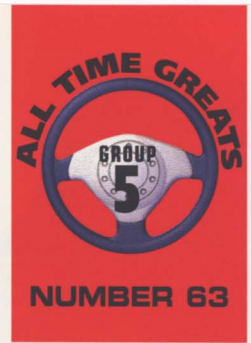




SWEDEN 1956-1970

Volvo 120 SERIES

After the dated-looking PV cars, the 120 series (Amazon in its home market) was a breath of fresh air. It not only looked good but helped Volvo gain its reputation for producing cars with amazing reliability and strength.



Produced by Volvo Car Corporation, Gothenburg, Sweden



VITAL STATISTICS

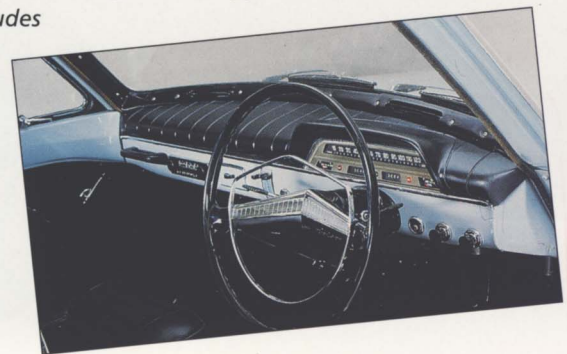
Top speed:	100 mph
0-60 mph:	14.9 sec.
Engine type:	In-line four
Displacement:	1,778 cc
Max power:	90 bhp at 5,000 rpm
Max torque:	105 lb-ft at 3,500 rpm
Weight:	2,380 lbs.
Gas mileage:	27 mpg
Price (1965):	\$2,630



"...overwhelming solidity."

"The first thing that strikes you when you get into the Volvo is its very basic interior. It's comfortable though, with supportive seats and an air of overwhelming solidity. The dash includes a horizontal speedometer, and the long shifter looks like it belongs in a truck. The four-cylinder engine isn't very smooth but it pulls strong and will cruise at 90 mph with overdrive. There is a fair amount of body roll through turns, but its roadholding is good."

The interior of the Amazon is spacious and surprisingly comfortable.



Volvo 120 SERIES



With handsome, full-width styling by Jan Wilsgaard, and continuing Volvo's astounding reputation for reliability, the 120-series was the car that really saw Volvo's sales take off here in the U.S.

Strong engine

Volvo gained a reputation for reliability with its pushrod four-cylinder engines. This car has the 1.8-liter B18 engine with five main bearings. Twin SU carburetors take power to 90 bhp.



High build quality

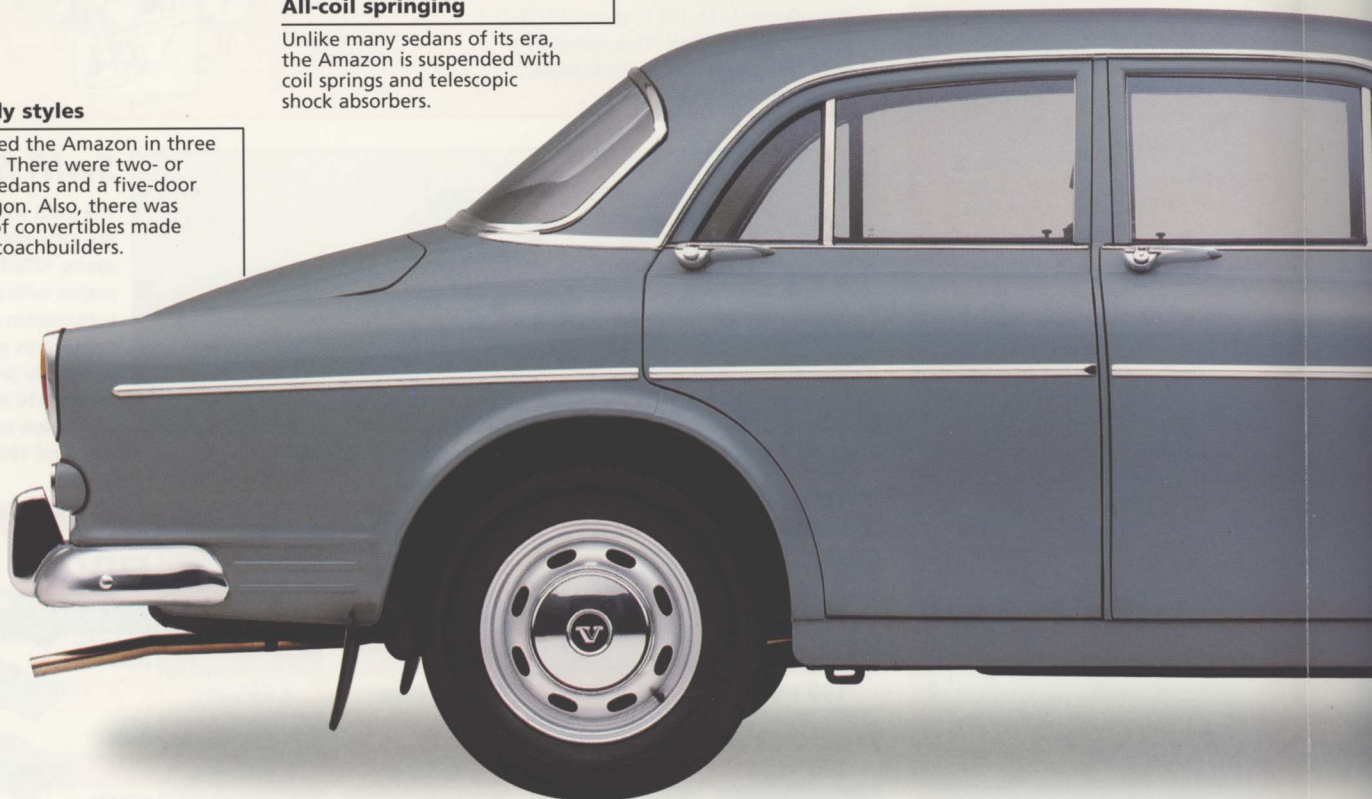
High standards in the Volvo factory and the use of high-quality steel have ensured that most Amazons have stood the ravages of time remarkably well. Many unrestored cars are still in daily use.

All-coil springing

Unlike many sedans of its era, the Amazon is suspended with coil springs and telescopic shock absorbers.

Three body styles

Volvo offered the Amazon in three body styles. There were two- or four-door sedans and a five-door station wagon. Also, there was a handful of convertibles made by various coachbuilders.





Overdrive transmission

The four-speed manual transmission is supplemented by an optional Laycock de Normanville overdrive unit. Operating only in top gear, it is activated by a column-mounted shifter. Overdrive makes high-speed cruising more relaxed. An automatic transmission was optional from 1963.

Build quality

Standards in the Volvo factory use of high-quality steel ensured that most Amazons survived the ravages of time very well. Many unrestored Amazons are still in daily use.



Live rear axle

Like the PV series, the Volvo Amazon uses a live rear axle. It is extremely well located with large torque arms and a hefty Panhard rod.



Specifications

1965 Volvo 122S

ENGINE

Type: In-line four-cylinder

Construction: Cast-iron block and head

Valve gear: Two valves per cylinder operated by a gear-driven camshaft

Bore and stroke: 3.31 in. x 3.15 in.

Displacement: 1,778 cc

Compression ratio: 8.5:1

Induction system: Two SU carburetors

Maximum power: 90 bhp at 5,000 rpm

Maximum torque: 105 lb-ft at 3,500 rpm

TRANSMISSION

Four-speed manual; optional overdrive

BODY/CHASSIS

Unitary monocoque construction with steel four-door sedan body

SPECIAL FEATURES



The 1955 Chrysler Imperial influenced the styling, especially the grill.



The parking brake is mounted between the door and the seat.

RUNNING GEAR

Steering: Cam-and-roller

Front suspension: Independent with wishbones, coil springs, telescopic shock absorbers and anti-roll bar

Rear suspension: Live axle with coil springs, torque arms, Panhard rod and telescopic shock absorbers

Brakes: Discs (front), drums (rear)

Wheels: Steel, 6 x 15 in.

Tires: Radials, 5.9 x 15 in.

DIMENSIONS

Length: 175.2 in. **Width:** 64.0 in.

Height: 59.3 in. **Wheelbase:** 102.5 in.

Track: 51.5 in. (front and rear)

Weight: 2,380 lbs.

Milestones

1956 Volvo shows its new car in September.

Public response is excellent and many orders are placed. Volvo announces that the first Amazon will reach buyers at the beginning of 1957.



The Amazon was sold alongside the PV544 until 1965.

1958 An 85-bhp Sport model is introduced.

A four-speed transmission becomes available.

1959 Front safety belts become standard equipment—an industry first.



The 140 series was introduced in 1967 to replace the Amazon.

1961 The Amazon gains a more powerful 1.8-liter engine.

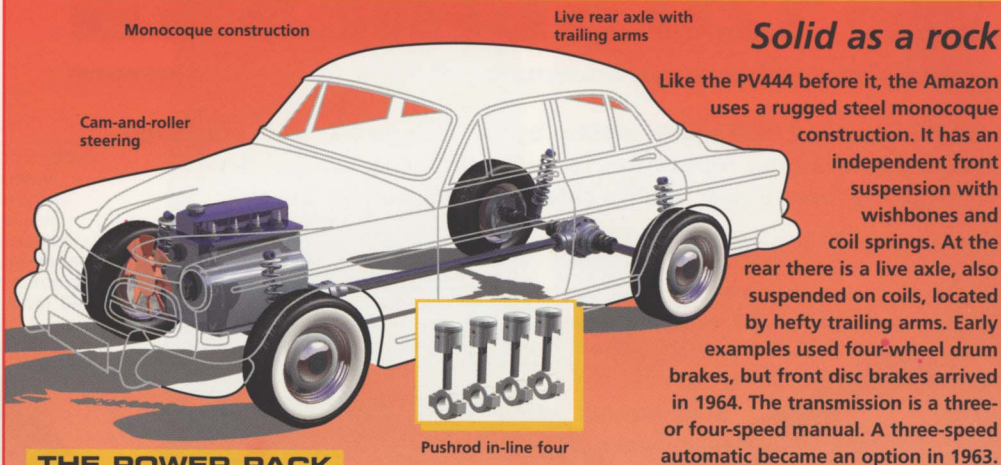
1968 A 2.0-liter engine is also available

as are dual-circuit brakes. Production finally comes to an end in 1970.

VALUE GUIDE

ORIGINAL PRICE	
1965	\$2,630
CURRENT VALUE	\$2,000-\$7,000
PRODUCTION TOTAL	
All Amazon models	667,322

UNDER THE SKIN



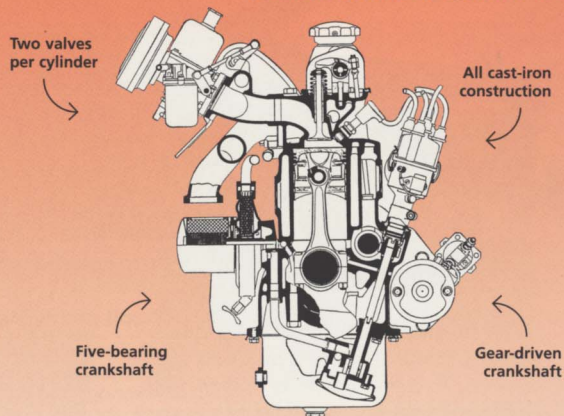
Solid as a rock

Like the PV444 before it, the Amazon uses a rugged steel monocoque construction. It has an independent front suspension with wishbones and coil springs. At the rear there is a live axle, also suspended on coils, located by hefty trailing arms. Early examples used four-wheel drum brakes, but front disc brakes arrived in 1964. The transmission is a three- or four-speed manual. A three-speed automatic became an option in 1963.

THE POWER PACK

Strong four

The first engine used in the Amazon was the all-iron, pushrod 1.6-liter B16 unit with 60 bhp. A 1.8-liter version arrived in 1961. This engine has a stronger, five-bearing crankshaft than the older, three-bearing unit. With twin SU carburetors, power is increased to 115 bhp on the sporty 123GT. The 2.0-liter version became available in 1968. It produces up to 118 bhp and 123 lb-ft. In five-bearing form, it's a famously strong engine and is easily capable of exceeding 200,000 miles.



The 123GT is the most desirable Amazon, but few were made.

Swift Swede

The most collectable of the 120-series range is the sporty 123GT. Its 1.8 liter engine with a higher compression ratio and twin carburetors gives 115 bhp—enough to propel it to around 110 mph. About 2,500 were built between 1966 and 1968.

NOSE TO NOSE

Citroën DS21 • NSU Ro80 • Volvo 122S

TOP SPEED	0-60 mph	POWER	WEIGHT	RIVAL CARS
108 mph	12.9 sec.	108 bhp	2,919 lbs.	CITROËN DS21
110 mph	13.4 sec.	115 bhp	2,695 lbs.	NSU Ro80
100 mph	14.9 sec.	90 bhp	2,380 lbs.	VOLVO 122S