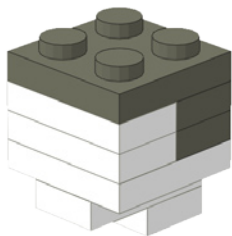


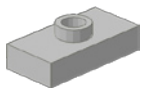
Miniland Building: MINILAND Character Build

Extended GuideLines Part III - The Head

By Didier Enjary

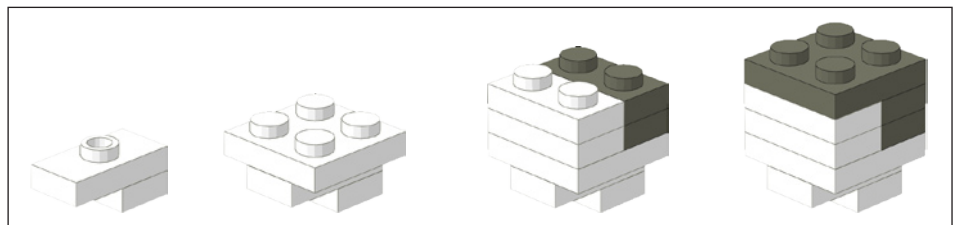


The representation of the head of MINILAND characters, despite the limited volume reserved for it - a cube of about 10/16 inch - is subject to a wide variety of design: variety in the color (hair, skin), diversity of hairstyles (from complete baldness to the wildest hair) and headgear (hats and caps). But let us begin the construction of this prototype. The base of the head, i.e. the neck, is represented by a simple plate 1x1. You may prefer a 1x1 round plate. The chin is drawn with a jumper plate (1 single centered stud on a 1x2 plate) which centers a 2x2 plate. The use of 1x2 plates in different colors differentiates the face from the hair. Finally, the last 2x2 plate forms the top of the skull.



The Jumper plate

The resulting geometry is very angular, a geometric effect hardly softened by the presence of the studs on the top - one reason you may prefer conventional plates against the smooth plates (tiles). As we will see later, some characters' faces may look more «organic» using round or curved parts or using offset techniques.



Basic Head Building



White people
(color tan)



Black people
(color brown)

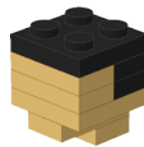
Colors

We have first to say a word about the colors to use. For items that represent the skin as the face but also hands, which must be flesh-colored, the best effect is obtained with the brown (for black people) and the tan color (for white people). You can also use respectively black or gray and white or yellow, but with less convincing results.

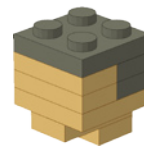
Nonetheless you can use other colors to represent specific characters' makeup (clowns, mimes,...), sick people (a seasick boat passenger will have a blue-green face) or masks (Batman, Spiderman ...).



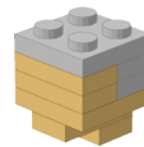
For the hair, the choice of color is even wider, and it is possible to achieve shades from blond to black and shades of gray for the elderly. Some common colors are illustrated here but you can use any color as long as parts are available (sand and dark red, medium orange...).



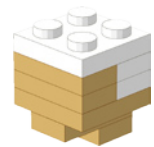
Black hair



Gray hair
(Dark gray)



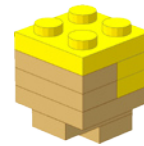
Gray hair
(Light gray)



White hair



Brown hair



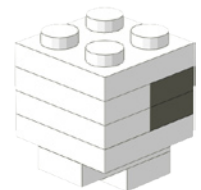
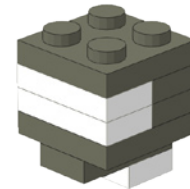
Blond hair
(Yellow)



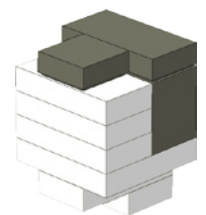
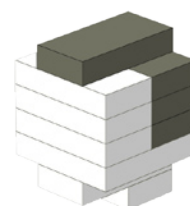
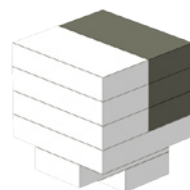
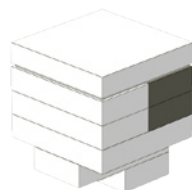
Red hair
(Orange)

Beards and Hairstyles

From the basic design of the head, you can create bearded or bald heads by changing the colour of a few parts. For the beard, you have to change the chin color from flesh to hair color. To get a bald head, we swap the hair color of the top of the head to flesh color. None of the parts are modified, only the colors are chosen differently. How would you make a character at the same time bald and bearded?

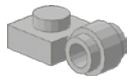


It is possible to enhance the design, for instance in making use of tiles and jumper plates. As demonstrated below, you can represent at least 4 different stages in the process of losing hair.

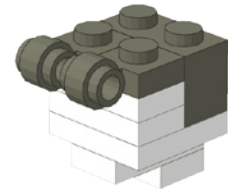
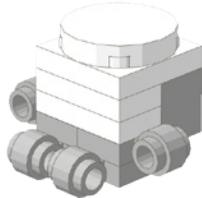


Different stages of male baldness

You can also notice how much the use of rounded parts or parts with clips or rings, featuring curved geometries, makes the whole design less blocky and smoother. The plate 1x1 modified with clip (ring) is a part which is heavily used to recreate hairstyle effects, for instance a rockabilly fringe.



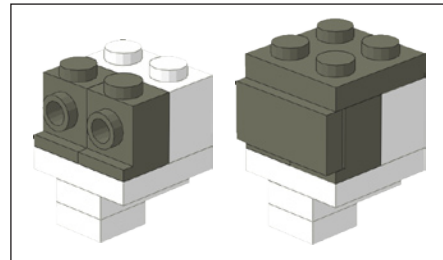
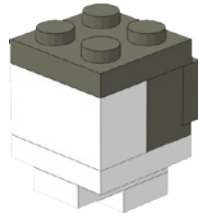
1x1 plate modified with ring



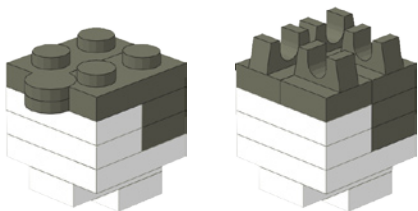
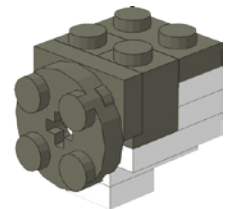
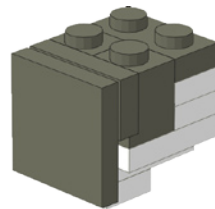
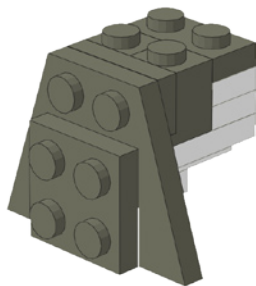
An unusual build makes the back of the head bigger and less blocky. This effect is made possible thanks to the Erling brick. This brick, named after the LEGO® Designer who created it but also named headlight brick, makes it possible to build perpendicularly (studs not on top but on side : SNOT).



Erling Brick

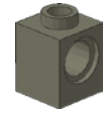


This is the source for a serie of new long hair hairstyles, some examples being illustrated here.

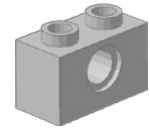
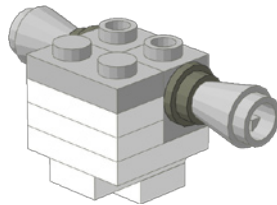
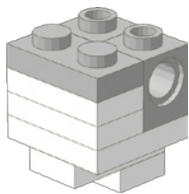


Other short hair styles

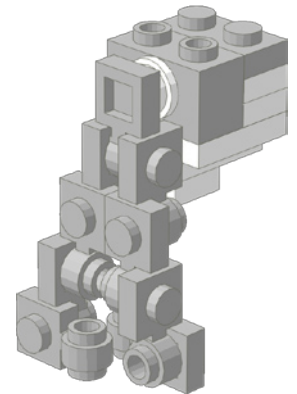
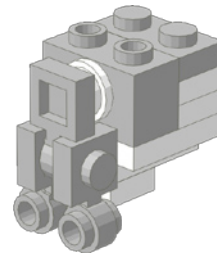
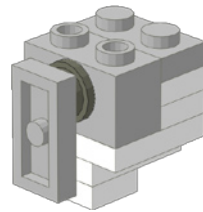
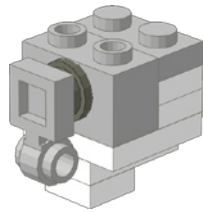
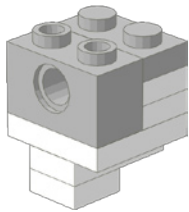
Other builds make this kind of arrangement possible. The first makes use of Technic bricks. Those bricks have a hole on the side and the size is compatible with studs. It is a stud-to-hole build which is inverted (it makes apparent the underside of the parts) compared to the classic stud-to-tube build. We make use here of the smallest Technic bricks (1x1 and 1x2) that you find not only in Technic sets but also in various LEGO sets. In the following examples, a 1x1 round plate creates a necessary shift to avoid overlap side effects while featuring hair ties.



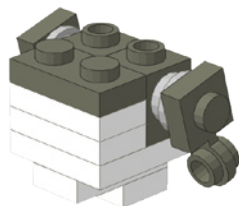
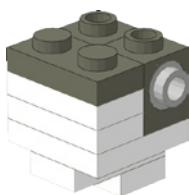
1x1 Technic Brick



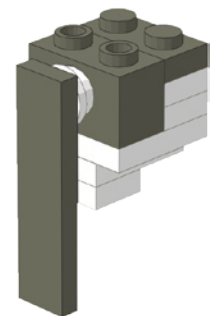
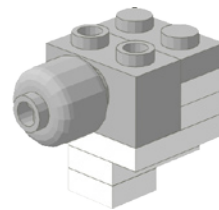
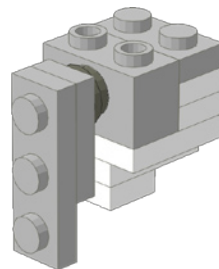
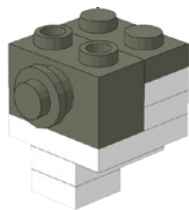
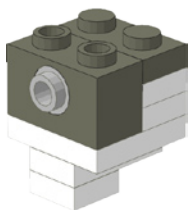
1x2 Technic Brick



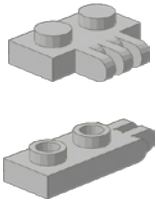
The second SNOT build makes use of the Technic half pin in combination with Technic bricks. Unlike the previously described Erling build, this one does not feature undesired shift. This way you can create pigtails, buns of various sizes and ponytails.



Technic half pin



Without any advanced building technique, the massive use of modified plates, such as the plate with clip, the plate with offset and hinge plates are sources for original designs: short or long curly hair, braided ponytails...



Hinge plates

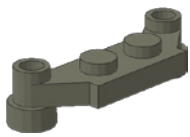
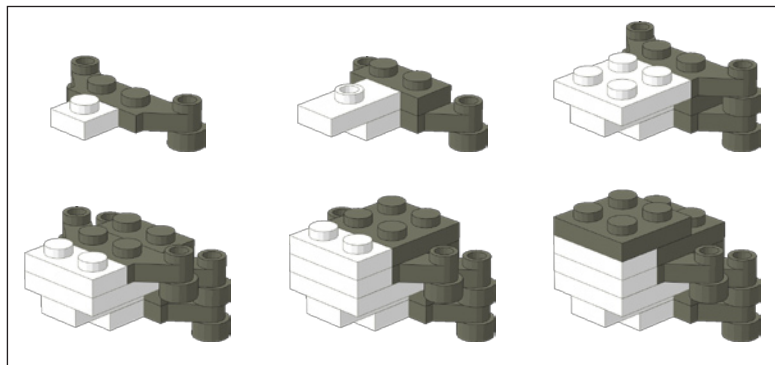
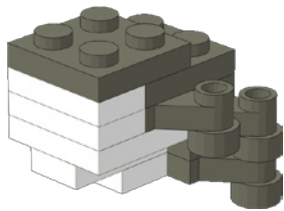
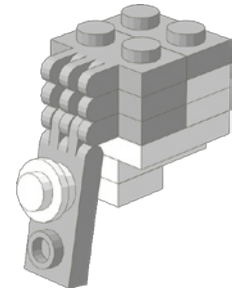
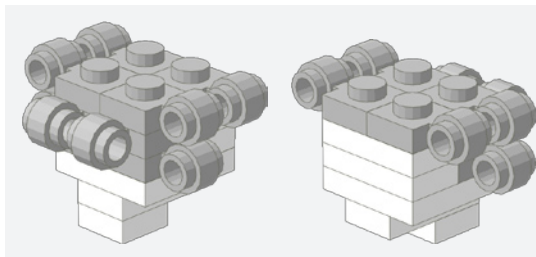
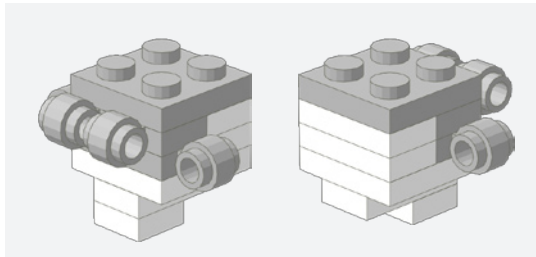
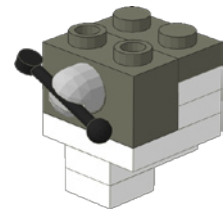
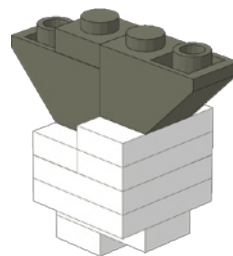
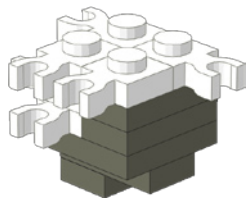
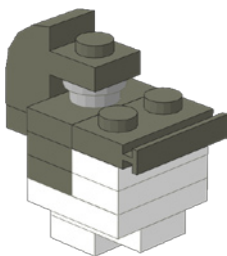


Plate 1x4 offset



Build for long curly hair

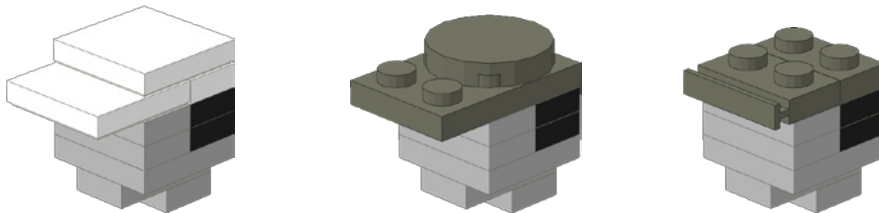
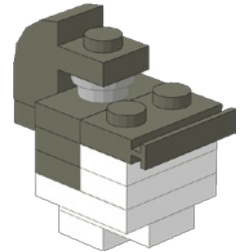
To conclude on hairstyles, and to underline that possibilities are practically limitless, the following are four different hairstyle designs using previously unused LEGO® parts.



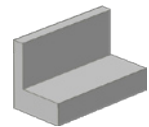
Caps and hats

The MINILAND characters sometimes need to cover their heads. The most common today is the cap. The key element of the cap is the visor. The simplest solution is to use a 2x3 plate and a round 2x2 plate to simulate the indentation of the head. You can also use tiles or even shorten the visor with a 1x2 plate with rail. This solution also allows, with a wise choice of color to simulate a fringe instead of a visor cap (see the girl with a ponytail).

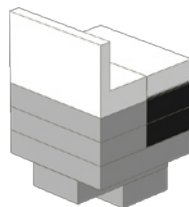
It is important to contrast the color of the hat to the hair (and preferably to flesh color). Later we will see other examples demonstrating the importance of contrasting the colors of elements representing different body parts.



If you need to represent a child, you may prefer a version of a cap with the visor raised using a 1x2 panel. More simply, young people and bad boys will wear a reverse cap like in real life.



Panel 1x2



One part is particularly well suited to recreate a cap with the visor: the plate 3x2 with a hole. Indeed, in addition to its dimensions, it has a rounded edge. It provides a wide range of solutions.

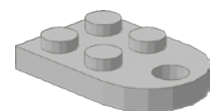
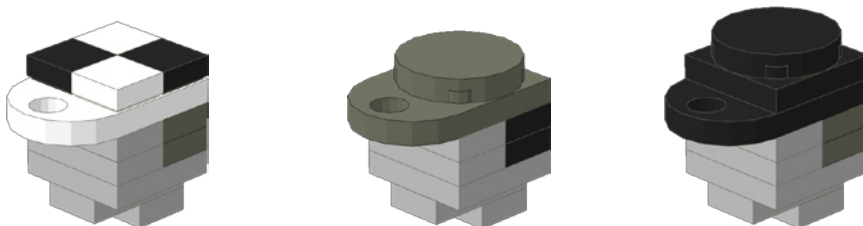
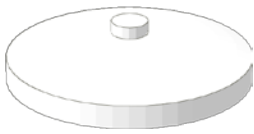


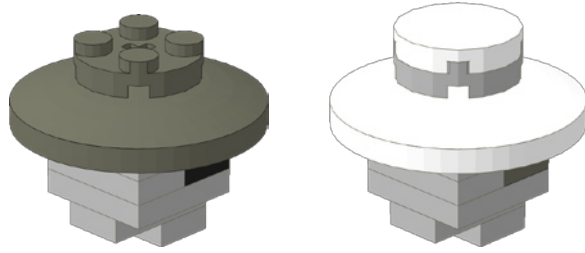
Plate 3x2 with hole



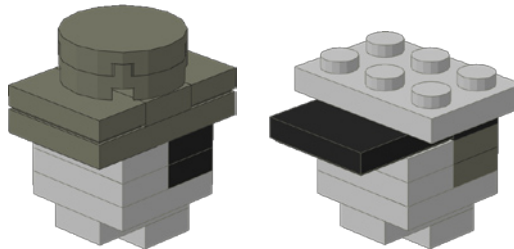
The elegant ladies will make use of the 4x4 dish inverted as wide brim hats in combination with smaller round parts.



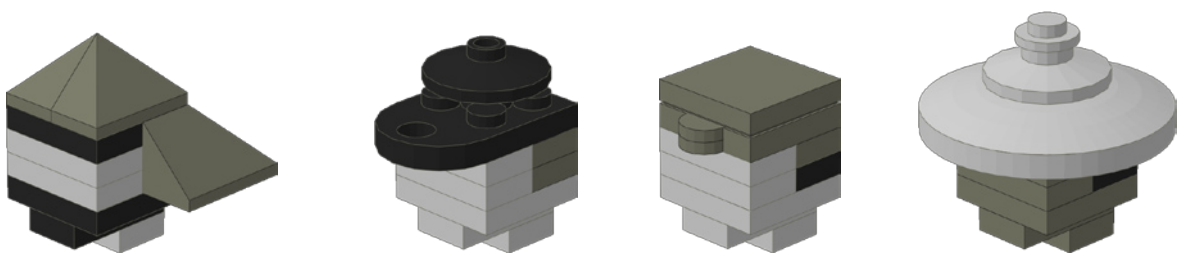
4x4 dish inverted



Other types of hats can be recreated using the possibilities offered by the half-stud shift of the jumper plate.



These last designs are only a small sample of the various headgears used in the MINILAND.



As usual, to conclude this chapter, we propose you build a MINILAND character related to the subject, here an ape's head with prominent nose (snout). This design is inspired by an original build by Iain Heath previously featured at www.thelivingbrick.com.

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