



Volvo Car Corporation

Press Information

Forty-year jubilee for Volvo's three-point safety belt

A FORTY-YEAR OLD WITH A FUTURE

The three-point V-type belt has not changed much in forty years. A sound fundamental principle rarely needs to, and the three-point belt is the proof. The changes that have taken place are mainly a matter of comfort, while the basic principle is the same.

A racing driver is belted into his moulded seat with the help of a four-point or even a six-point belt. The straps are brought together in a common buckle on the driver's abdomen. For the everyday motorist and his or her passengers, the three-point belt with a low attachment point for the buckle, next to the body, is a better solution - even in an impact. There is no pressure on the abdomen or other organs and the belt keeps the body in place.

It is hardly credible, or desirable, for the everyday motorist to be restrained like a racing driver. The belt must be safe and comfortable, easy to take on and off, if it is to be used frequently - and preferably always.

Briefly, the changes that have taken place to Volvo's three-point belt since its introduction in 1959 are:

- the reel, for increased freedom of movement and flexibility
- tensioners to eliminate slack when the belt is tightened
- force limiters which control the force needed to restrain the occupant
- simpler and more effective buckles
- adjustable upper anchorage point

In the long-term too, the basic principle of the three-point belt will be retained, although there will continue to be developments in terms of effectiveness and comfort. More comfortable straps, more effective force limiters to control the roll-out speed, upgrades to the automatic height adjustment, etc.

Swift new developments in computers and micro-electronics will probably lead to a dramatic change in the function of the belt in the future and make more sophisticated regulation of the function both possible, before, during and after a collision sequence. In other words, the function of the belt will become more advanced.

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