**Volvo P1800ES**

The uniquely styled Volvo P1800 coupe was looking a little dated by the start of the 1970s, so Volvo decided to spruce it up by adding a station wagon rear end. This improved its luggage capacity.

**VITAL STATISTICS**

| Top speed: | 116 mph |
| 0-60 mph: | 11.3 sec. |
| Engine type: | Inline four |
| Displacement: | 1,986 cc |
| Max power: | 112 bhp at 6,000 rpm |
| Max torque: | 115 lb-ft at 3,500 rpm |
| Weight: | 2,570 lbs. |
| Gas mileage: | 27 mpg |
| Price: | $5,032 |

**...supportive seats.**

"The elderly design of the P1800ES's engine means that you really need to work the shifter—which is slick, with well-spaced ratios—in order to overcome the lack of torque. Because the steering is heavier than suits most people's tastes, it is only on the freeway that the Volvo shines, with its overdrive transmission working very well. Prominent body roll makes forceful driving a hair-raising experience. At least you sit comfortably on very supportive seats."

An overdrive transmission makes the Volvo a fine cruiser.
Volvo P1800ES

Volvo's 1800ES was part sports car, part station wagon and a real image breaker for the Swedish firm. The specification was hardly state-of-the-art, but it was in many ways a lively, charismatic car.

Fuel injection
Volvo's 1800 model switched to fuel injection from 1969, not only for the American market but for Europe too, which was unusual. The system chosen was Bosch's electronically controlled Jetronic, which enabled good emissions performance without serious loss of power.

Rear fins
Despite its rear-end makeover, the 1800ES retained the prominent rear fins of the 1800 coupe. This is one styling quirk that was well out of fashion by the 1970s.

Glass tailgate
A deep, glass rear hatch lifts up to access a neatly carpeted luggage area, usefully boosted in capacity over the regular coupe's. The station-wagon-style rear end also provides more headroom for rear-seat passengers and offers much better visibility.
Four-wheel disc brakes
As part of Volvo's safety-first policy, it adopted all-around disc braking from 1969. That meant the 1971-1973 1800ES model always came with powered discs on each wheel.

Rear fins
Despite its rear-end makeover, the 1800ES retained the prominent rear fins of 1800 coupe. This is the styling quirk that was well out of fashion by the 1970s.

Overdrive or auto
After experimenting with ZF transmission, Volvo fitted the 1800ES with its own four-speed, all-synchronmesh manual unit with Laycock de Normanville overdrive. From 1972, there was also the option of a Borg-Warner three-speed automatic.

Specifications
1972 Volvo P1800ES

ENGINE
Type: Inline four
Construction: Cast-iron cylinder block and head
Valve gear: Two valves per cylinder operated by a single camshaft with pushrods and rockers
Bore and stroke: 3.55 in. x 3.2 in.
Displacement: 1,986 cc
Compression ratio: 8.7:1
Induction system: Bosch fuel injection
Maximum power: 112 bhp at 6,000 rpm
Maximum torque: 115 lb-ft at 3,500 rpm

TRANSMISSION
Four-speed manual with overdrive

BODY/CHASSIS
Unitary monocoque construction with steel two-door station wagon body

SPECIAL FEATURES

Unlike earlier P1800 models, the ES has a black plastic grill.

Bosch fuel injection allowed the ES to meet strict U.S. emission tests.

RUNNING GEAR
Steering: Worm-and-roller
Front suspension: Wishbones with coil springs, shock absorbers and anti-roll bar
Rear suspension: Live axle with trailing arms, radius arms, Panhard rod, coil springs and shock absorbers
Brakes: Discs (front and rear)
Wheels: Steel or alloy, 15-in. dia.
Tires: 185/70 HR15

DIMENSIONS
Length: 172.6 in.
Width: 66.9 in.
Height: 50.6 in.
Wheelbase: 96.5 in.
Track: 51.6 in. (front and rear)
Weight: 2,570 lbs.
**Milestones**

1963 **Volvo moves into** the sports car market with the P1800 coupe.

The sporty 123GT uses the same 1.8-liter engine as the ES.

1969 **As the renamed** 1800E, the coupe gains fuel injection, disc brakes and alloy wheels.

The P1800 sports coupé was originally made by Jensen.

1971 **The 1800ES sports** station wagon is launched. Despite its good looks, in Europe it gains the nickname 'Snow White's hearse.'

1972 **Automatic transmission** becomes available as an option.

1973 **A year after the coupe** is withdrawn, 1800ES production ends. Some 8,078 examples were built. Most were exported to the U.S.

**UNDER THE SKIN**

- Front and rear disc brakes
- Live rear axle with Panhard rod
- Coil-sprung front suspension

**Solid sledge**

Every bit as strongly built as its Volvo sedan sisters, the 1800ES even shares many of its underpinnings with the rugged Amazon series. That includes the suspension, consisting of unequal-length wishbones, coil springs and an anti-roll bar at the front, while the rear has a live axle with radius arms and lower arms, coil springs and a Panhard rod. There are four-wheel disc brakes from Girling, and the transmission is Volvo's own M41 four-speed unit.

**THE POWER PACK**

**Rugged design**

Volvo engines have a reputation for rugged reliability and longevity. Certainly the overhead-valve four-cylinder unit in the 1800ES lasted a long time in production, as it is derived from the PV444 engine of the 1940s. It even shares its 80-mm stroke, although by the 1970s it had expanded to 2.0 liters. From 1969, the sporting Volvos had Bosch electronically controlled fuel injection, in which form the engine puts out 130 bhp, or just 112 bhp in the U.S.

**Characterful**

While the early P1800 coupe may get collectors more excited than the later 1800E, the ES sports station wagon is unique among Volvos and is highly regarded. It is more practical, just as satisfying and reliable to own and has an individual character.

**NOSE TO NOSE**

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<th>VALUE GUIDE</th>
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<td><strong>ORIGINAL PRICE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CURRENT VALUE</strong></td>
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**TOP SPEED** | **0-60 mph** | **POWER** | **WEIGHT** |
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<td>7.8 sec.</td>
<td>140 bhp</td>
<td>2,120 lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>120 mph</td>
<td>8.8 sec.</td>
<td>146 bhp</td>
<td>2,554 lbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>116 mph</td>
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**RIVAL CARS**

- **Jensen-Healey**
- **Reliant Scimitar GTE**
- **Volvo P1800ES**

The P1800ES combines style, safety and performance.