, Mercedes-Benz E-Class and Audi A4, and to an extent, Japan's Toyota Camry, Honda Accord and Nissan Teana.

## **Price and equipment**

Volvo Car Malaysia has lowered the price of the S40 to boost sales especially from potential buyers of the Japanese models like Toyota Camry and Honda Accord. It is now sells at RM169,500 (on the road without insurance), more than RM10,000 off the RM181,500 price tag of its predecessor.

The new S40 boasts an improved audio systems and increased storage space. For enhanced safety, it boasts Side Impact Protection System (SIPS), anti-lock braking system (ABS), Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD), Stability and Traction Control (STC) and Emergency Brake Assistance (EBA), all as standard. It also has front-seat side airbags and full-length head curtain airbags, along with whiplash-reducing head restraints for outboard positions.

The car is fitted with Volvo Audio Systems which comes with radio, 6-CD in a dash CD player, eight speakers with audio amplifier 4X40W, diversity aerial system at the rear window and rear bumper and with audio control on the steering wheel. Active Bi-Xenon headlights and BLIS (Blind Spot Information System), a camera system located on the side mirrors to alert the drivers of passing vehicles beside the car, are optional.