



# Toyota Land Cruiser 70 Station Wagon

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Toyota offers a wide range of 4x4 vehicles from the 'little' RAV to the Hilux pick-up, Fortuner, Land Cruiser Pick-up, Prado and the top of the range Land Cruiser wagon. The new Land Cruiser 70 tested here slots in between the Fortuner and the Prado, and even under the softened guise of a contemporary design, they don't come much tougher than this!

If you are looking for a vehicle that achieves low drag co-efficiency and is both stylish to look at and very fast, with all the latest gimmicks to impress your country club friends, then you probably won't be looking at the Land Cruiser 70.

But if you have a hankering after not shaving on weekends, of getting out and earning a healthy tan and wearing your favourite bush hat trimmed with fake leopard skin, then this Cruiser

will do you exceptionally proud!

In fact, you'll love it – and largely because of its overall simplicity and cavernous interior space. Marry this to the unspoken promise of being able to take you wherever your heart desires in Africa, and what more could you want? And after an hour behind that steering wheel you won't want to give this vehicle back. Ever!

The Land Cruiser 70 Station Wagon shares the same mechanical specification as the Land Cruiser Pick-up. Both have a strong ladder frame chassis known for ruggedness and the ability to carry heavy loads; the major difference between the two is that the Station Wagon's overall wheelbase is 450 mm shorter than that of the commercial Pick-up, but slightly wider (100 mm) due to the wider fenders on the Station Wagon.

But don't expect the hard ride of the Pick-up. Rather, the 70 Series uses live axles front and rear with long travel coil springs at the front and leaf springs at the rear with modified spring rates that favour quality of ride rather than the ability

to carry excessive loads over tough terrain.

It's available in only one choice of engine, a normally aspirated 4.2-litre 6-cylinder diesel engine that develops 96 kW at 3 800 r/min and 285 Nm of torque at 2 200 r/min, and it requires an oil change every 5 000 km.

The vehicle uses a five-speed manual gearbox with two-speed transfer case offering the option of selecting low-range 4x4, and perhaps surprisingly - for it is an advancement on those old manually-operated free-wheeling hubs - the front wheels are equipped with automatically-locking front hubs. These enable the selection of 4x4 while the vehicle is still moving and without the need for the driver to leave the comfort of his seat. Stylish alloy wheels (16 inch) add a touch of glamour and are fitted with wider 265/70 R 16LT tyres that impressed us when towing off-road.

If we have been a bit harsh on stressing the 70's simplicity, there are a few other modern features to mention: power windows, power steering, air conditioning, RDS

radio/CD combination, key operated central locking, front fog lights and a rear console incorporating a rear compartment heater. But expect durable vinyl floor covering, cloth seat facings, a rear door mounted spare wheel carrier, a 90-litre fuel tank, aluminium side and rear steps, and finally, a manually operated electric aerial.

### What can it tow?

Like its Pick-up stable-mate the 70 Station Wagon will move virtually anything anywhere in first gear, but all in its own time. Not being turbo-charged like most modern day diesels, the performance is a bit slow. The plus side is that this engine will probably outlast that of the driver!

Having a tare weight of 2 138 kg should mean that it can tow up to 2 138 kg, however Toyota has placed a restriction of a maximum braked towing capacity of 1 500 kg for this vehicle, the same as for the Fortuner petrol 4x4. Because we feel that the 1 500 kg limit is too conservative for this vehicle we selected an off-road Xplorer 1, weighing in at 1 650 kg, as a typical and more suitable match.

The Xplorer is not known for a light nose weight, but hitched onto the rear of the 70 Cruiser, the towball height drops 22 mm to 480 mm, near perfect for towing and able to clear the caravan's jockey wheel when going over or through reasonable obstacle courses!

Acceleration is fair, from zero to 60 km/h in 10.96 seconds and zero to 100 in 32.72 seconds. Compare this figure with our tow test data at the back of this magazine and you will see that even with six cylinders and a 4.2-litre engine capacity and a top towing speed of 115 km/h, its performance is not anywhere near to that of a turbo-charged diesel engine. The standard hill climb took two minutes fifteen in the Cruiser and one minute thirty-seven in a Fortuner diesel. Compare that figure with the Toyota Fortuner 3-litre 4x4 turbo diesel, which does zero to 100 in 19.62 seconds and the hill climb in one minute 37, almost half the time.

Where the Cruiser excels is at going places: traction is superb even while towing up steep inclines on grass. And whereas with a turbo-powered engine you may need to give stick in some places, the low down grunt of this big,



## Non turbo

# VS

## Turbo

### 70 Station Wagon

Jurgens Xplorer: 1 650 kg  
Hill Climb: 2 min 15 sec  
0-100 km/h: 32.72 sec  
80-100 km/h: 10.06 sec  
Top speed: 115 km/h  
Fuel consumption: 15.48 l/100 km

### Fortuner 3.0 D-4D 4x4

Jurgens Xplorer: 1 650 kg  
Hill climb: 1 min 37  
0-100 km/h: 19.62 sec  
80-100 km/h: 6.66 sec  
Top speed: 140 km/h  
Fuel consumption: 14.2 l/100 km



Dashboard layout is simple and functional; note the diff-lock just below the steering wheel on the left.

normally aspirated engine means that it does the job without resorting to wheel spin – just idle in first or second gear!

You can probably throw your bulky David Kramer CD collection away too as there is a very elaborate music centre complete with USB port for an I-pod Nano.

Toyota also did away with a rev counter to take your mind off the fact that you have selected fifth gear at 60 km/h and you are really only going to travel at about 100 km/h for the rest of the day, week or year.

But getting back to towing: The big six-cylinder diesel engine is geared to pulling loads at an acceptable speed – it will do 120 km/h but you may feel you are pushing really hard and then the fuel needle starts to drop. My favourite speed is 90 km/h; the engine revs sound reasonable but you may arrive at the opinion that this Cruiser is under geared, it certainly feels like you need a sixth gear if you want to travel at 120 km/h.

As for fuel consumption, expect



Twin door access to the rear loading bay.

to get 15.48 l/100 km while towing at 100 km/h - remarkable for such a big engine and combined weight; but also expect slightly slower stopping times of 4.4 seconds from 100 km/h to standstill – not unexpected.

Verdict: Drive one and you won't want to give it back. It has a throaty truck-sounding engine, oodles of character, plenty of space and an easy-to-clean interior. You may even find that if you take it dirty to your country club you will be seen as a man's man and earn a little more respect from the pink shirted, yellow pullovered, slacks wearing brigade! 