

First drive impressions: Unveiling the power and style of the new all-electric Volvo C40 Recharge

 By [Imran Salie](#)

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I was one of the lucky few to get inside Volvo's new all-electric C40 Recharge in Cape Town recently, and what an experience it was. The conditions on the road weren't ideal for driving at higher speeds, it was an extremely wet day in the Mother City, which means that driving had to be done with extra caution and without hard acceleration. I still got a good taste of what the C40 Recharge offers though.



Source: [Motorpress](#)

So, what is the Volvo C40 Recharge about?

The Volvo C40 Recharge is the brand's first battery-electric vehicle (BEV), and is a stylish compact crossover. It's also touted as the Volvo's first car to be designed fully electric.

The C40 Recharge, which is only on offer in its flagship Ultimate specification, is powered by twin motors that sit on each axle, enabling an all-wheel-drive system. It also has a 78 kWh high-voltage lithium-ion battery pack.

Its power outputs are 300kW and 66Nm. Volvo claims a 4.7-second sprint from 0-100km/h. The C40 Recharge has a range of up to 444km and can be charged fully in approximately 37 hours.

A cool and minimal interior

The C40 Recharge has leather-free seats which are made of recycled material. Don't be fooled into thinking the quality and the premium touch are not there, the seats still look and feel spectacular. Volvo has taken a truly sustainable approach with the C40 Recharge and we here are for it.

Matching the leather-free seats are interesting-looking panels attached to the dashboard. The design of these panels was inspired by the outlining of a topographical map apparently. It goes with the greyish colour of the seats quite nicely.

The overall interior is minimal and adequately spacious.

Features

The C40 Recharge has a nine-inch infotainment system with Google apps and services, a 12.3-inch digital driver display, Volvo's suite of safety features, electrically adjustable front seats, seat heating (both front and rear), a heated steering wheel, a panoramic sunroof, wireless smartphone charging and two-zone climate control.

Exterior design

The C40 Recharge looks great and has a strong road presence. I noticed people noticing it while we drove, which could be because they have never laid eyes on a Volvo that has a sloping rear end. I remember being in a black C40 Recharge, which looked gorgeous with a layer of raindrops around it from the wet weather. Overall, the C40 Recharge is characterised by this sloping rear-end design.



What was it like to drive?

The C40 Recharge is fast. Once your foot is down on the pedal you will feel an immediate pull and you will find yourself being pushed back into your seat due to the sheer force. I must admit that I was surprised at how fast it was even though I wasn't expecting any sluggishness. Keep in mind that this acceleration was achieved without fully pressing down on the pedal, indicating that the C40 Recharge has even more power to offer

In terms of ride quality, the C40's all-wheel-drive did well to help maintain the vehicle's confidence and sturdiness on the soaked Western Cape roads. The C40 did feel slightly heavy on the bends and curves as the steering was not the lightest out there.

I'm happy to report that you can expect a soft and serene experience on the inside of this vehicle. Despite the thunderous sounds of splattering raindrops and the noise from passing vehicles, the cabin remained relatively quiet.

The C40 Recharge also has a good seating position that enables good visibility for the driver.

Pricing

The C40 Recharge starts at R1,285,000. Volvo notes that South Africa's initial allocation is 50 units.

Included in the purchase price is the Volvo Care package, which comprises a five-year maintenance plan and warranty (with the battery pack covered for eight years or 160,000km), a home charging wall box and a public charging cable.

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