

Top 10 Environmentally Friendly Luxury Vehicles

You don't need to buy a small and cheap car to drive a vehicle that's kind to the environment. And to help you out on that quest, [Forbes](#) has assembled a list of luxury vehicles that emit the fewest pollutants according to the EPA. [The Lexus LS 600h L](#) came in behind two other hybrid Lexus models, the GS 450h sedan and RX 400h SUV. For now, though, Lexus is the only one offering luxury hybrids, and that's why it took the top three spots in Forbes' list. None of the competing sedans from other luxury automakers are currently offered as hybrids, but that's about to change. Audi, BMW, Cadillac, Lexus, Mercedes-Benz, and Porsche have all announced plans to unveil hybrids, some as soon as 2009. After the hybrids, cars with four- and five-cylinder engines come next on the list of luxury vehicles that pollute the least — cars like the [Audi TT](#) (fourth place), Volvo S40 (tied for seventh), and BMW 128i (tied for eighth) also made the cut. [Click here for a slideshow showcasing the complete top ten list.](#)

7. (tie) Volvo S40 2.4i/V50 2.4i

Air Pollution Score: 7
(higher is better)

Carbon Footprint:

8.0 annual tons

(annual tons of greenhouse-gas emissions; lower is better)

The base five-cylinder-powered Volvo S40 sedan and its station-wagon equivalent, the V50, aren't as fast or sporty as other premium compact cars, but their smaller, less-powerful engine represents a gain for the environment. If you live in California or the other states that adhere to its stricter emissions regulations, you can drive an S40 or V50 that's given an Air Pollution Score of 9.5, while those in the rest of the U.S. settle for a version rated at 7, which is still above average. We used the latter score for this ranking because it corresponds to the vehicles most widely available. The 2.4i variants come only with front-wheel drive, unlike the more powerful and slightly less environmentally friendly T5 models not on this list, which can be ordered with all-wheel drive.

7. (tie) Volvo C30 T5 (w/ 6-speed manual trans)

Air Pollution Score: 7
(higher is better)

Carbon Footprint:

8.0 annual tons

(annual tons of greenhouse-gas emissions; lower is better)

New for 2008, Volvo's C30 is a distinctively styled two-door hatchback that borrows styling and technology from the S40 sedan and V50 wagon. A smaller 2.4-liter engine is offered on the C30 outside the U.S., but only the quicker 2.5-liter turbocharged five-cylinder engine, designated by the "T5" in the car's name, is offered here. The C30 averages 19 mpg city/28 mpg highway with a six-speed manual transmission. A five-speed automatic reduces fuel efficiency and increase the carbon footprint. Unlike the S40 and V50, the C30 is not offered as an ultra-low-emissions model in California and other states with similar emissions regulations.

8. (tie) Volvo S60 (w/ front wheel drive)

Air Pollution Score: 7

(higher is better)

Carbon Footprint:

8.3 annual tons

(annual tons of greenhouse-gas emissions; lower is better)

The midsize Volvo S60 sedan comes powered in its base, front-wheel-drive version by an efficient and clean-operating 2.5-liter five-cylinder turbocharged engine that delivers peppy, though not overpowering, acceleration. Estimated fuel economy is 19 mpg city/27 mpg highway. An all-wheel-drive version of the base model and a quicker T5 model with a 2.4-liter turbo five-cylinder engine are also offered, but both get lower fuel economy, and have higher carbon footprints.

*** Volvo To Invest in Greener R&D**

Volvo will invest \$1.36 billion over the next five years to develop cars that consume less fuel, reports [Reuters](#). "The aim is to reduce the total fuel economy and tailpipe emissions of the global Volvo Cars fleet," Volvo said in a statement. "The investment initiative will focus primarily on the development and deployment of cleaner, more efficient diesel engines, hybrids and alternative fuel vehicles, the use of light, strong materials ... and the introduction of smaller vehicles." The automaker also announced that a new development center for hybrid technology would be created in Gothenburg, Sweden. The new center would initially be staffed by 20 engineers, who would be responsible for introducing hybrid systems into Volvo cars as well as ensuring that other brands in the group could apply the technology in their own product plans.

http://www.forbesautos.com/advice/toptens/least-polluting-luxury-cars-story.html?partner=fadc_hpflash_pollute_least