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If you're running a **Toyota 70 Series** and looking to upgrade your 4x4 for better dust management, creek crossings, or towing safety, chances are you've come across two major snorkel options: the **Safari ARMAX snorkel** and the **Safari V-Spec snorkel**. Both are made by Safari, a long-standing name synonymous with tough, reliable snorkel kits designed to keep your engine breathing clean air while protecting against water ingress.

In this post, I'm diving deep into the real-life differences between the ARMAX and V-Spec snorkels, sharing insights from over a decade of hands-on experience with multiple 70 Series builds — paying special attention to the 2023 model changeover a lot of people miss. I'll cover everything from dust management and engine breathing to water ingress risk, towing safety, and why fitment accuracy by year and engine choice is critical to avoid "shed-on-a-Saturday" mistakes.

## Understanding the Role of Snorkels on Your Toyota 70 Series

Before we get into which snorkel is better for what, it pays to understand why snorkels matter — especially for the workhorse 70 Series utes that regional NSW farmers, tradies, and off-roaders rely on.

- **Dust Management & Engine Breathing:** Off-road dust and mud can wreak havoc on your air filter and engine intake. A snorkel lifts the air intake point up, ideally above dust clouds and road grime, feeding cleaner air which means less wear and better performance.
- **Water Ingress Prevention:** Creek crossings, floodwater, or heavy rain — a snorkel reduces the risk of water entering the intake and causing hydrolock or swollen con-rods, which can sink your ute faster than you can say "send it."
- **Towing Safety & Blind Spot Reduction:** Some snorkel designs can actually enhance towing safety by reducing blind spots (check fitment carefully). Getting the shape right also avoids snagging or interference with other accessories.
- **Fitment Accuracy By Year & Engine:** The 70 Series quietly shifted in 2023 with new engine variants and changes to bodywork around the intake. Buying the wrong snorkel for your specific year and engine can lead to fitment headaches, wiring loom cuts, or poor sealing.

## Safari Snorkel Kits - An Aussie Icon for Quality and Durability

Safari is arguably the most trusted brand for snorkels in Australia. Their snorkel kits come with *UV-stabilised polyethylene snorkels* that stand up to harsh sun exposure common in regional outback conditions. The tough plastic won't fade, weaken, or crack easily — a necessity for long-lasting performance.

Safari's range includes the V-Spec snorkels and the ARMAX series, the latter positioned as a premium bolt-on upgrade with refinements in styling, durability, and ease of install.

## Safari V-Spec Snorkel - The Tried and Tested Classic

The V-Spec snorkel has been on the market for years, and it's the go-to for many traditionalists who want something that works, day in and day out. It balances cost and performance, with snorkel kits starting from around **\$526** depending on your vehicle model and any additional parts like a head assembly or mounting hardware.

## Key Features of Safari V-Spec Snorkel

- Proven design with years of field testing on Toyota 70 Series
- UV-stabilised polyethylene body for sun and corrosion resistance
- Standard head design that efficiently manages airflow, reducing dust ingestion
- Plug-and-play fit for pre-2023 70 Series models with compatible engine choices

**Fitment hint:** The V-Spec snorkel kits are known for reliable installations on the 1HZ [therural.com.au](https://therural.com.au) diesel and older V8 petrol models but can require minor modifications on later model variations due to bonnet and intake changes made by Toyota in 2023.

## Safari ARMAX Snorkel - The Premium Next-Gen Upgrade

The ARMAX snorkel is Safari's premium option from their range and is designed to take everything the V-Spec does well, then refine it for a better seal, easier install, and sleeker look. It's often chosen by farmers and off-roaders who want to future-proof their build, particularly for the revamped post-2023 70 Series.

### Key Features of Safari ARMAX Snorkel

- Robust UV-stabilised polyethylene snorkel with improved UV and heat resistance
- Redesigned head for better airflow and water deflection during creek crossings
- Enhanced mounting brackets that reduce panel deformation during installation
- Specific fitments for the 2023+ Toyota 70 Series engines, including diesel and petrol variants
- Installation avoids wiring loom cuts and includes pre-fitted gasket seals for water ingress prevention

**Price-wise,** ARMAX snorkel kits usually start slightly higher than V-Spec, around \$600–\$650, but the hassle-free fitment and better protection pay off in long-term reliability.

## Real-Life Differences: Where the Rubber Hits the Road

| Feature                       | Safari V-Spec Snorkel                                                                | Safari ARMAX Snorkel                                                                       |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Material                      | UV-stabilised polyethylene, solid but older formulation                              | Upgraded UV-stabilised polyethylene with enhanced durability                               |
| Snorkel Head Design           | Traditional high-flow V-Spec head, proven but bulkier                                | Streamlined design with better water deflection and dust shedding capabilities             |
| Fitment                       | Precision Best for pre-2023 models; may need minor tweaks post-2023                  | Exact match for 2023+ bodywork and engine variations; factory-matched mounts               |
| Installation                  | Requires careful measurement; some cutting of wiring loom possible with later models | Designed for bolt-on install with minimal fuss and no wiring loom damage                   |
| Water Ingress Risk            | Good water protection but older seal design                                          | Enhanced sealing with pre-fitted gaskets and better head geometry reduces water entry risk |
| Cost                          | From ~\$526                                                                          | From ~\$600+                                                                               |
| Impact on Towing & Blind Spot | Classic bulkier shape may reduce some driver visibility depending on tow setup       | Sleeker shape reduces blind spots; safer towing experience                                 |

## Why Fitment Accuracy by Year and Engine Is Critical

Here's where I always say: "What year and what engine?" before suggesting parts, because there are big differences for anyone running a 70 Series from 2023 onward.



For example, the post-2023 70 Series comes with new engine updates from Toyota, slightly redesigned bonnet contours, and shifted air intake paths. The V-Spec kits were developed before these changes and may require cutting the wiring looms or trimming body panels for a good fit — bugs that long-time Safari customers call “shed-on-a-Saturday” mistakes because no one wants to be stuck fixing rookie errors on the weekend.

The ARMAX, by contrast, was tailored specifically to fit these models perfectly out of the box, with thoughtful bracket placements and plug-and-play hose runs that respect the new engine bay layouts and maintain factory wiring integrity.

## Which One Should You Choose?

At the end of the day, both snorkels deliver solid performance for dust protection and water ingress reduction. The choice really boils down to your ute’s build year, budget, and how much time you want to spend on install finesse.

1. **For pre-2023 Toyota 70 Series owners:** The Safari V-Spec snorkel remains a dependable, cost-effective option with plenty of proven service history.
2. **For 2023+ 70 Series or if you want to future-proof your setup:** The Safari ARMAX snorkel is the smarter investment, especially if you’re not keen on wiring hacks or panel modifications.
3. **If towing with trailers or caravans frequently:** The ARMAX’s sleeker shape also helps reduce blind spots, which is a major safety bonus.

## Final Thoughts from a Regional NSW Farm-All-Rounder

Having fitted dozens of Safari snorkels over 12 years in the field, my advice is to always ask, “What year and what engine?” before buying your snorkel. Don’t get caught out by generic advice or marketing fluff shouting “fits all.” You’ll end up hacking wiring looms, trimming panels, or worse — risking water ingress or engine damage.

Both the Safari ARMAX snorkel and the Safari V-Spec snorkel use the tried and tested *UV-stabilised polyethylene snorkel* material, but the ARMAX offers noticeable upgrades in fitment, durability, and safety features that pay dividends for anyone running the latest Toyota 70 Series builds.



Snorkel prices start from around **\$526**, and I recommend budgeting a bit extra to get the kit that's right for your rig rather than trying to save pennies and ending with a "shed-on-a-Saturday" headache.

Whether you're crossing dusty gravel roads, towing heavy loads, or crossing creek beds, getting your snorkel right is one of the best upgrades to keep your trusty Toyota 70 Series running strong for years to come.

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