

1. THE LEGO BRICK - THE EARLY HISTORY (1949-65).

1.1 The Lego Company Early History (1932-49).

The Lego company, today known as “The Lego Group” or “TLG“, started producing toys in 1932. These were wooden toys for young children, such as brightly painted animals on wheels, etc. After 28 years, the production of wooden toys came to an abrupt end on the 4th of February 1960, when a fire erupted in the wooden toy warehouse. From then on the only wooden products that the TLG produced were some Lego set wooden boxes. Anyone wishing to learn more about the Lego wooden toys (produced 1932-1960) should reference “The World of Lego Toys”, the 1986 book by Henry Wiencek, or the 1999 book “The Ultimate Lego Book”, which was produced by Dorling Kindersley. An additional book (not sold to the general public) was “Lego 50 Years of Play” in 1982.



The 1950 60th birthday party for Lego company founder Ole Kirk Christiansen, with his son Godfred and his grandson Kjeld.

1.2 Automatic Binding Bricks - (1949-1953).

Automatic Binding Brick Elements

The first plastic bricks produced by the Lego Group (TLG) were sold in 1949 in Denmark only. They were known as “Automatic Binding Bricks”, and looked different from the Lego bricks produced today. There were no tubes underneath the bricks, no “LEGO” printed on the stud tops (they were flat), and there were slots in the sides of the bricks. . In 1950 a limited number of Automatic Binding Brick sets were also sold in southern Sweden, only to be discontinued within a year, due to poor sales.



1949-53 #700/3 Automatic Binding Bricks set box top. No Lego logo on these boxes until 1952.

There were only 2 brick sizes produced for the Automatic Binding Brick sets, 2x2 and 2x4. They were however produced in about 9 different colors.

The Automatic Binding Bricks had 3 window types and 1 door type. These had no studs on top, but did have “wings” on the sides. These wings were used to fit the windows/doors snugly into the slots of the slotted bricks. Early examples of the 3 window types also had cellophane “glass” covering the window openings. These were very fragile, and were soon discontinued. Afterwards, all subsequent windows of this type had no “glass”.

Because the early bricks had slots on 2 sides of the brick, it was easy to put a picture or postcard into the slots, and make a picture frame. Automatic Binding Brick sets came with several postcard type colorful pictures for this very purpose. These colorful pictures were discontinued within a year. The Automatic Binding Brick box tops show an example of bricks used as a picture frame with one of these colorful postcards.

From 1949-50 there were no baseplates for the Automatic Binding Bricks to build upon. The first baseplates were introduced in 1951. These were 10x20 stud thin baseplates, available in at least 10 different colors. One of the most common was a brownish swirling marble pattern baseplate that required the mixing of several different colors of plastic. These unique thin colorful baseplates were discontinued in 1953.

Lego parts were also sold by Danish Lego retailers as individual parts. This was true for Lego bricks, as well as windows/doors. These individual parts were sold from tall/deep colorfully painted

wooden boxes that the Danish Lego retailers had to purchase from the Lego Company (TLG). They would dump the small boxes of loose parts into the large individual parts box, with the parts a mixture of parts in different sizes and colors.



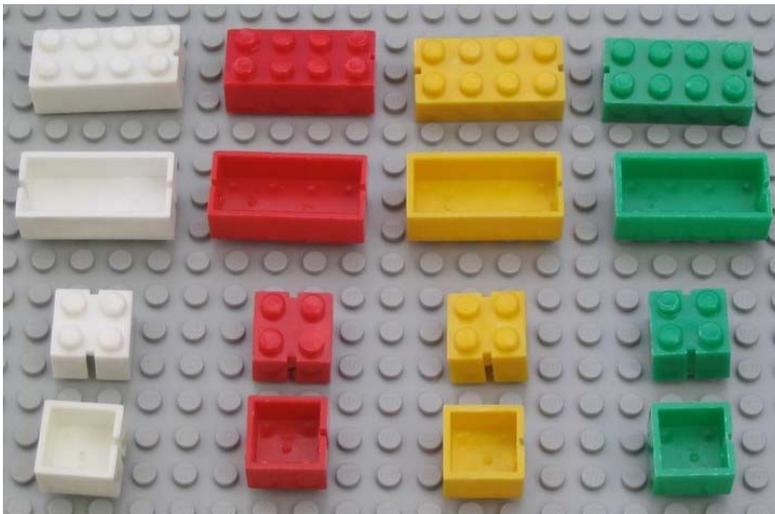
The Lego Logo used in the 1940's

1949 LEGO ITEMS

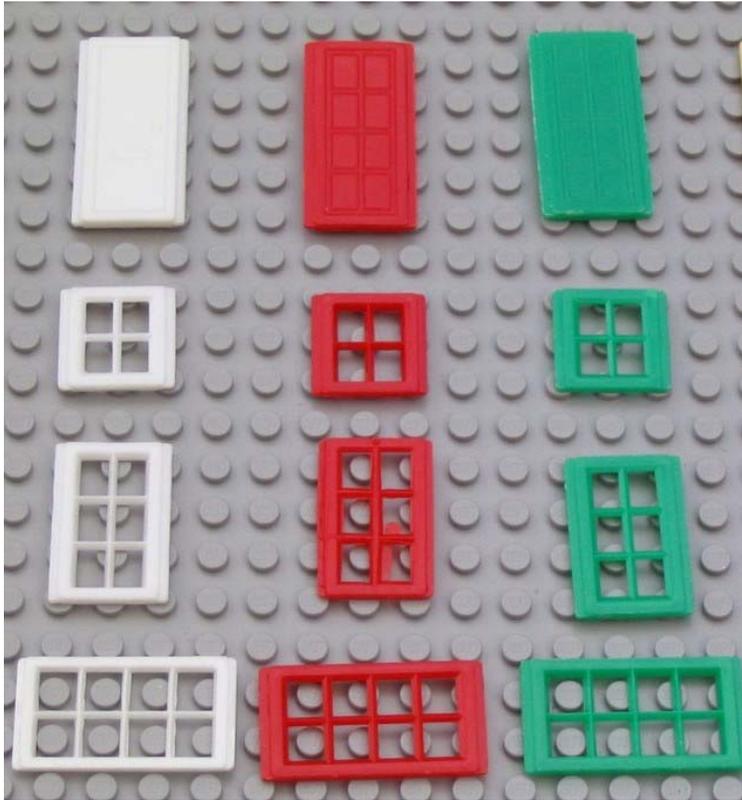
- Starting in 1949 Automatic Binding Bricks were sold in several basic sets. These were sets (in descending size) #700/1, #700/2, #700/3 and #700/4. Soon after (circa 1950) additional basic sets #700/3A, #700/5 and #700/6 were introduced. For the most part, these same set numbers were used for many different versions of basic sets until 1965. These #700/x sets had 2 piece flat boxes, a bottom inner box and a box top that fit over it. They were flat and wide. They had cardboard inserts in the bottom half of the box and enough space above to allow a single level of bricks. The smallest box, the #700/6 had a box in the drawer style. The outer sleeve slid over the inner box bottom. In the #700/x sets the bricks were displayed in a zigzag pattern in 4 or 5 different brick colors (red, white, yellow light green and as the sometimes 5th color, medium blue). Starting in 1951, all but the smallest sets (#700/6) also included the 10x20 thin baseplate, usually in a brown marbled swirling multi-color.

- From 1949-53 the #700/x box top pictures had a dark green background with “AUTOMATIC BINDING BRICKS” printed along the top or bottom edge of the box top. The box top pictured a boy and girl building a multi-color Lego house. All different #700/x sets had the same picture, except the larger sets have Lego models on either or both sides of the central picture.

- Denmark is the first country to have Automatic Binding Brick (Lego) sales with the first sets of 1949. There are only 6 different Lego elements.



- 2x2 and 2x4 slotted bricks were the first bricks produced for the Automatic Binding Bricks sets of 1949. They were available in all the basic sets of 1949, and only sold in Denmark. These bricks had no “Lego” embossed anywhere on the brick. These first Lego bricks were available in red, white, light green and yellow, with medium blue coming online a year later.



- Windows/doors with “wings” were introduced in 1949 with the first bricks. These windows were available in 3 sizes: 1x4x2, 1x2x3, and 1x2x2. These 1949 windows had “glass” panes made of cellophane. The 1x2x4 door type introduced that year had no window lights, and therefore no cellophane. These were available in many colors such as red, white and light green, with other colors such as dark blue and yellow coming later. These were only available in basic sets, until parts packs came online a few years later.

1950 LEGO ITEMS

- Starting in 1950, the first 2x2 and 2x4 slotted bricks were available with “Lego” in block letters underneath. However the old bricks without “Lego” underneath were still being produced. These were only available in basic sets.

- Starting in 1950, the 1x4x2, 1x2x3, and 1x2x2 Lego windows with wings no longer had “glass” panes made of cellophane. They were now completely open. The 1x2x4 Lego door did not change. These were only available in basic sets.

- #700/3A, #700/5 and #700/6 were new Automatic Binding Brick basic sets first produced circa 1950.

- First foreign Lego sales. Automatic Binding Bricks were sold in southern Sweden. They were not very successful, so sales ended within a year or two.



Lego logo used in Lego brochures starting in 1951

1951 LEGO ITEMS



- Starting in 1951, a new 10x20 thin baseplate came into production. This new baseplate was available in several colors, sometimes even in a marbled pattern of different swirling colors. These were only available in basic sets.

1952 LEGO ITEMS



1952 saw the first Automatic Binding Brick boxes with the appearance of "LEGO" on the box top.

- Starting in 1952, an additional version of the #700/x sets was produced at the same time as the earlier version. The box top picture has a dark blue background with "AUTOMATIC BINDING BRICKS" printed along the top of the box top, as well as "LEGO Mursten" ("LEGO Bricks" in Danish) printed below it. This is the first year that the word "LEGO" appears on box tops. The box top pictured the same boy and girl building a multi-color Lego house as with earlier sets. All different #700/x sets had the same picture.

- Even though the Automatic Binding Brick basic set boxes were primarily found with a blue or a green background, occasionally other background colors on the #700/x boxes have also been found, such as red.



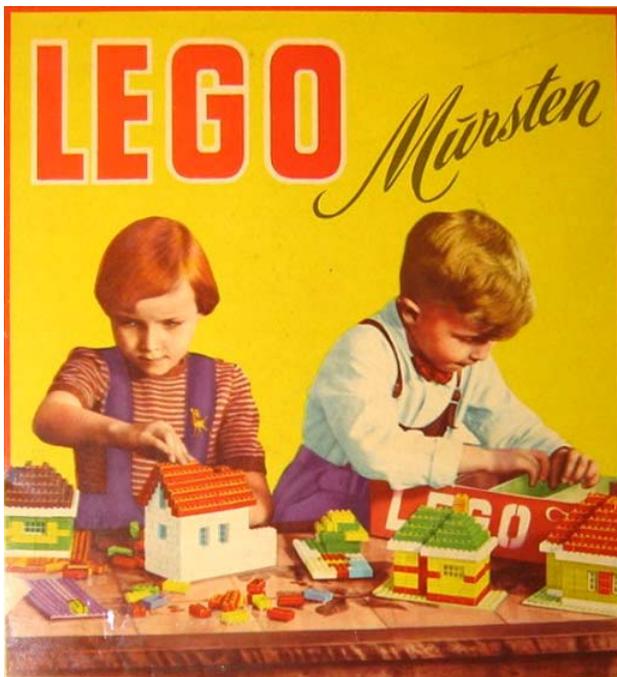
Lego logo used in Lego brochures starting in 1953

1.3 Lego Mursten Years - (1953-1955).

1953 LEGO ITEMS

- In 1953 the #700/x set box top name “Automatic Binding Bricks” disappeared completely, and the new box designs started to only have “Lego Mursten” (“Lego Bricks” in Scandinavian languages) on the box top. These Lego sets still had the same slotted bricks that the older sets had, but they also had a few new items. The #700/x sets that produced from 1953-55, were displayed in their box in a checkerboard pattern in 4 different brick colors (red, white, yellow and light green).

- The 1x2 and 2x3 Lego brick started production in 1953. These were only found in red, white, blue, yellow, and light green.



The 1953-55 Lego basic set box tops had this very colorful picture of Gunhild and Kjeld, grandchildren of Ole Kirk Christiansen, the Lego company founder. This box style was used mainly in larger sets.

- A new 10x20 thick baseplate replaced the 10x20 thin baseplate which came into production in 1951. The new thick baseplate matches the thickness of the Lego bricks. This 10x20 baseplate replaced the thin 10x20 baseplate in the #700/1 thru #700/5 basic sets, but not in #700/6 basic sets, which never had a baseplate. It was also available as an individual item from Lego retailers under the number #700E.



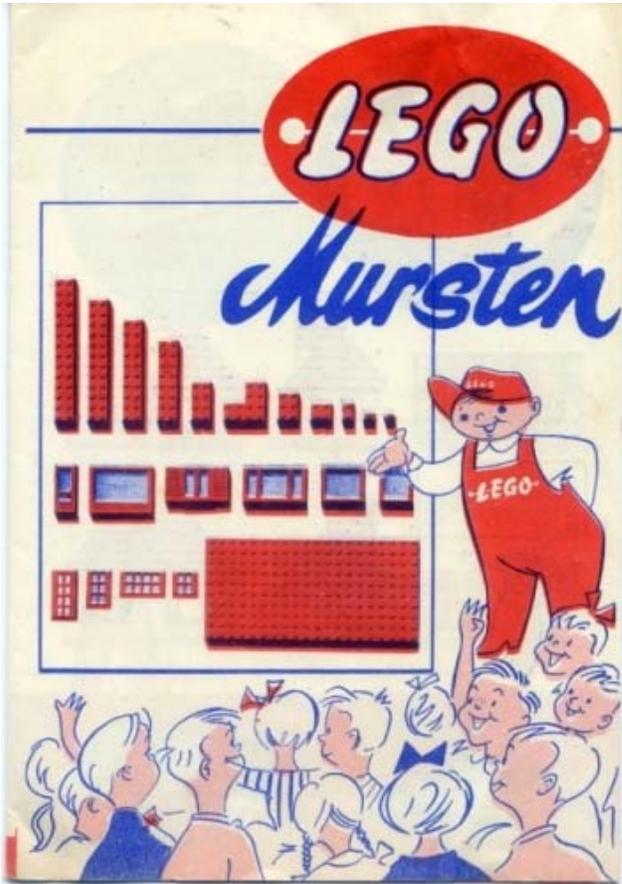
1953-55 box style used in smaller Lego sets.

- In 1953 the first Lego continuous sales outside of Denmark were begun in Norway. However, since imported toys were forbidden in Norway in the 1940's and 1950's, TLG licensed a company in Norway to produce Lego parts/sets there. Note: only #700/x Lego sets were produced for sale in Norway. They did not have individual parts (from wooden retailer boxes) that were common in Denmark. Since the Danish and Norwegian languages are similar, the box top words "LEGO Mursten" (LEGO Bricks) appeared on all the #700/x sets in both countries. Only the small black/white brochure with a few building models, shows the local language.

- The #700A small basic set first became available in 1953, and was just an assortment of small 2x2 and 2x4 bricks.



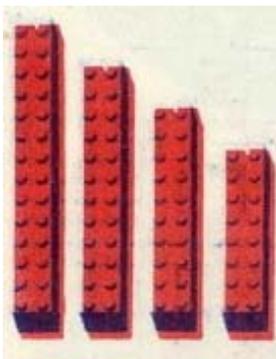
- The #700B spare parts pack, the first parts pack for Lego, became available in 1953. This pack had an assortment of the 1x4x2, 1x2x3 and 1x2x2 windows, as well as the 1x2x4 door.



This late 1954 Danish Lego catalog shows all the parts that were available for sale that year. These were sold as individual items, in basic sets, or in windows and doors spare parts packs.

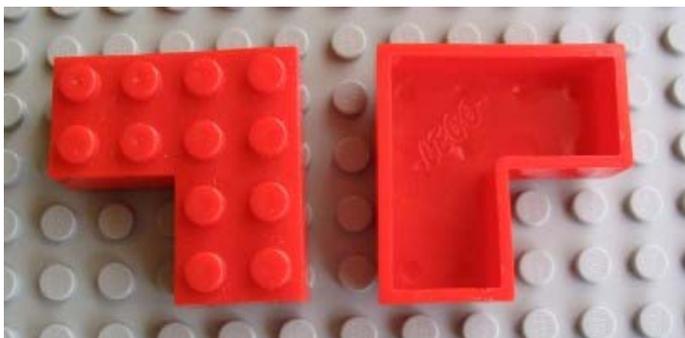
1954 LEGO ITEMS

- There was a new series of Lego windows and a door that became available in 1954 with “glass” panes. These windows came in sizes 1x6x4 (panorama), 1x6x3 (3 pane), 1x6x3 (shuttered), 1x4x3 and 1x3x3, and the door came in size 1x2x4. The large 1x6x4 panorama window had the word “Lego” imprinted (dog bone font) in the plastic window “glass”. These new windows/doors were available in basic sets #700/1, #700/2, #700/3 and #700/3A. These windows/doors were available in spare parts pack #700 C, which had one of each. These windows were available in colors red, white, blue, dark blue and yellow.



- New series of large Lego beams. These were available in sizes 2x8, 2x10, 2x12 and 2x14 in colors red, white, blue, yellow and light green. The 2x8 and 2x10 were available in the #700/1, #700/2, #700/3, #700/3A, #700/4, #700/5 and #700/6 basic sets, and also available as individual parts from retailers under the numbers #700/16 and #700/20. The 2x12 and 2x14 were only available as individual parts from retailers under the numbers #700/24 and #700/28. Ironically the 2x12 and 2x14 beams were never available in any Lego set during their short (1954-56) production period. These two larger sized beams have not been produced since 1956.

- There was also a new series of Lego windows and a door that became available in 1954 without “glass” panes. These windows came in sizes 1x6x3, 1x6x2 (3 pane), 1x6x2 (shuttered), 1x4x2, 1x3x2 and 1x2x2, and the door came in size 1x2x3. These new windows/doors were available in basic sets #700/4, #700/5 and #700/6. These windows/doors were not available in a spare parts pack until 1955. These windows were available in red, blue and dark blue.



- New 4x4 (12 stud) corner brick. This part became available as individual parts from Danish retailers under the number #700H.

- Also new in 1954 were 1x1 bricks in square and round sizes. These always had the Lego logo on the “stud”, and never underneath.

1949-55 Denmark /1953-55 Norway Sets/Individual Brick - Numbering System

Set/Parts Number	Set/Part Description	Introduced	
		DK	NOR
#700/1	Large Basic Set	1949	1953
#700/2	Large Basic Set	1949	1953
#700/3	Medium Basic Set	1949	1953
#700/3A	Medium Basic Set	1950	1953
#700/4	Small Basic Set	1949	1953
#700/5	Small Basic Set	1950	1953
#700/6	Small Basic Set	1950	1953
#700 A	Small Bricks Set	1953	1953
#700 B	Windows/ Doors Parts Pack (w/o glass)	1953	1953
#700 B/1	Individual 1x4x2 window (w/o glass)	1950	-----
#700 B/2	Individual 1x2x3 window (w/o glass)	1950	-----
#700 B/3	Individual 1x2x2 window (w/o glass)	1950	-----
#700 B/4	Individual 1x2x4 door (w/o glass)	1950	-----
#700 C	6 Windows/1 Door Parts Pack (w/ glass)	1954	1954
#700 C/1	Individual 1x6x4 (panorama) window (w/ glass)	1954	-----
#700 C/2	Individual 1x6x3 (3 pane) window (w/ glass)	1954	-----
#700 C/3	Individual 1x6x3 (shutter) window (w/ glass)	1954	-----

#700 C/4	Individual 1x4x3 window (w/ glass)	1954	-----
#700 C/5	Individual 1x3x3 window (w/ glass)	1954	-----
#700 C/6	Individual 1x2x4 door (w/ glass)	1954	-----
#700 E	Individual 10x20 Baseplate	1953	1953
#700 H	Individual 4x4 corner bricks	1954	-----
#700 1/4	Individual 1x2 bricks	1953	-----
#700 1/2	Individual 2x2 bricks	1950	-----
#700 3/4	Individual 2x3 bricks	1953	-----
#700 1/1	Individual 2x4 bricks	1950	-----
#700/16	Individual 2x8 bricks	1954	-----
#700/20	Individual 2x10 bricks	1954	-----
#700/24	Individual 2x12 bricks	1954	1955
#700/28	Individual 2x14 bricks	1954	1955

1.4 Lego System of Play - The Early Town Plan Years (1955-1958).

In 1954 Godtfred Kirk Christiansen, son of the Lego founder Ole Kirk Christiansen made his famous ferry voyage to England. En route he had a discussion with a Copenhagen department (Magazin du Nord) executive, and from that discussion he later developed the “Lego System of Play” based on the 10 principles that a good toy should have. The Lego company found that the plastic Lego bricks were the best candidate. So in 1955 Lego started the “Lego System of Play”.

In 1955 the first Lego “system”, the Town Plan was introduced. All Lego basic sets and spare parts packs now had a town plan scene on the box top. There were many new parts to support the Town Plan System. New items included a Town Plan board, which was a soft plastic rollup (the following year a hard board would begin production). There were new thin Lego plates, 1/3 the height of Lego bricks, that were produced in 5 sizes. There were also new Lego trees and bushes, road signs, beams with business names, a garage kit (with automatic door), gas station freestanding sign and gas pumps, and small trucks. These small trucks were at 1:87 scale, and were cast plastic cars with metal wheels. Early examples had no “glass” windshields, but soon the 1:87 trucks had clear plastic windshields.

In 1955 the same slotted bricks were still in use. But the new window/door styles that came into production in 1954 were replacing the older Automatic Binding Brick windows and doors which were discontinued in 1955.

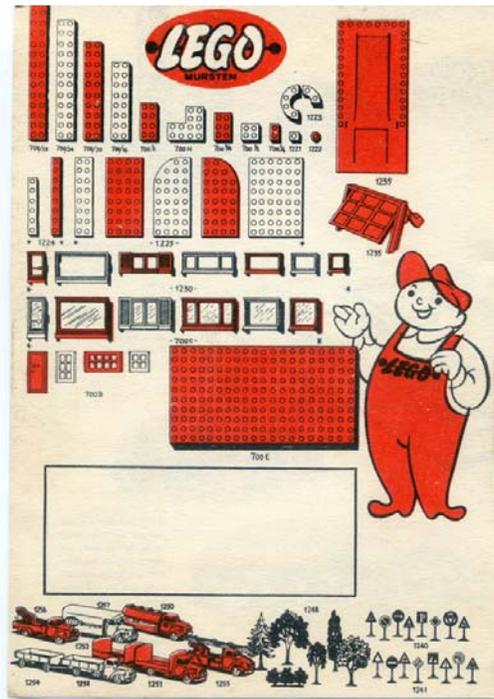
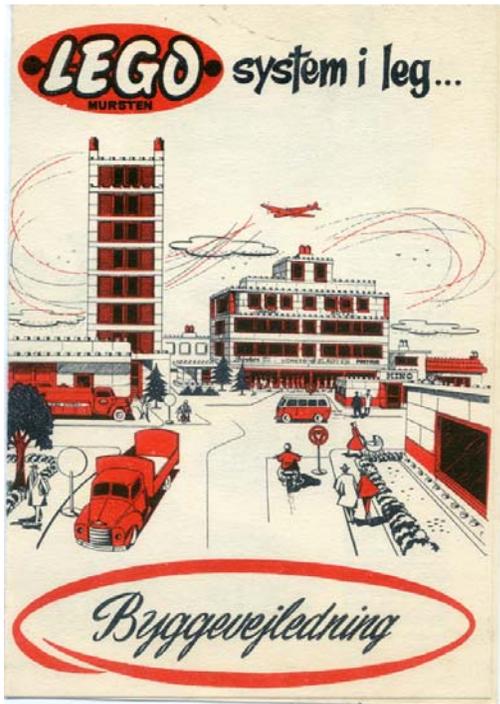
Lego 2 Tier Set Numbering System (1955-58).

From 1953-55 Lego was only sold in Denmark and Norway. But in 1955 Lego sales restarted in Sweden.

In 1956 Lego sales started in Germany, followed by Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Netherlands and Portugal in 1957. But the Lego that was sold in these countries was different from the Lego sold in Denmark and Sweden. The bricks were without the slots in the sides, and the windows/doors no longer had the wings on the sides, but had studs on top, and “prongs” on the bottom so that they could attach to the studs beneath them.

These “new” Lego parts were sold in central Europe at the same time that the old slotted bricks/windows and doors were being phased out in northern Europe. It appears that in Denmark, Sweden and Norway still had an inventory of the old slotted bricks (and related windows/doors), so the remaining parts were sold off before the new Lego bricks and windows/doors were introduced there. The way for TLG to handle this “dual” production was to produce different numbered sets in central Europe (new parts) that in northern Europe (slotted elements).

This double numbering system was used by TLG from 1955-58. The northern European countries used a 4 digit number that started with 12xx (for parts packs) and 13xx (for model sets), while central European Lego countries used a 3 digit numbering system that started with 2xx (for parts packs) and 3xx (for model sets). All Lego slotted bricks in sizes 2x2, 2x3, 2x4, 4x4 corner, 2x8, 2x10, 2x12 and 2x14 were still sold as individual pieces under the #700 x/x number in Denmark. Also, the same #700/1, #700/2, #700/3, #700/3A, #700/4, #700/5 and #700/6 basic sets kept the same numbering system for all countries.



This early 1955 Danish Lego catalog shows all the parts that were available for sale with the new Town Plan system. These were sold as parts packs, or in basic sets.

1955-58 Lego Set/Spare Parts Pack/Individual Brick - Numbering System *

LEGO Set/Part Description	Northern Europe Slotted/Hollow Bricks 1955-56/1956-58		Central Europe Hollow Bricks 1956-58	
	Set #	Year	Set #	Year
Large Plastic Town Plan Mat	#1200	1955	-----	-----
Small Plastic Town Plan Mat	#1200	1956	#200	1956
Wood Town Plan Board	#1200A	1956	#200A	1956
Wood Town Plan Board	-----	-----	#200M	1956
Small Store	#1210	1955	#210	1956
Small House	#1211	1955	#211	1956
Small House	#1212	1955	#212	1956
Small House	#1213	1955	#213	1956
Tall Classic Windows/Door	#1214 ****	1955	-----	-----
2x8 & 2x10 Beams	#1215 ****	1955	-----	-----
2x10 Beams	-----	-----	#215	1956
2x8 Beams	-----	-----	#216	1956
4x4 Corner Bricks	#1216 ****	1955	#217	1956
2x4 Bricks	#1217 ****	1955	#218	1956
2x3 Bricks	#1218 ****	1955	#219	1956
2x2 Bricks	#1219 ****	1955	#220	1956
1x2 Bricks	#1220	1955	#221	1956
1x1 Bricks	#1221	1955	#222	1956
1x1 Round Bricks	#1222	1955	#223	1956
4 Types Macaroni Bricks	#1223	1955	#224	1956
1x6 & 1x8 Beams	#1224A	1956	#225	1956
8 Named Beams	#1224 **	1955	#226	1956
8 Named Beams	#1224/1 **	1955	-----	-----
16 Named Beams	#1224 ****	1955	-----	-----
6 Mixed Plates	#1225	1955	-----	-----
6x8 & 2x8 Plates	#1226	1956	#229	1956
4x8 & 2x8 Plates	#1227	1956	#228	1956
4x8 Curved & 2x8 Plates	#1228	1956	#227	1956
Windows/Door no Glass	#1230	1955	-----	-----
Windows/Door with Glass	#1231	1956	#214	1956
Street Lights	#1233	1958	#233	1958
Alphabet Bricks	#1234	1958	#234	1958
5 Piece Garage Kit	#1235	1955	#235	1956
Garage Set	#1236	1955	#236	1956
8 Road Signs	#1240	1955	-----	-----

8 Road Signs	#1241	1955	-----	-----
16 Road Signs	-----	-----	#232	1956
5 Flags	#1242	1957	#242	1957
5 Danish Flags	#1242D **	1957	-----	-----
Lighting Device	#1245	1957	#245	1957
Esso Pumps/Sign	#1247	1955	#231	1956
Trees/Bushes	#1248	1955	#230	1956
1:87 Esso Bedford Tanker	#1250	1955	#250	1956
1:87 Esso Bedford Truck	#1251	1955	#251	1956
1:87 Esso Bedford Trailer	#1252	1955	#252	1956
1:87 Bedford Flatbed Truck	#1253	1955	#253	1956
1:87 Bedford Flatbed Trailer	#1254	1955	#254	1956
1:87 Bedford Fire Engine	#1255	1955	#255	1956
1:87 Bedford Tow Truck	#1256	1955	#256	1956
1:87 Bedford Delivery Truck	#1257	1955	#257	1956
1:87 VW Bus	#275	1956	#258	1956
1:87 VW Beetle	#260	1958	#260	1958
1:87 VW Beetle + Showroom	#261	1958	#261	1958
5 Cyclists/Motorcyclists	#1270	1956	#270	1956
Traffic Police Set	#1271	1956	#271	1956
Small Mosaic Set	#1300	1955	-----	-----
Large Mosaic Set	#1301	1955	-----	-----
VW Salesroom Set	#1306	1957	#306	1958
VW Repair Shop Set	#1307	1957	#307	1958
Fire Station Set	#1308	1957	#308	1958
Church Set	#1309	1957	#309	1958
Esso Service Station Set	#1310	1956	#310	1957
Large Wooden Box Set	#700	1957	#700	1957
Large Wooden Box-Empty	#700	1957	#700	1957
Large House (Basic Set)	#700/0	1957	#700/0	1957
Large House (Basic Set)***	#700/1	1955	#700/1	1956
Large House (Basic Set)***	#700/2	1955	#700/2	1956
Medium House (Basic Set)***#700/3	#700/3	1955	#700/3	1956
Medium House (Basic Set)***#700/3A	#700/3A	1955	#700/3A	1956
Small House (Basic Set)***	#700/4	1955	#700/4	1956
Small House (Basic Set)***	#700/5	1955	#700/5	1956
Small House (Basic Set)***	#700/6	1953	#700/6	1956
Small Bricks Set	#700 A	1955	-----	-----
Windows/Door(no glass)**	#700 B	1953	-----	-----
Windows/Door(w/ glass)**	#700 C	1954	-----	-----
Individual 10x20 Baseplate	#700 E	1953	#700 E	1956
Individual 2x2 bricks**	#700 1/2	1953	-----	-----
Individual 2x3 bricks**	#700 3/4	1953	-----	-----
Individual 2x4 bricks**	#700 1/1	1953	-----	-----
Individual 2x8 bricks**	#700/16	1954	-----	-----
Individual 2x10 bricks**	#700/20	1954	-----	-----

Individual 2x12 bricks	#700/24	1954	-----	-----
Individual 2x14 bricks	#700/28	1954	-----	-----
Individual 4x4 corner bricks**	#700 H	1954	-----	-----

* From 1955-58, northern Europe included only Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Central Europe included Germany (1956-58), Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, and distant Portugal (all 1957-58). Starting in mid 1958, all countries started using the (central European 1956-58) 3 digit #2xx and #3xx numbers for their parts packs and small sets. All old style slotted Lego bricks were sold only in northern Europe. When they ran out, the newer non-slotted Lego bricks were sold (starting in late 1956 to early 1957). In central Europe, all bricks were of the regular (non-slotted) variety from the very beginning, starting in 1956 in Germany.

** Denmark Only Items. Individual Lego brick sales were restricted to Denmark, except for the large 2x12 (#700/24) and 2x14 (#700/28) bricks, which were also sold individually in Sweden and Norway. Spare part pack #700B and #700C were only sold in Denmark. #1242D Danish Flags was only sold in Denmark. Named beams parts packs #1224 and #1224/1 with 8 named beams in each were only sold in Denmark.

*** The 700/x basic sets were produced from 1955-58 with 2 different box tops, with “Lego Bricks” in the local languages of the country in which it was sold (Lego Mursten, Lego Bausteine, Lego Bouwensten, Lego Briques).

**** These parts packs were only sold in Sweden and Norway.

Local Language(s) Lego Boxes

Another common item used by all Lego sets from 1955-58 was the use of the local language on Lego set or parts pack boxes. The word “brick” for “LEGO Bricks” was in the local language for these countries (LEGO Mursten, LEGO Bausteine, LEGO Bouwstenen, LEGO Briques, etc). For those countries such as Belgium and Switzerland, 2 languages (French and Flemish, and German and French respectively) were used on the box tops. Also on the boxes were the words “System in Play”. Here are the words in the local languages:

Country “Lego Bricks” & “System of Play”

Denmark:	“Lego Mursten” and “System i leg”
Norway:	“Lego Mursten” and “System i lek”
Sweden:	“Lego Mursten” and “System i lek”
Germany:	“Lego Bausteine” and “System im Spiel”
Austria:	“Lego Bausteine” and “System im Spiel”
Switzerland:	“Lego Bausteine” and “System im Spiel” & “Lego Briques” and “Du Systeme dans le jeu”
Belgium:	“Lego Bouwstenen” and “Systeem bij het Spel”* & “Lego Briques” and “Du Systeme dans le jeu”
Netherlands:	“Lego Bouwstenen” and “Systeem bij het Spel”*

* - In 1958 the Dutch/Flemish word “bij” in “Systeem bij het Spel”, was changed to “in” on the sides of all 1958-60 #700/x Lego boxes.

The introduction of the international “Lego System” box top label started in 1957. All the model sets only came in a “Lego System” variation. All the basic sets except for Portugal came in the local language variations. Portugal started sales in 1957 with all items marked “Lego System”. And only Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Germany had the #700/x basic sets in the local language. All the other countries had the #700/x sets with the international “Lego System” when they came online in 1957. A possible exception to this rule may have been German speaking Austria, which could have had some of the same German language #700/x sets as those found in Germany.

By 1958, all sets changed to the international “Lego System” standard, as well as a single set of parts pack and set numbers.



The new line of Lego set designs that came out in 1955 shows Gunhild, Hanne and Kjeld, the three young grandchildren of Lego Company founder Ole Kirk Christiansen. This box is a Danish language version.

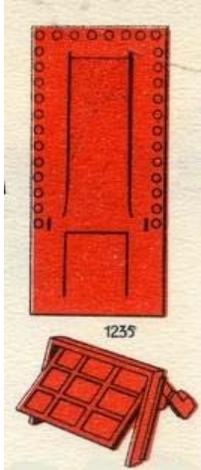
1955 LEGO ITEMS

- The #1200 Town Plan Board. This (1950's style) Town Plan board was produced in a flexible rollup type plastic. There were 7 town blocks on the board, and the gas station block was facing north. Starting in 1956 this same Town Plan board was available as #200 in central Europe.



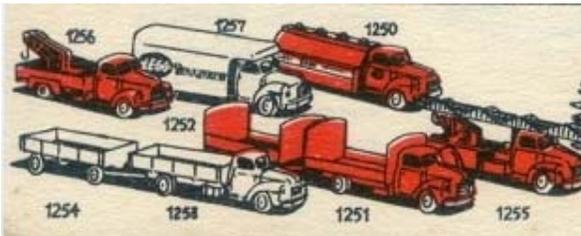
Danish Lego logo used in basic sets starting in 1955

- Waffle bottom plates in sizes 2x8, 4x8, 4x8 left curve, 4x8 right curve, and 6x8. These came out in mostly in white, but a very limited number of these were also produced in red. After 1956 these were no longer produced in red. Until 1956, these plates had no “Lego” written on the studs. The different sizes of waffle bottom plates came out in spare parts packs 1225, #1226, #1227 and #1228. Starting in 1956 these were available in central Europe as #227, #228 and #229.



- The 5 piece garage kit. This kit came with a baseplate, garage door (with 2 separate counterweights), and a garage frame. All 5 pieces were available in red or white. After 1956 the garage baseplates were no longer produced in red. From 1955-56, the garage sets were compatible with the slotted Lego bricks, and therefore had no studs on the door frame. These garage kits were sold as #1235 in Denmark, Norway and Sweden from 1955-57. Starting in 1956, the garage kits were sold in central Europe with the #235 number. Also starting in 1955, a #1236 Garage set was produced (in Denmark, Norway and Sweden) with #236 garage produced in central Europe. The garage baseplates in red are considered very rare today.

- The 1:87 scale Esso trucks. In 1955 TLG started producing a Bedford Esso Tanker Truck #1250, a Bedford Esso Flatbed Truck #1251, and a Bedford Esso Flatbed Trailer #1252. These were sold in Denmark and Sweden. In Denmark the #1251 set came with 3 small oil cans which were 1x1 round bricks with Esso oil stickers attached. In Norway and Sweden the #1251 set came without the Esso oil cans. These were part of the new Town Plan system, and were for use on the new Town Plan board. Early examples of these trucks were produced without the clear plastic windshields. Starting in 1956 these 3 trucks were available in central Europe as #250, #251 (no Esso oil cans) and #252 respectively.



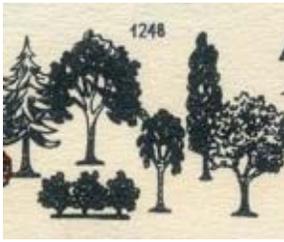
The 1:87 scale Bedford truck line for the Town Plan

- The 1:87 scale Lego trucks. In 1955 TLG started producing 4 other trucks as part of the new Town Plan system. They were a Bedford Flatbed Truck #1253, a Bedford Flatbed Trailer #1254, a Bedford Fire Truck #1255, a Bedford Tow Truck #1256 and a Bedford Delivery Truck #1257. These were sold in Denmark and Sweden. Early examples of these trucks were produced without the clear plastic windshields. Starting in 1956 these 5 trucks were available in central Europe as #253, #254, #255, #256 and #257 respectively.

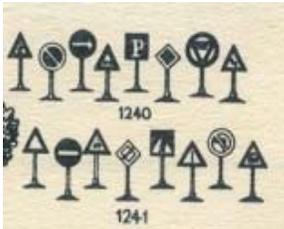
- Lego 1x6 and 1x8 beams with no posts underneath. The spare parts packs with these beams were #1224A in Denmark and Sweden. Starting in 1956 these were available in central Europe as #225.



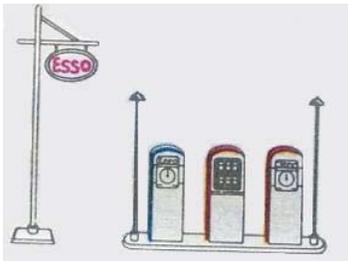
- Lego 1x6 and 1x8 named beams with no posts underneath. These were available in each European country with the names in the local language(s). The spare parts packs with these named beams were #1224 & #1224/1 in Denmark and #1224 in Norway and Sweden. Starting in 1956 these were available in central Europe as #226. There are many printing colors and varieties to these beams.



- 1950's style Lego trees/bushes. The flat bottomed tree varieties were: Elm, Cypress, Pine, Fruit, and Birch. The bush variety was a triple base Evergreen. The trees/bushes were made of a flesh colored plastic. The leaves were painted green, and the trunks and branches were painted a mixture of colors, usually black, brown or white (Birch). The Lego trees/bushes parts packs were #1248 in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Starting in 1956 these were available in Germany and the rest of central Europe as #230.

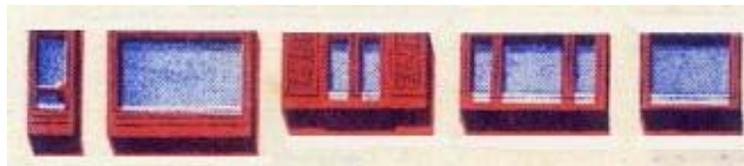


- Lego road signs. There were a total of 16 different road signs produced in the 1950's (this number jumped to 21 by the late 1950's). The road signs parts packs were #1240 and #1241. These contained white road signs/poles in Denmark and Norway, and yellow road signs/poles in Sweden. Starting in 1956 these were also available in Germany, and the rest of central Europe as #232, which had 16 road signs, all with white road signs/poles.



- Esso Gas Pumps/Sign. There were 3 gas pumps on one white base with a metal pole on either end with a red lamp on top of each. These were of a 1950's style with clock type dial readouts. There was also a tall freestanding flat bottomed Esso sign. This set was known as #1247 in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and in central Europe as #231.

- Four new small building sets. #1210 Small Store set, #1211 Small House set, #1212 Small House Left set, and #1213 Small House Right set. These small building sets were sold in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. Starting in 1956 these sets were sold in central Europe as #210, #211, #212 and #213.



- The tall windows and doors with glass that were produced since 1954 in the #700C spare parts packs was still available in that set in Denmark. But starting in

1955, this set was known as #1214 in Sweden and Norway, while the #700C was still being sold in Denmark. These tall windows/doors were not produced for any other country.

- The windows/doors without glass that were produced since 1954 (but not in a parts pack) were now available in a parts pack #1230 for Denmark, Sweden and Norway. These were not produced for any other country.



- Curved bricks (also known as "macaroni bricks"). There were 4 different styles sold from 1955-56. There were 2 different 1/4 circle bricks, one with a notch of missing plastic, the other without. There were also 2 different 1/2 circle bricks, one with 2 notches of missing plastic, the other without. The spare parts packs with these bricks were #1223 in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. Starting in 1956 these were available in Germany as #224. These were not produced for any other country. After 1957 only the 1/4 circle brick with the notch of missing plastic were produced. These earlier curved bricks were only produced in red, white and clear.

- Two Mosaic sets. #1300 Small Mosaic set and #1301 Large Mosaic set were sold only in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. These consisted of 10x20 baseplates and many small 1x1 round, 1x1 square, 2x2 quarter circle and 2x4 half circle bricks. These short lived sets were discontinued in 1956.

- Lego sales restarted in Sweden in 1955.



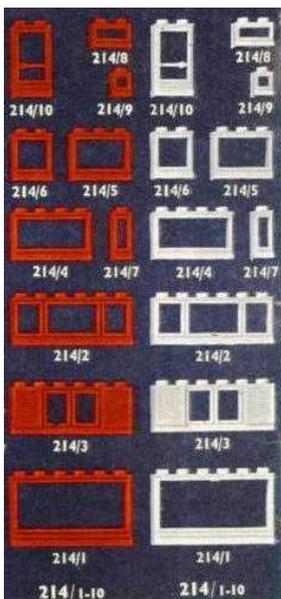
Lego logo used in German basic sets and spare parts packs starting in 1956

1956 LEGO ITEMS

- The #1200 Town Plan Board. The (1950's style) Town Plan plastic roll up board introduced in 1955 was reduced in size in 1956, and had the gas station block was now facing west. Also in this smaller style a roll up board was introduced in central Europe as #200.

- The #1200A Town Plan board. This (1950's style) Town Plan board was produced in a stiff Masonite fiberboard. There were 7 town blocks on the board, and the gas station block was facing west. The same year this board was also available in central Europe as #200A. In some central European countries it shows up in the Lego catalog as #200M.

- New Lego bricks without slots (but still with hollow bottoms) were produced for the first time in 1956. The new bricks came in sizes 1x2, 2x2, 2x3, 2x4, 2x8, 2x10 and 4x4 corner. The 2x12 and 2x14 slotted bricks were retired, and never produced in the new style.



- New classic Lego windows/doors were put into production in 1956 for use with the new non-slotted Lego bricks. Window sizes were: 1x6x3 (#214/1, panorama), 1x6x2 (#214/2, 3 pane), 1x6x2 (#214/3, shuttered), 1x4x2 (#214/4), 1x3x2 (#214/5), 1x2x2 (#214/6), 1x2x1 (#214/7), 1x1x2 (#214/8) and 1x1x1 (#214/9). The door size was 1x2x3 (#214/10), available as both a left and right handled door. From 1956-58 these windows/doors were produced with solid studs on top of the windows/doors. Also, some of these windows/doors (in all sizes except the 1x1x1, 1x1x2 and 1x2x1) were produced without glass in parts pack #1230, which was only sold in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The 9 windows/door with glass was sold in those countries in parts pack #1231. In 1956 the 9 windows and 1 door with glass was sold in parts pack #214 in central Europe. By 1957, all of Europe was using the #214 numbers.

- 4 Different Cyclists/Motorcyclists. There were 4 different cyclists introduced in 1956. They were a person riding a motorcycle, a motor scooter, a motorcycle with side car, and a bicycle. The spare parts packs with these cyclists were #1270 in Denmark and Sweden. This same year these were also available in central Europe as #270.



1956 German spare parts pack box showing a traffic policeman and 4 of the grandchildren of Ole Kirk Christiansen, Gunhild, Kjeld, Hanne, and their cousin Jorgen (in the middle). They are playing on the new 1955 Town Plan board.

- Traffic Policemen and Accessories. This set consists of a traffic policeman in 4 different poses, a traffic light on a pole, and a traffic island with lantern. Interestingly enough, this parts pack was rarely seen in any Lego catalog of the 1950's or 1960's. The spare parts packs with the traffic police accessories were #1271 in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. This same year these were also available in central Europe as #271.

- The #1310 Esso Service Station came into production in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. In 1957 it came into production as #310 in central Europe.



- 1:87 VW Bus. In 1956 the first 1:87 scale car was produced. It was a VW Bus, and was known as #275 in northern Europe and #258 in central Europe. Lego advertising (left) showed windows, but Lego VW buses did not have clear windows until the early 1960's.

- The #700/6 smallest of the basic sets has changed box design. Earlier boxes had a sliding inner box with outer sleeve. The new boxes now have a box top and bottom.

- Lego sales started in Germany in 1956, although some test sales were done in northern Germany in 1955. German sales started with the new non-slotted Lego bricks, and the new classic windows/doors with studs on top.

- Lego sales also started in Iceland in 1956, but under a different name besides "Lego". The Icelandic market was very small. The sales and production were handled by a company that promoted work for Tuberculosis patients.



International Lego logo used in Lego model sets starting in 1956

1957 LEGO ITEMS

- In 1957 TLG produced the #214 1-10 Windows/Doors Retailer Box for individual parts sales in continental Europe. The 9 windows and 1 door types were sold individually from these Lego retailer's windows/doors boxes. (Complete box refills were numbered as #214/S)



- Lego flags. There were 5 to a set. There were 15 different flags available, for 13 European countries, the USA, and a Lego flag (although the Finnish flag was not produced until 1960) The spare parts packs that contained 5 flags were #1242 in northern

Europe and #242 in central Europe. There was also a Denmark only spare parts pack, #1242D that contained 5 Danish flags.

- Lego lighting set. This small set consisted of a 2x4 hollow clear brick with a connection for a small lamp. There were also 2 wires, and a 1x2 brick with a notch on either side to allow the 2 wires to go underneath. The set required the purchase of a 4.5 volt battery. The spare parts packs that contained the lighting set were #1245 in northern Europe and #245 in central Europe.

- Lego street lights. The small silver street lights were introduced in 1957 in Denmark, Sweden and Norway as parts pack #1233. They were also produced in central Europe as pack #233.



-Lego alphabet bricks. The 1x1 white bricks with capitalized alphabet letters were introduced in 1957. They were sold in Denmark, Norway and Sweden as #1234, and in central Europe as #234. There were 50 mixed bricks in a pack.

- The first wooden box set was introduced. The large #700 wood box set came 2 different ways, with contents, and empty. In Germany the set that came with contents had a 2 piece Masonite sliding lid that had a Town Plan board on the back side. In most other continental European countries the set only came with a 1 piece lid, without a Town Plan scene. The empty version of #700 always came with a 1 piece board, without a Town Plan scene.

- A new large cardboard box basic set was introduced in 1957, known as #700/0. It had 2 10x20 baseplates, and an assortment of several named beams, Lego trees, and an assortment of windows/doors and large plates. Also #700/2 large basic set was discontinued (leftover inventory

was sold in Netherlands until 1959).

- Several new Town Plan model sets were introduced in Denmark, Sweden and Norway in 1957. They were the #1306 VW Service set, #1307 VW Showroom set, #1308 Fire Station set and the #1309 Church set. Also the #310 Esso Service Station set was introduced to central Europe.

- First Lego sales start in Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium and Portugal.

1.5 The Mature Town Plan Years (1958-1965).

1958 was a landmark year for the Lego Company. It was the year that they obtained a patent on their bricks because of the new tubes underneath. This provided much more flexibility for building.

In 1963 the Cellulose Acetate plastic that was used for Lego elements since 1949, was replaced by ABS plastic. This switching of plastic happened very swiftly in continental Europe, Britain and Australia, but happened very slowly in USA/Canada.

By the end of 1965, new Lego motors were being developed, a new Lego train system was still awaiting production, and many new Lego parts and specialty pieces would be introduced each year until the present.

Italy started Lego sales in 1958, followed by France and Finland in 1959. In 1960 Britain started Lego sales as well. TLG licensed out the Lego franchise to a British company named Courtauld's, which was a British chemical and textile maker. Courtauld's obtained the Lego license for not only Britain and Ireland, but also for Australia and the rest of the British Commonwealth (except for Canada).

In 1961 TLG licensed out the Lego franchise to an American company named Shwayder Bros., which was also known by the name of their major product, Samsonite. Shwayder Bros. was the licensee for Lego in USA (starting in 1961) and Canada (starting in 1962). By 1965 the name "Shwayder Bros." would be replaced by "Samsonite Corp."

Lego sales expanded to Australia in 1962 (thru Courtauld's) and also to Japan (thru TLG). Lego sales continued to expand into many other countries, including Spain in 1965. By 1966 42 countries were selling Lego.

From 1958 until 1965 all Lego sets had mostly the same set numbers in each country throughout the world. This uniform numbering system stopped in 1966, and would not be introduced again until the early 1980's.



International Lego logo used in all sets starting in 1958

1958 LEGO ITEMS

- Another major event for Lego in 1958 was the elimination of using local languages on the boxes of Lego sets and spare part packs. Starting that year only “LEGO System” was used with no other words on the outside of the box, except the set numbers. Lego System was used starting in 1958, and continued to be used throughout the 1960's. Internally local languages were still used in instructions, but only when the instructions were on separate pieces of paper. All instructions on the inside box top (or bottom of the box) were without words. However, Lego catalogs continued to be published with writing in the local language(s). And the lighting device parts packs (for safety reasons) continued to have the instructions written in the local language throughout their production.

- Starting in 1958 all 2 stud wide Lego bricks started having tubes underneath for better clutching power. The brick sizes that had the tubes underneath were the 2x2, 2x3, 2x4, 4x4 corner, 2x8 and 2x10 bricks.



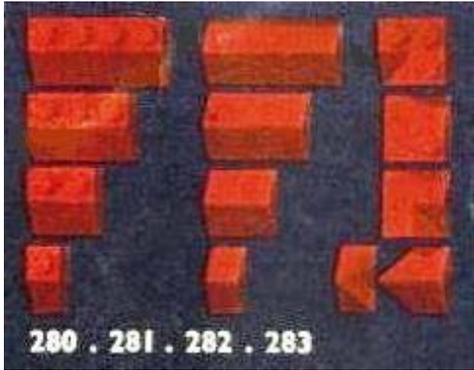
International style box tops with “Lego System” were first introduced in Portugal in 1957 and in other continental European countries in 1958-60. Again, here we have the grandchildren of Lego founder Ole Kirk Christiansen (Hanne, Gunhild, and Kjeld).

- Several new Town Plan model sets were introduced in 1958. They were the #306 VW Service set, #307 VW Showroom set, #308 Fire Station set and the #309 Church set.

- Lego VW Beetle 1:87 metal wheeled car. Although this car was introduced in 1957 in sets #1306 and #1307, the spare parts pack that contained the VW Beetle was introduced in 1958 as #260. This car was produced in many colors.



- Lego VW Beetle 1:87 metal wheeled car and VW Showroom plastic box. This pack had a wrapper and a 4x8 plate holding all the elements (and 1:87 VW Beetle) together. This rather unique item was known as pack #261.



- Lego regular slope bricks. These consisted of 8 different types of regular sloped bricks that formed a system so that normal gabled roofs could be built. The spare parts packs that contained these different sloped bricks were #280, and #282. The roof slopes came in sizes 1x2, 2x2, 3x2 and 4x2. The roof peak pieces also came in sizes 1x2, 2x2, 3x2 and 4x2. These slope bricks only came in red at first. By 1960 additional valley and peak bricks were introduced, along with blue sloped bricks.

- First Lego sales started in Italy in 1958. All Lego sets sold in Italy had only “Lego System” on the box tops.

1959 LEGO ITEMS

- New Town Plan board. In November of 1959 a new Town Plan board was introduced and replaced the earlier plastic and wood fiberboard Town Plan boards. Old boards were still being sold until the supply finally ran out in 1962. The new board was made of cardboard that folded in half in the middle (with a cloth spine). This board was still known as #200. It came in a right side and left side driving board styles.

- First Lego sales started in France and Finland in 1959.



The International script Lego logo introduced in Denmark in 1959, and in the rest of the world starting in 1960

1960 LEGO ITEMS

- New Lego basic set box designs. The #700/0, #700/1, #700/3, #700/3A, #700/4, #700/5 and #700/6 basic sets had new box designs with a background field of gray baseplate studs. Prior to 1960, they all had the same box top artwork. Now they each have individual building scenes, with some boxes (#700/0, #700/1, #700/3A and #700/5) coming in 2 different box top versions.



- Lego Number Bricks. These were white 1x1 bricks with a number (0-9) on one side of each brick. They were produced in spare parts pack #237.

- Lego regular slope bricks. In 1960 5 additional sloped bricks joined the 8 already in production since 1958. This made a total of 13 different types of regular sloped bricks that formed a system so that gabled, hipped and other exotic roof types could be built. The new spare parts packs that contained these 5 different sloped bricks were #281 and #283. Also starting in 1960, regular sloped bricks now came in blue as well as the 1958 released red sloped bricks.



- New Lego Idea Booklet. In 1960 the first universal idea booklet came into wide production. There were a few small idea booklets produced in the 1950's, but they were unnumbered and were not produced in all continental European countries. This first major idea book came in 9 main variations, with many language sub variations. This book was sold in all countries.

The Lego assigned number to this book was #238. It does not show up in European Lego catalogs until about 1963. It is never found in USA/Canada catalogs. And it doesn't show a number designation in British and Australian catalogs.

- First Lego sales started in Great Britain in 1960. New Lego box designs, new trees/bushes, and a new Town Plan board awaited British buyers.



- 1960's style Lego trees and bushes. These replaced the 1950's style trees/bushes. The older styles were much more fragile, and could break easily. The old types of trees were redesigned except for the Elm tree, which was replaced in 1960 with an Oak tree. The bush, still a triple base Evergreen, was also redesigned into a more sturdy plant. These trees/bushes were also made of a flesh colored plastic. The leaves were painted green, and the trunks and branches were painted black, brown or white (Birch). The 1960's Lego trees/bushes spare parts pack was #230.

- New Windows Spare Parts Packs. TLG started producing the classic style Lego windows/doors by type in individual boxes. They were sold under the #214/1 thru #214/10 numbers. Lego windows/doors were sold this way in Britain (1960), USA (1961), and Canada and Australia (1962), but not continental Europe.



New spare parts packs were introduced in 1960 in 10 colorful box top designs. These had the new international "script" logo.



In 1960 TLG came out with an entirely new series of basic sets. Unlike all basic #700 sets since 1949, these basic sets each had their own unique picture on the box top. Some sets, such as #700/0, #700/1 and #700/3a, had two versions of the box top picture. These sets were sold in continental Europe, Britain and Australia.

1961 LEGO ITEMS



- The first Lego sales were introduced in the USA in 1961 and in Canada in 1962. This is the picture on the USA and Canada 1961-62 Lego catalog. Lego licensed Samsonite Corporation to sell their toys in both countries. Unfortunately the larger Samsonite Lego sets that were actually produced in 1961-62 somehow never matched the box top designs shown in this 1961-62 USA or Canada catalog. The Lego Archives in Billund Denmark make no mention of these pictured Samsonite sets, and none are found in the company vault. These early set pictures were probably prototype mock-ups made to look like real sets. It is likely that the decision to switch designs happened after all the 1961-62 catalogs were already printed. The sets produced by Samsonite in 1961-62 can be seen pictured in the 1963 catalog.

- First Lego sales started in USA, although parts came from a Stratford, Ontario Canada Samsonite plant.

- 10 x 10 Thick Baseplate. When Lego came to the USA/Canada in 1961/62, there were two small basic sets that were produced in a square cardboard tube. These were #702 and #703 (although later other Samsonite sets would have these as well). The box top of these sets was a 10x10 thick baseplate, similar to the 10x20 used everywhere. The major difference is that the 10x10 has no support beams underneath. This allowed a snug fit onto the top of the #702 and #703 boxes. These 10x10 baseplates were not sold separately, and were not available outside of USA/Canada.