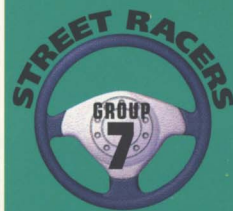




SWEDEN 1958-1965

# Volvo PV544



NUMBER 42

When Volvo launched its PV544 sedan in 1958, it already looked 20 years old. However, its performance belied its appearance and it became one of the most successful rally cars of the early 1960s.

Produced by  
Volvo Car Corporation,  
Gothenburg, Sweden



## VITAL STATISTICS

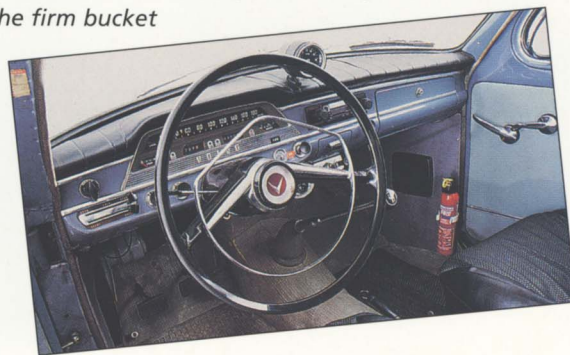
Top speed:	98 mph
0-60 mph:	10.5 sec.
Engine type:	In-line four
Displacement:	1,780 cc
Max power:	90 bhp at 5,000 rpm
Max torque:	105 lb-ft at 3,500 rpm
Weight:	2,160 lbs.
Gas mileage:	25 mpg
Price (1962):	\$2,395



### "...this cat's got scat!"

*"As one journalist put it: 'Hold on to your hats, guys, this cat's got scat!' The PV's acceleration is better than most six-cylinder compacts of its time. At the wheel, sitting upright in the firm bucket seat, you are confronted by a large steering wheel and strip speedometer. The steering is light but direct, and the brakes are good for an all-drum setup but fade with abuse. Despite its ancient suspension, the handling is surprisingly good."*

*A large steering wheel and painted metal dash give the PV544 added character.*

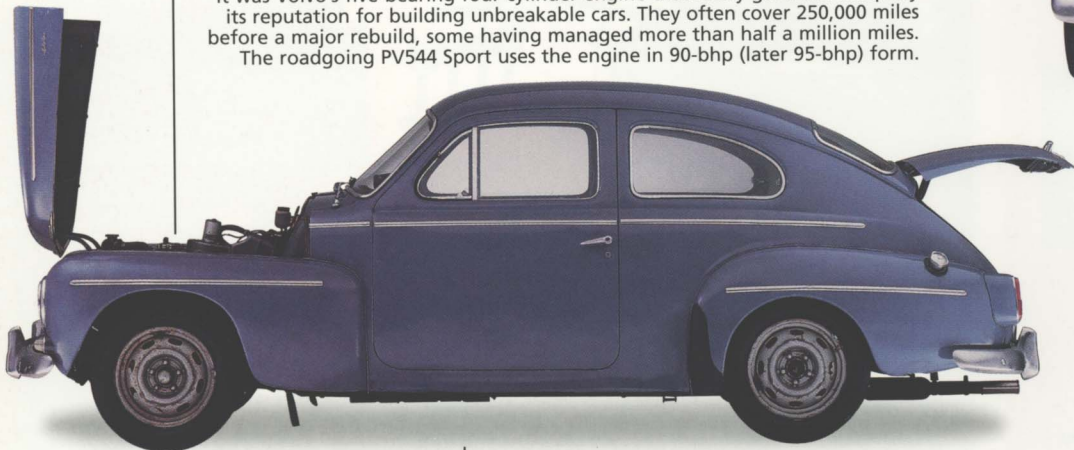


# Volvo PV544

One of the most unlikely looking competition cars, the PV544 was nevertheless one of the most successful rally and track racers in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

## Strong engine

It was Volvo's five-bearing four-cylinder engine that really gave the company its reputation for building unbreakable cars. They often cover 250,000 miles before a major rebuild, some having managed more than half a million miles. The roadgoing PV544 Sport uses the engine in 90-bhp (later 95-bhp) form.

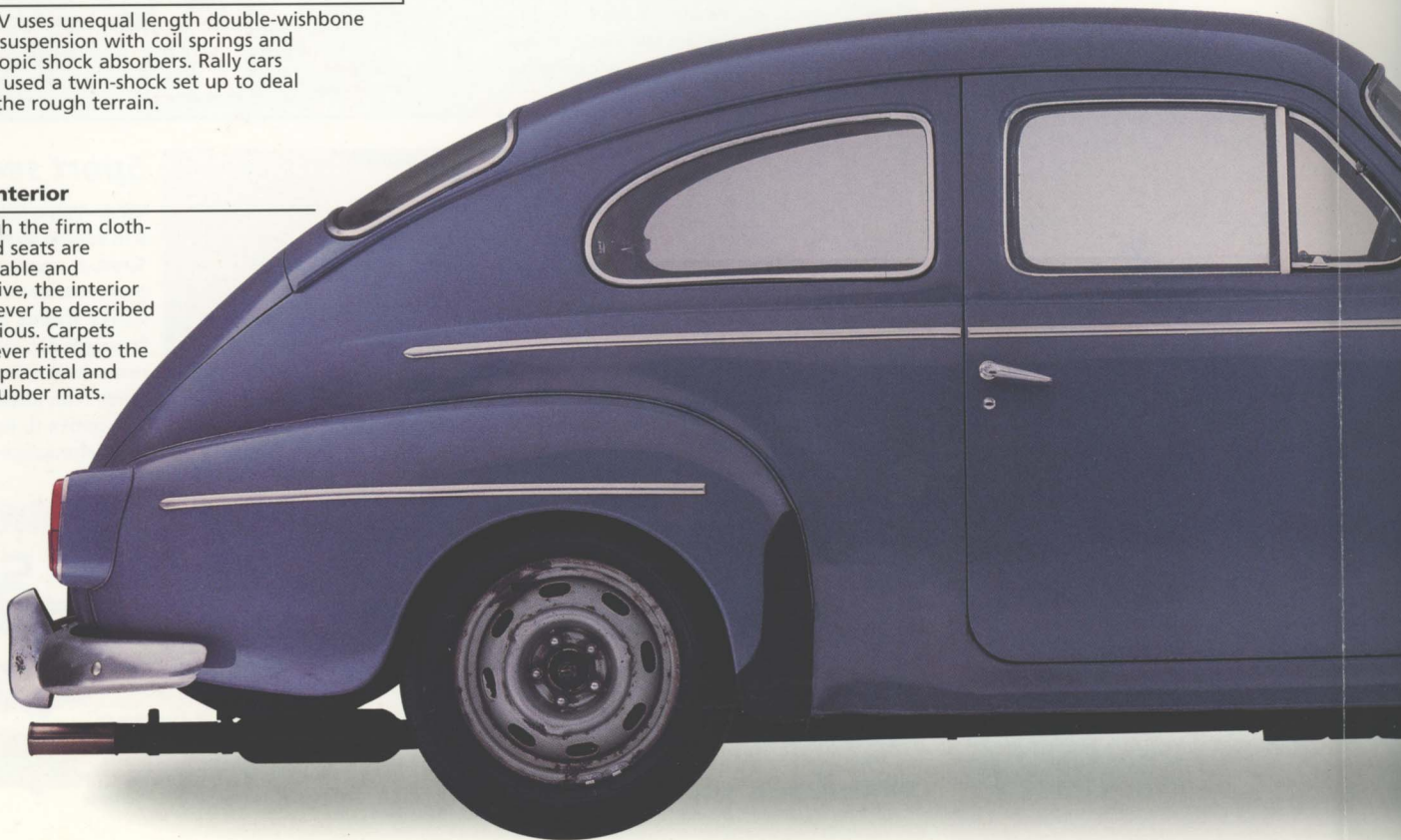


## Wishbone front suspension

The PV uses unequal length double-wishbone front suspension with coil springs and telescopic shock absorbers. Rally cars often used a twin-shock set up to deal with the rough terrain.

## Basic interior

Although the firm cloth-trimmed seats are comfortable and supportive, the interior could never be described as luxurious. Carpets were never fitted to the PV, just practical and tough rubber mats.



## Four-wheel drum brakes

Drum brakes are used all around. The system is just powerful enough to cope with the car's performance but is definitely one of its weak points. Many owners now fit front discs from the Volvo 'Amazon' 120 series.



### Worm-and-roller steering

Rather than the more common rack-and-pinion system, the PV uses worm-and-roller steering. It is light but quite fast, at 3.2 turns from lock-to-lock, and has little self-centering action.

### Wheel drum brakes

Drum brakes are used all around. The system is just simple enough to cope with the car's performance, definitely one of its strong points. Many owners have ditched their front discs from the 'Amazon' 120 series.



### Well-located live axle

This car uses a simple coil-sprung live axle that is solidly located by huge trailing arms and a Panhard rod.



# Specifications

## 1963 PV544 Sport

### ENGINE

**Type:** In-line four-cylinder

**Construction:** Cast-iron block and head

**Valve gear:** Two valves per cylinder operated by a single camshaft via pushrods and rockers

**Bore and stroke:** 3.31 in. x 3.15 in.

**Displacement:** 1,780 cc

**Compression ratio:** 8.5:1

**Induction system:** Twin SU carburetors

**Maximum power:** 90 bhp at 5,000 rpm

**Maximum torque:** 105 lb-ft at 3,500 rpm

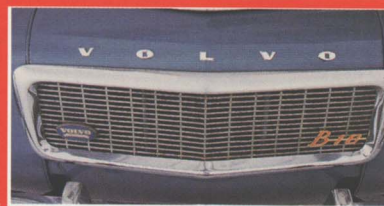
### TRANSMISSION

Four-speed manual

### BODY/CHASSIS

Steel monocoque two-door sedan

### SPECIAL FEATURES



The B 18 badge on the grill signifies the 1.8-liter engine in the Sport model.



Dual handles operate the door latches and window winders.

### RUNNING GEAR

**Steering:** Worm-and-roller

**Front suspension:** Double wishbones with coil springs, telescopic shock absorbers and anti-roll bar

**Rear suspension:** Live axle with coil springs, trailing arms, Panhard rod and telescopic shock absorbers

**Brakes:** Drums (front and rear)

**Wheels:** Pressed steel, 15-in. dia.

**Tires:** 5.90 x 15 in.

### DIMENSIONS

**Length:** 175.0 in. **Width:** 62.5 in.

**Height:** 61.5 in. **Wheelbase:** 102.5 in.

**Track:** 51.0 in. (front), 51.8 in. (rear)

**Weight:** 2,160 lbs.

# Milestones

**1943 Work starts** on a new small Volvo.

**1944 Volvo shows its new car,** the PV444, at a special exhibition in Stockholm.

**1947 The PV444** finally enters production.



A wagon version of the PV—the Duett—was also offered.

**1955 The first PV444s** reach the U.S. In response to high demands, Volvo launches a 'Sport' model.



Although launched in 1944, production of the PV444 did not begin until after World War II.

**1958 The PV444 is updated** to form the PV544. Art Riley drives his PV444 to victory at Sebring.

**1963 Tom Trana wins the** British RAC Rally in a PV544. The car lasts until 1965, winning the East African Safari Rally in its final year.

## VALUE GUIDE

### ORIGINAL PRICE

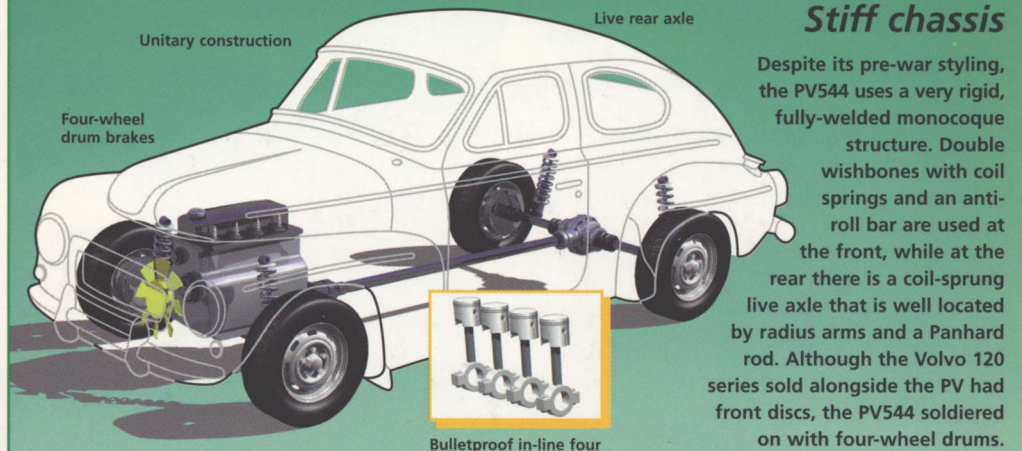
1962 \$2,395

### CURRENT VALUE

\$2,000-\$7,000

Simple, yet fast and tough, the PV544 is an ideal rally car.

## UNDER THE SKIN



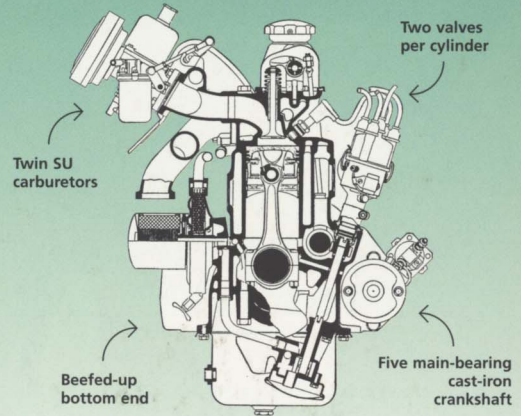
### Stiff chassis

Despite its pre-war styling, the PV544 uses a very rigid, fully-welded monocoque structure. Double wishbones with coil springs and an anti-roll bar are used at the front, while at the rear there is a coil-sprung live axle that is well located by radius arms and a Panhard rod. Although the Volvo 120 series sold alongside the PV had front discs, the PV544 soldiered on with four-wheel drums.

### THE POWER PACK

### Reliable and strong

When first launched in 1958, the PV544 was powered by the immensely tough B16 three-bearing four-cylinder 1.6-liter unit used in the PV444. The 1.8-liter B18 engine arrived in 1962. This had a stronger bottom end, with five main bearings which gave it an enviable reputation for longevity and reliability. In 'Sport' tune, with twin SU carburetors, it produces 90 bhp (95 bhp for the last few months) and 105 lb-ft of torque. Works rally cars were tuned to give up to 130 bhp.



Sport models could hold their own against larger, more powerful cars.

### Sport sedan

When Volvo fitted the B18 engine to the PV544 Sport, it created a real performance sedan. The quirky styling, gutsy four-cylinder, and tidy rear-wheel drive handling made it an interesting alternative to home grown V8 performance cars.

## NOSE TO NOSE Volkswagen Beetle 1954 • Chevrolet II Nova SS • Volvo PV544 Sport

TOP SPEED	0-60 mph	POWER	WEIGHT	RIVAL CARS
70 mph	16.1 sec	44 bhp	1,675 lbs.	VOLKSWAGEN BEETLE 1954
105 mph	9.8 sec.	140 bhp	2,675 lbs.	CHEVROLET II NOVA SS
98 mph	10.5 sec.	90 bhp	2,160 lbs.	VOLVO PV544 SPORT