

KIDS' PAGE

DISCOVER NEW AND EXCITING STUFF FROM THE ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Construction Toys

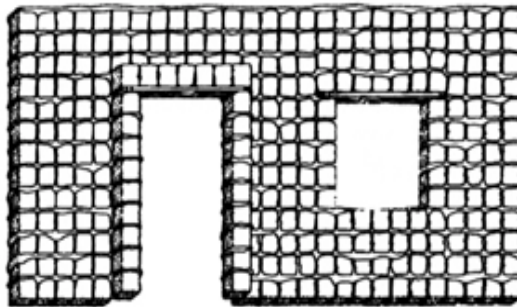
For hundreds of years children have delighted in building toy houses, bridges and machines. Long ago, they used wood and stone blocks, but in the last century, toy makers have introduced new building materials, such as metal and plastic.

Your parents probably remember Meccano, Erector and Tinkertoy building sets. Since the early 1900s, children have used these sets to build cars, cranes and mechanical monsters. Meccano sets, made in England, first appeared in 1907, but the company stopped production in 1981; specialty Meccano sets are still available from a French manufacturer. Erector, a similar type of building kit made in the United States, arrived in 1916. The Tinkertoy was invented by Charles Pajeau from Illinois (USA); he got the idea from watching his children playing with empty thread spools and pencils. It was introduced at the 1913 American Toy Fair in New York.

Dollhouses have been around for at least 200 years. At first, they were used to teach young girls how a household should function, but they quickly lost their training function and became a fun toy for all children. Most were wooden, but by 1900, toy makers began selling paper houses. Children could also build their own dollhouses with a set of building bricks and blocks, such as the Happi Time miniature red-brick set. Many dollhouses featured elaborate decorations and toy furniture, often as carefully made as life-sized furniture.

Sugar Cube House

Sugar cubes can be used just like bricks to build a house. Real bricks are held together with mortar. You can make a good mortar for your sugar-cube creation with icing sugar. Simply mix it with water to form a paste, then spread a thin layer between each sugar-cube brick. Once the bricks are in place, allow the mortar to dry before placing the roof on top. It's a good idea to design your house on paper before you begin construction, so you can leave spaces for doors and windows. Remember to install headers above window and doors to support the sugar cubes above them. A small piece of flat wood, such as a length of Popsicle stick, makes a good header. The roof can be made from cardboard or wood. If you feel adventurous, try building a sugar-cube chimney on the side of your house.

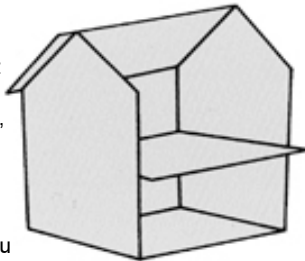


Facts

- The earliest record of a fully furnished doll house was owned by Albert V, Duke of Bavaria in the 16th century.
- In 1939, the Number 5 Meccano set sold for \$5.75 and could be used to make 512 different models.

Build a Dollhouse

Dollhouses can be made from cardboard, wood or any rigid material that can be cut and glued. Fome-Core, available from most art-supply stores, is an ideal building material. The light, rigid foam boards are easy to cut and can be hot-glued into a framework including the floors and walls. Building the house will be easier if you first draw a picture of how you want it to look.

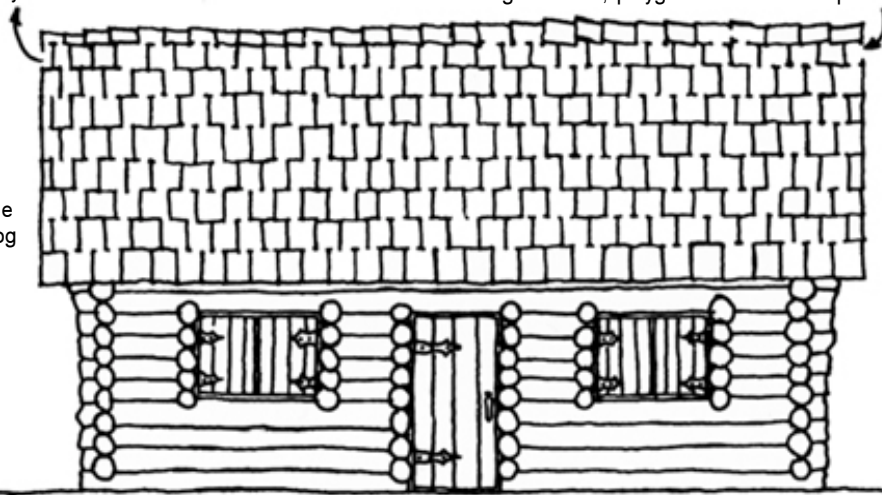


Decorating Your House

- Scraps of cloth can make carpets, bedspreads and wall coverings.
- Old wallpaper with small patterns can be used for dollhouse wallpaper.
- Pins, foam and cloth can be used to create furniture. Here's how to make a chair: cover a small block of foam with a cloth to make the seat (the cloth is the upholstery); a row of pins wound with thread form the back rest; and push in four pins or matchsticks for the legs.
- Pieces of a straw, cut to the right size, make drinking glasses and vases.
- Straws and small pieces of wood can be used to make all kinds of things, including furniture, playgrounds and even pets.

LOG CABIN MAZE

Find your way through the maze on the roof of the log cabin.



Facts

- The Lego company was founded in Denmark in 1932. The first plastic bricks were made in 1949, but they were not called Lego until 1953.
- Lego launched its "Lego system of play" in 1955 with 28 sets and 8 vehicles.

X	U	D	E	W	E	T	Y	J	X	E	F	G	B	P
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WORD SEARCH

Twelve words are hidden in the puzzle. Can you find them?

- | | | |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
| BRICKS | FURNITURE | TOYS |
| ERECTOR | TINKERTOY | DOLLHOUSE |
| PLAY | CONSTRUCT | MECCANO |
| BUILD | LEGO | WOOD |

Facts

- The large Number 7 Meccano set, in 1922, had just over 240 pieces. In 1965, the new Number 7 set had 768 pieces and sold for \$28.95.
- The Number 7 Meccano set, first sold in 1922, featured designs for super models, including the Giant Blocksetting Crane, which was many a boy's desire to build.