

DESIGN CONCEPT

In Brief:

The award-winning Volvo V70 has been styled to reflect the needs, expectations and active lives of today's premium brand estate car customers. The nose and the strong shoulder lines echo the award-winning shape and new Volvo styling introduced in the S80 but, from the windscreen back, the Volvo V70 asserts its own identity.

Despite its handsome lines, Volvo's designers have ensured it remains extremely functional and flexible. The upright side windows and vertical tailgate, for example, are traditional Volvo estate styling cues and help provide the Volvo V70 with a well-shaped, versatile load space.

In full:

- Designed to reflect the needs, expectations and active lives of premium brand estate car buyers
- Styling incorporates all elements of the latest Volvo design language introduced with the S80 saloon and subsequently in the XC90 and V50 compact Sportswagon, with V-shaped bonnet and strong, shapely shoulder lines
- Near-vertical tailgate and upright rear windows are classic Volvo design cues and help provide a vast load bay
- Styled under Volvo's former chief designer, Peter Horbury
- Aerodynamic CD figure of 0.30

Gone are the days when Volvo estates looked like they'd been designed only with the aid of a set-square. The Volvo V70 reflects the extraordinary, dynamic advances in Volvo design over the last decade and has been styled to reflect the varying needs of today's premium brand estate car owners.

The V70 follows many of the design cues introduced in the award-winning Volvo S80 that now form the new Volvo design language subsequently seen in the XC90 and the compact V50 Sportswagon. But form has not been allowed to take precedence over function - the Volvo V70 is still a true load carrier, offering versatility and practicality.

Peter Horbury, who was Volvo's Design Director in from 1991 to 2003, gives an enigmatic response when questioned about the concept for the Volvo V70:

"Imagine the front end of an E-type Jaguar married to the back end of a Ford Transit van," he says. "With the Volvo V70, we have tried to combine the two."

Thankfully, the end product is rather more handsome than Horbury's image suggests. The Volvo V70 offers a brilliant synthesis of the latest Volvo dynamic design cues, while retaining the practicality and versatility expected of a proper Volvo estate. It's also a shape that's exceptionally efficient – the CD figure is just 0.30 – and this helps both high-speed stability and fuel consumption.

The front end echoes the award-winning design of the Volvo S80 and the sporting Volvo S60 saloons. The V-shaped bonnet is instantly recognisable and it frames a traditional Volvo chrome 'waterfall' grille. Strong shoulder lines also reflect Volvo's strong, modern design language and help to give the car a sense of solidity, purpose and premium quality as well as emphasise and aid side impact protection.

From the windscreen back, though, Volvo's designers have developed unique themes for the Volvo V70 befitting its status as a versatile estate car. The complex rounded curves in the front and side profile underline its dynamic nature and help to disguise the practical square shape of the rear end.

"We tried to make the car appeal to saloon car buyers as well as traditional estate drivers," said Horbury. "It has the same dramatic front as the Volvo S60, but while the body of the Volvo S60 tapers to the rear, the Volvo V70 is vertical to the third window."

Upright rear side windows and an almost vertical rear door are classic Volvo estate design features and vital elements in making the Volvo V70 such a practical machine. The result is a cargo area that's both spacious and easy to load, even when the luggage is bulky.

Horbury continued: "The vertical rear door is crucial – a sloping tailgate means sacrificing a big triangular tube of space. And the third window has to be longer than the second for it to be a Volvo estate car."

At the rear, the shapely clear lense tail-lights have been developed from the curved theme of those first introduced on the Volvo S80 saloon, helping to retain a family look, but they are also stacked alongside the rear door, reflecting a Volvo styling theme that began with the 850

estate. Attention to detail is highlighted by the integrated LED side marker lights and the position of the tailgate hinges which keep the loading area clear of obstructions.

The exterior detailing has also been engineered to reflect the practical, active or sporting requirements of Volvo V70 owners. The top of the rear loading panel is finished with a protective plastic material, which prevents the paintwork from being damaged during loading and unloading, and if scratched is easily replaced, as are the chrome or body coloured bumper inserts. Such attention to detail helps the Volvo V70 stand out against some talented opposition.