

PRESS RELEASE

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World's first automatic vacuum cleaner soon in shops

(ELECTROLUX) The vacuum cleaner that takes care of the cleaning all by itself is here. The Trilobite is the first automatic vacuum cleaner in the world. It is manufactured at the Electrolux plant in Västervik, Sweden. It will be available in shops in Sweden in a couple of weeks. After the premiere launch in Sweden it will be exported to other European countries in the beginning of next year.

"Our intention is to make life easier for people. And what could possibly be easier than an automatic vacuum cleaner? It is very gratifying that the Trilobite, the world's first automatic vacuum cleaner, will soon be available in shops," says Michael Treschow, President and CEO of the Electrolux Group.

The Trilobite has been under development for several years in Stockholm and Västervik, Sweden.

"This has been quite an exciting journey," says Hans Stråberg, Chief Operating Officer of the Electrolux Group and President of Floor Care and Light Appliances. "We presented a prototype in 1997 to find out if the market was interested. The response was overwhelming. So we decided continue with the project. The prototype has played an important role in our consumer tests and for the development of the product we have today."

"Sees" just like a bat

The vacuum cleaner is 13 centimeters high and has a diameter of 35 centimeters, which means that it can even clean under beds and tables. The Trilobite can "see" with the aid of ultrasound – just like a bat. The system allows it to quickly detect a dog's water bowl, legs of chairs, walls and other obstacles. Once detected, the Trilobite will calculate a new path. Near stairways and other places where there are no natural obstacles, you place special magnetic strips to prevent the Trilobite from passing through.

When the automatic vacuum cleaner is started it first seeks out the nearest wall and vacuums along the perimeter of the room. In so doing it also creates a picture of the room, which helps the Trilobite calculate the time for cleaning. As soon as it is heading for an obstacle on the floor, it quickly calculates a new path and continues cleaning until the floor has been vacuumed.

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Cables and rugs are not considered obstacles, however. The vacuum cleaner has both an independent wheel suspension and a unique patented system in the roller brush that allow the Trilobite to pass over rugs and to avoid getting tangled up with cables on the floor.

Returns to charger by itself

When the power is running low, the Trilobite automatically returns to the charging station and docks for charging. If the cleaning was not completed when the charging started, the Trilobite will resume cleaning the remainder of the room once charging is complete.

The Trilobite is a completely new product compared to the prototype that was presented in 1997. It has automatic charging, an LCD display, and the option to choose between three different cleaning programs (normal, quick, and spot vacuuming). In today's Trilobite, dust is collected using rubber lamellae and is accumulated in a dust box that is easily removed and emptied (no dust bags are needed).

The expected price level for the vacuum cleaner is 1,500 euros.

Electrolux is the world's largest producer of powered appliances for kitchen, cleaning and outdoor use, such as refrigerators, washing machines, cookers, vacuum cleaners, chain saws, lawn mowers, and garden tractors. In 2000, Group sales were SEK 124.5 billion and the Group had 87,000 employees. Every year, customers in more than 150 countries buy more than 55 million Electrolux Group products for both consumer and professional use. The Electrolux Group includes famous appliance brands such as AEG, Electrolux, Zanussi, Frigidaire, Eureka, Flymo and Husqvarna.

See www.electrolux.se/trilobite/press for press pictures, illustrations, press releases and fact sheets.
See www.electrolux.se/trilobite for general information about the Trilobite.

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