

# ME & MY CAR



It looks like a tank but my Volvo XC90 is comfortable and practical and there's so much personal space inside that driving it is almost a pleasure, says Dale Jannels

I drive what can only be described as a tank. It's actually a Volvo XC90 4 x 4, but you'd be forgiven for running in the other direction when confronted by it.

It is a huge beast so you wouldn't want to be a bunny in the headlights of this motor. Thankfully, since being acquired by the Americans, Volvo seems to have shrugged off its flat cap reputation and is now building good quality and attractive cars.

But monster that it is, I'm fond of my car. For starters, it is exceptionally practical and it's big for a reason – to cater for my wife and two children, and in preparation for the one on the way.

They can all sit comfortably together for reasonably long periods, even with all the necessary baggage, more often than not resulting from their shopping addictions.

Importantly, there is also plenty of what I call 'argument allowance.' In other words, passengers don't sit so close together that elbows, feet and flailing arms become a prob-

lem. On the contrary, there's so much personal space in the car that driving the Volvo comes close to being a pleasure.

The XC90 is a relatively new car to the market. It was only launched in Britain in 2002 and has since become pretty popular. The reason I like it is that it isn't as pretentious as the stereotypical 4 x 4. It has quite a feminine feel to it.

I'm not saying that I like girly cars but the XC90 was designed by Volvo to have a broad appeal and it took into account the tastes of both men and women. The resulting car is less aggressive than a traditional 4 x 4 and it also has a sleek edge with an air of beauty.

Most 4 x 4s are much of a muchness and it's pretty difficult to single out what you think would be the best choice. But we've all seen the rave reviews – even Jeremy Clarkson loves the XC90.

In conclusion, my car is comfortable on long journeys, incredibly spacious and fantastically practical. In fact, much like my company's motto of getting it right first time, Volvo did.



TIME OUT



**DALE JANNELS**  
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