

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

2023 Volvo XC60 Recharge

MSRP: \$43,450 (Core FWD) \$57,200 (Recharge AWD) As Tested: \$74,690 (Recharge AWD Ultimate)



This week's test drive is in the Volvo XC60. The midsize premium crossover was first offered in the states in the 2010 model year. The 2023 edition is offered in three trim levels (Core, Plus and Ultimate replace the former Momentum, R-Design and Inscription designations). All buyers now have a choice of Light or Dark exterior color schemes. The former features brightwork trim, while the latter is gloss black.

Three engine choices are available. B5 specifies a 2.0L four cylinder turbo (247 h.p.) with mild (48v) hybrid assist (EPA combined estimate 25 mpg (AWD)). B6 takes the B5 engine and adds a supercharger (295 h.p., EPA est. 23 mpg combined (AWD)). Finally, XC 60 Recharge models like our test car employ Volvo's T8 powertrain, which adds a twin motor, plug-in hybrid system (with an 18.8 kWh battery) to the B6 engine. The gas engine's 312 horsepower combines with 143 h.p. from the electric motor, for a total of 455 h.p., along with a combined, 523 lb.-ft. of torque. (EPA est. 28 mpg combined and 63 MPGe (AWD)). Volvo quotes 0-60 times for the three engines as 6.5 seconds for the B5 (6.6 with FWD), 5.9 with the B6, and 4.5 with the T8. While my T8 tester indeed felt quick, the 4.5 time surprises me. Sufficed to say, the sneaky fast T8 is the antidote to on-ramp anxiety. Estimated, electric-only range is 36 miles, which means that some drivers can cover their daily commute without touching the gas tank. I found that plugging in overnight was sufficient time to recharge the Recharge, on regular, household (110v) current. You can also opt to replenish the battery as you drive, with the adjustable, regenerative braking system. Mileage-wise, I



Photos courtesy of the manufacturer

logged 24 mpg's overall, during a cold winter week here in the Capital District. My test coincided with a couple of minor, snow/sleet events, which the AWD system (standard on Recharge and Ultimate B6, optional elsewhere (\$2,300), shrugged off as it traversed the snowy, slushy roads. On dry roads, the Recharge handles confidently and rides comfortably.

The cabin has the clean, Scandinavian styling characteristic of Volvo's lineup. Particularly in Ultimate trim, the materials, fit and finish have an upscale look and feel. Controls for many system functions are channeled through the vertically oriented, 9" center touchscreen. The design is not especially intuitive, so (as in many, premium vehicles), it takes more steps to get to the desired, system controls than would be needed with a simpler layout. Some study time is required to flatten the learning curve (hint - using voice commands helps). Buyers can choose from many desirable features as they climb the trim ladder. Among them, the panoramic moonroof on Core models, a bird's-eye camera on Plus, and a Harmon Kardon sound system (600 watts, 14 speakers) on Ultimate. On this top rung, the option sheet further beckons, with a Bowers & Wilkins sound system upgrade. The 1,410 watt, 15-speaker system offers premium sound (with a premium price - \$3,200).

Row one seating is highly adjustable and exceptionally comfortable, and with front seats set to hold six footers, there's just enough leg room behind for like-size passengers in row two. EYP (Empty Your Pockets) storage spots run small in the cabin. Cargo capacity in back ranges from 25.8 - 63.3 cubic feet, depending on how you configure the rear seating. The space is usable large, and the low liftover height in back makes for easy loading/unloading.

A 40 year resident of the Capital District, Dan Lyons is the author of six automotive books, and photographer of more than 200 calendars.

