

# LEGO® Through Time And Space

*Text by Dr. Sinister (A J Summersgill)*

*Pictures by Dr. Sinister and their respective owners*

I have a confession to make. LEGO® is not my first love. Yes, I know, it's a strange statement to make in a LEGO-related magazine, but there is something that got to me a long time before LEGO...the BBC television series, "Doctor Who".

"Doctor Who" is the world's longest running science fiction TV serial, having first aired between November 1963 and November 1989, with a brief revival in 1996 and then a full-blown new series in 2005 that is still going strong. The show occupies a unique niche in British culture similar to that of "Star Trek" in the United States.

The series is chameleon-like in its ability to change styles. At times it has been quirky, humorous, thoughtful, insightful and downright terrifying, and sometimes all of these things in the space of just one episode.

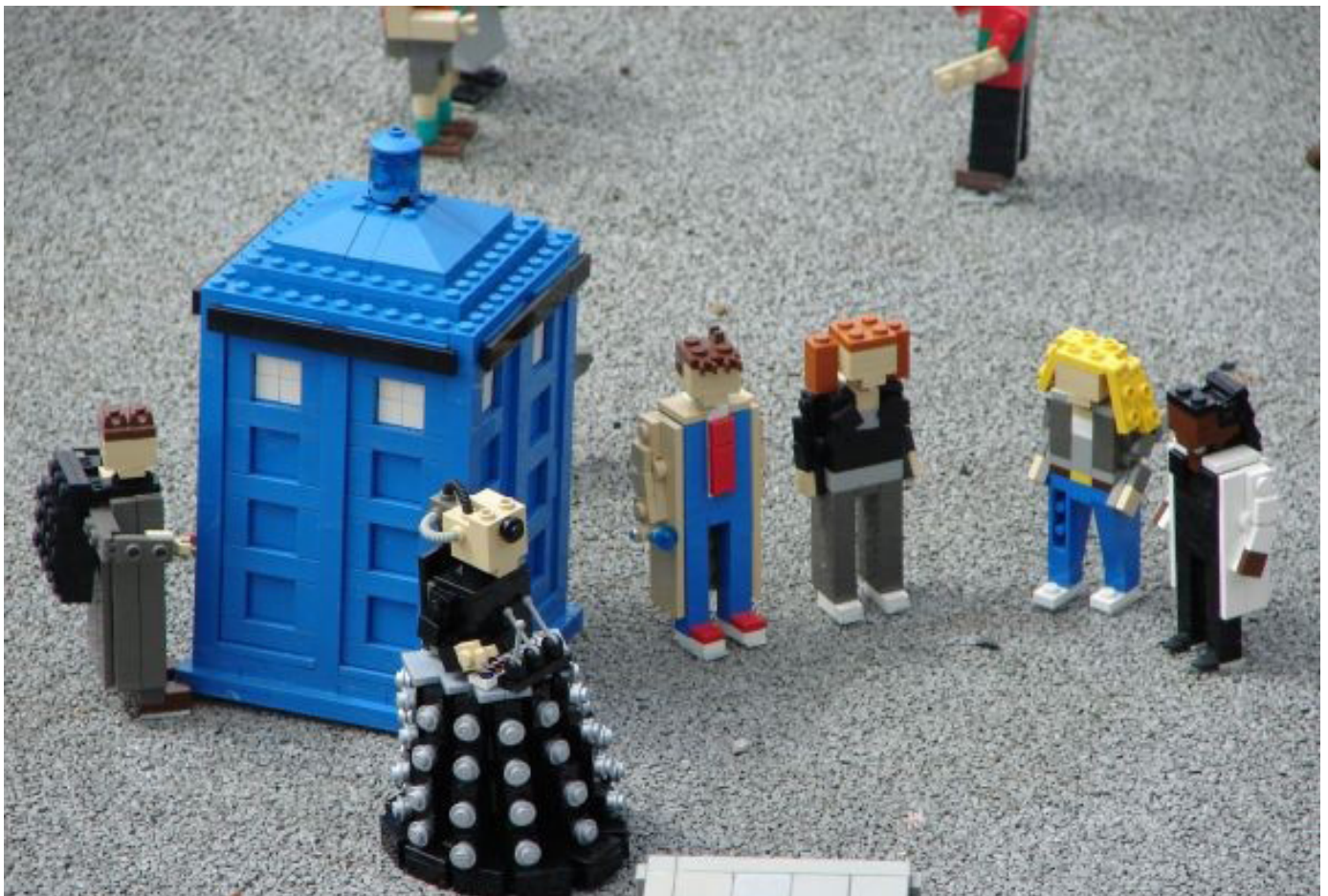
The central premise of "Doctor Who" is the adventures of a character who we only know as The Doctor – a 900+ year old Time Lord from the planet Gallifrey. The Time Lords are an infinitely old race who mastered the art of time travel millennia

ago but who ostensibly only used their great powers to observe and catalogue events. The Doctor, bored with this sedentary lifestyle, decided to escape and see the universe for himself, and so he stole one of the Time Lords' time travel devices – a TARDIS (Time And Relative Dimensions In Space). Thus the universe of "Doctor Who" is one where adventures can take place across all of time and space, on any planet at any point in its history, past, present or future.

Given the popularity of the show, it is of course no surprise to find that there have been a great many representations of some of the central icons of the show in LEGO form. There are even Doctor Who LEGO characters at LEGOLAND Windsor within the London area of Miniland!

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/doctorsinister/2649158353/in/pool-30874488@N00/>

In the space of this article, I will highlight some of the best "Doctor Who" LEGO creations out there.



## The Doctor.

Perhaps the single cleverest concept of the show is its ability for the lead actor to change – ensuring its longevity. In 1966 the actor playing The Doctor, William Hartnell, was suffering from ill health. The writers thus came up with the concept of regeneration – allowing The Doctor to morph into a younger body and thus ensure that the show could continue. The Doctor has since regenerated a number of times, and the current episodes feature the adventures of the 11th Doctor played by Matt Smith. It's important to realise that The Doctor is still the same person, albeit different incarnations can bring out varied nuances in his personality and approach to solving problems.

The various Doctors have all had a somewhat...unique... approach to their style of dress, and so for LEGO® builders, there is often a choice to be made when representing them brick form.

Andrew Cookston prefers a purist approach to his minifigures:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/thebritishbafoon/5613647108/sizes/m/in/set-72157626483450570/>



Whereas Billy Riner is one of many AFOLs to have attempted to capture the various incarnations of The Doctor by using customised pieces:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/44590462@N05/6126011832/in/set-72157626478138067>



## The Daleks.

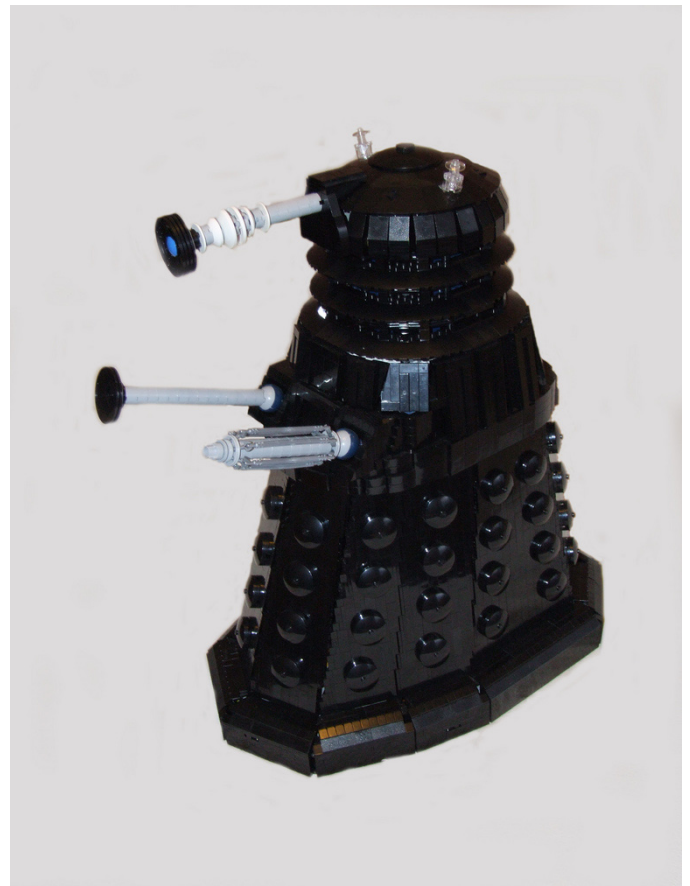
During his travels, The Doctor has encountered many alien races. The first and undoubtedly the most popular of these were the dreaded Daleks – evil creatures from the planet Skaro. Within their menacing gliding cases, the Dalek machines contain vicious mutated blobs of pure hatred, the result of a dirty nuclear war on their homeworld. Believing themselves to be the ultimate life form and destined to rule the universe, the Daleks are essentially allegories of Nazi Germany, terrorising other races everywhere they go and barking out their favourite catchphrase - "Exterminate!".

Unfortunately, Daleks are very tricky things to build in LEGO, because their unique shapes do not translate well to the angles found in our favourite building toy. Nevertheless, there are a great many fantastic Dalek creations out there, as evidenced by the LEGO Daleks Flickr group.

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/lego-daleks/pool/with/2115038201/>

Peter Salter has built a fantastic large-scale Dalek that features LEGO power functions – the Dalek can move and the dome (head) rotates.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/34247814@N07/4150973049/in/photostream>



Peter Reid, known for his neo-classic space creations, amongst other things, built this LEGO Dalek using some controversial techniques.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/legoloverman/2115038201/in/photostream>





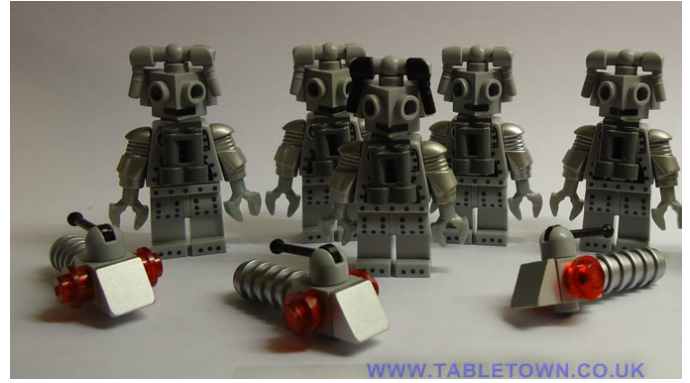
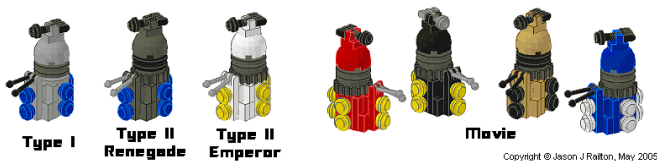
My favourite Daleks though are those built by Steven Locke. Steven has really gone the extra mile by constructing a variety of different Daleks to the same scale, but in different colours. Indeed, the Daleks have appeared in various liveries down the decades. Here are just two of his Daleks, with a similarly scaled K9 (more on him below!).

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/legoavon/274603914/in/pool-30874488@N00/>



Finally, as you can imagine, building minifig-scale Daleks is very hard, but that hasn't stopped people from trying, and here, Jason Railton has provided some images and instructions for his own design:

<http://www.brickshelf.com/cgi-bin/gallery.cgi?f=130993>



## The Cybermen.

Of the many "big names" in "Doctor Who", it would be remiss not to mention the Cybermen. A race of humanoid cyborgs, the Cyberman originally hailed from the Earth's twin planet, Mondas, which was hurled away from the sun in some kind of cataclysmic event. In increasingly desperate attempts to keep themselves alive on their doomed world, the humans of Mondas began to augment their bodies with cybernetic components, eventually replacing parts of their very brains and becoming emotionless drones, obsessed only with survival and converting others to become like them. The Cybermen share many concepts with The Borg from "Star Trek", although they pre-date The Borg by some 20 years or so.

My own take on the Cybermen also owes a lot to Flickr user "JimmytheJ" who came up with the fantastic idea for the "jug handles" on a Cyberman's head:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/doctorsinister/4796788315/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/10962799@N04/4777893173/>

## K-9.

During his travels, The Doctor has had many companions to accompany him and assist him in writing the wrongs of the universe. There is no time within this article to list them all, but one in particular deserves special mention as he is uniquely suited to building in LEGO®. The Fourth Doctor (played by Tom Baker) was, for a while, accompanied by a robotic dog from the year 5,000. The dog, known as K9 (a pun on "canine") was essentially a mobile computer, and equipped with a laser in his nose. Louise Dade has cornered the market in constructing a minifig scale K9 using only 14 pieces.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/bladewood/2852937331/>



## The TARDIS.

I will conclude this piece with a focus on the TARDIS, The Doctor's time machine.

The Time Lords created TARDISEs so they could observe the universe, and they were designed to blend in with their surroundings. Thus, for example, if a TARDIS were to arrive in Rome at the height of the Roman Empire, it might disguise itself as a pillar or a statue. The Doctor's TARDIS however, arriving in 1963 and leaving in something of a hurry during the first televised adventure, is also somewhat temperamental and so it is that his machine is stuck looking like a British Police Box from the era.

Police Boxes were small cubicles that were positioned on British streets before the advent of personal radio sets. They contained a telephone, desk, writing equipment and could even be used to hold arrested criminals whilst the Officer awaited transport to remove them to a station. At the time the series started, they were a common sight around the UK, although now there are less than a dozen or so remaining.

The TARDIS, like all machines of its type, is also larger on the inside than the outside. In fact, it has been suggested that the internal space is infinite. Once beyond the doors, there is a large central control room from where the machine can be "flown" through time and space. Beyond that, there are bedrooms, libraries and even a swimming pool!

Tim Fegan has created a stunning large-scale LEGO® TARDIS:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/doctorsinister/2916160104/in/pool-1417078@N24>



This one by Flickr user Doctor Mobius is even larger!

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/doctormobius/3501633759/in/set-72157617731848805>



Creating the TARDIS in Minifig scale presents its own challenges because of the four-way symmetry of the Police Box shape. The LEGO TARDIS group on Flickr has dozens of examples of LEGO TARDISEs from around the world.

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/1417078@N24/pool/with/2916182120/>

However, to round off, I'd like to share with you my own minifig-scale LEGO TARDIS creation. Having built on the work of others before me, I'm particularly pleased with the way this turned out, having achieved the four-way symmetry and yet managing to keep the size at the right scale.

As you will see, my TARDIS has engraved tiles for the lettering (courtesy of Tommy Armstrong, The Brick Engraver) and even internal lighting from Lifelites, although I'm still not sure how I managed to get it in there!

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/doctorsinister/4949452738/in/set-72157624066706705>

My TARDIS design gets used quite a lot in my spoof series of LEGO vignettes entitled "Doctor Hasn't a Clue". Here's the first of these, although you will note that this was made before my engraved bricks had arrived.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/doctorsinister/4671563141/in/set-72157624066706705>





To accompany my LEGO® TARDIS, I have a page set up on my website where you can view an instructional video on how to build one for yourself. There are also videos of two public TARDIS-builds that I gave in 2010. I'm pleased to say that as a result, there are copies of my LEGO TARDIS around the world!

<http://www.tabletownonline.com/TARDISinst.php>

The same page has a list of parts, and a downloadable set of instructions:

<http://www.tabletownonline.com/TARDIS.zip>

I hope you have enjoyed this journey through time, and I would encourage anyone who hasn't seen the show to check it out – you might be pleasantly surprised by what you find!

#



- 1 x Brick modified 1x1 with studs on 4 sides (Black)  
1 x Plate round 1x1 (Black)
- 8 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 1 x Brick modified 1x1 with studs on 4 sides (Black)  
2 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 8 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 1 x Brick modified 1x1 with studs on 4 sides (Black)  
2 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 8 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 1 x Brick modified 1x1 with studs on 4 sides (Black)  
2 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 8 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 1 x Brick modified 1x1 with studs on 4 sides (Black)  
2 x Plates 1x1 (Black)
- 8 x Plates 1x1 (Black)

4 x Plates 2x8 (Blue)

4 x Plates 1x2 (Blue)  
2 x Tiles modified 1x2 grille with bottom groove (White)  
2 x Tiles 1x2 (Blue)  
2 x Plates modified 1x2 with 1 stud (Blue)

2 x Tiles 1x4 (Blue)  
1 x Tile 1x1 (White)  
1 x Plate round 1x1 (White)

**3 X**

4 x Plates 1x2 (Blue)  
2 x Tiles modified 1x2 grille with bottom groove (White)  
4 x Tiles 1x2 (Blue)

**3 X**

1 x Plate 2x2 (Blue)  
2 x Tiles 1x4 (Blue)

**4 X**

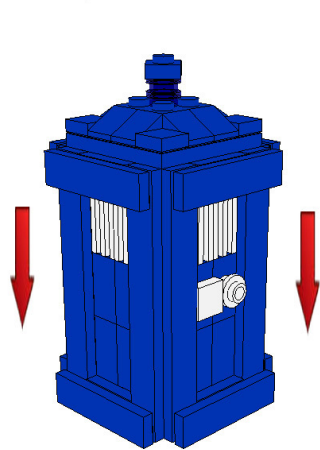
4 x Bricks modified 1x1 with stud in 1 side (Black)  
8 x Plates 1x1 (Blue)

1 x Plate 4x4 (Blue)

4 x Tiles 1x1 (Blue)  
8 x Tiles 1x8 (Blue)

2 x Plates 2x2 (Blue)  
2 x Plates round 1x1 (Trans Blue)

1 x Plate 1x1 (Blue)  
8 x Slopes 30 1x1x2/3 (Blue)



**TARDIS**  
by Dr. Sinister  
Image by Legotron