

Review: 21118 The Mine

Build your own Minecraft structures with LEGO® bricks.

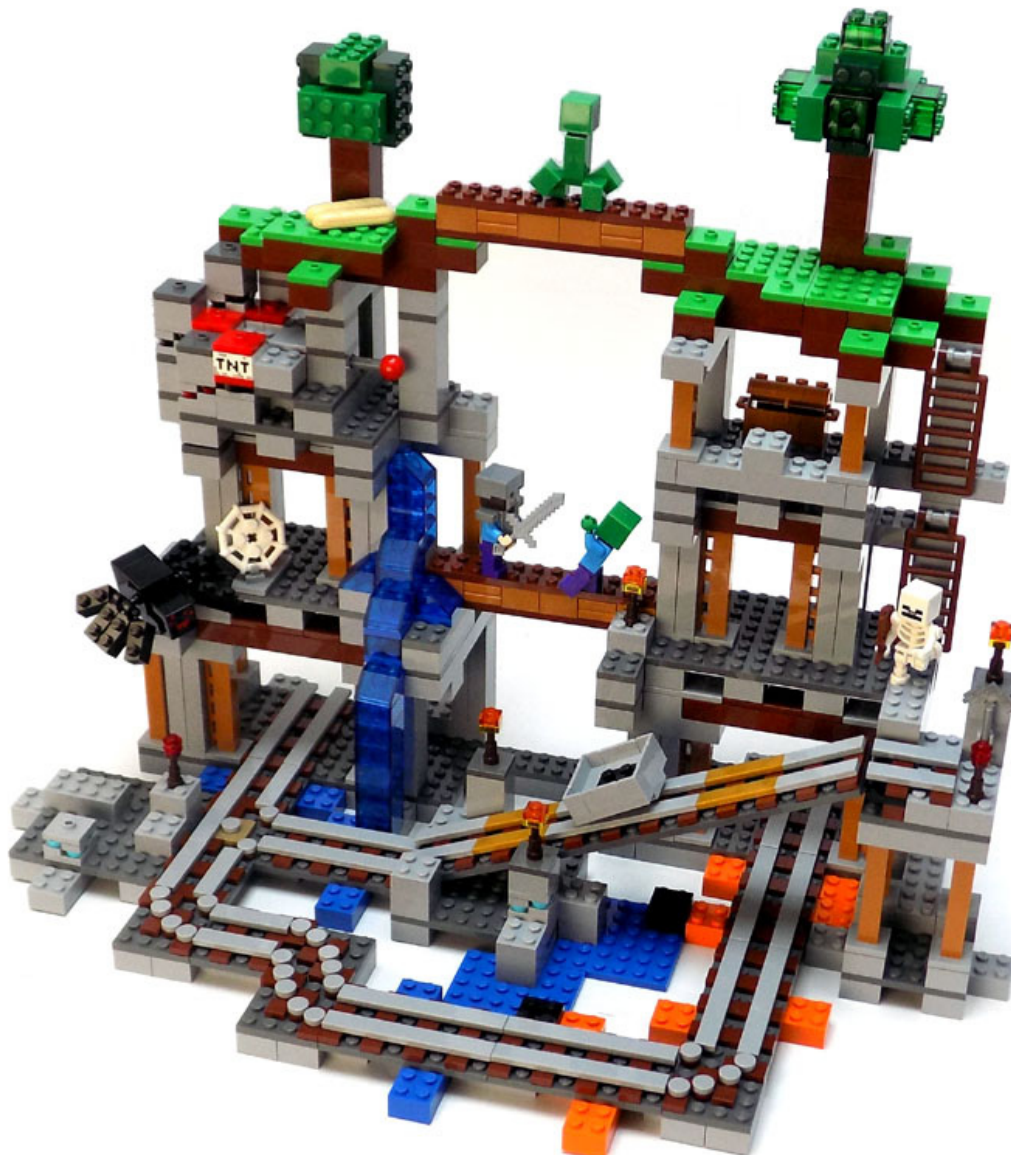
By Legotron (A. Bellón)

Set: 21118 THE MINE
Number of parts: 922
Minifigs: 5

After the unveiling of the “21102 Minecraft Micro World – The Forest” set in 2012 we have seen several new sets related to Minecraft. All of them show different scenes of the Minecraft world from a micro scale perspective. But, things have changed with the latest Minecraft related sets that were put on the market in November. They are designed to be compatible with the minifig scale. The 21118 The Mine is the biggest set of this new wave about the well known Minecraft game. A game that consists on surviving in an imaginary world by building and destroying structures with blocks of different materials.

I think the new scale of these sets is a great idea. The first sets that were made in micro scale did not allow to represent the specific characteristics shown in the Minecraft words. Details were impossible to built at this scale and were lost. The minifig scale is perfect to show the main characters and their features as well as their tools and weapons. In the Minecraft style, of course! The main elements of the game, the blocks, are clearly identified. Now you can see the different resource blocks, and this adds new interesting features to these Minecraft sets.

For those who don't know Minecraft, it can be said that Minecrafts is like a gigantic construction full of 1x1x1 bricks. These “bricks” are called blocks and represent different resources that can be used to create new materials or to build other structures. They are collected and used in the game





like we use our beloved bricks. I was new to Minecraft, but I had heard about it many times. So, I decided to play and see for myself what Minecraft is before the review of this set. And I must say that the work done by the LEGO® designers is awesome. I know that the Minecraft world is very close to LEGO® constructions as they share many common features, but the way this set has been designed shows them perfectly and allows you to play with the LEGO® bricks like in a game of Minecraft.

Let's talk about the set. It depicts an abandoned mine, like the ones that can be found in the deepest caves of the Minecraft worlds. It is a big box, with a large amount of pieces, in order to build several levels of a small Minecraft scene. We have several levels, the top one the surface, built with grass elements and trees, as common elements of the Minecraft worlds. The other levels are part of the mine, with many resource blocks, mine structures and a rail system with a mine car and other elements of the underground world of Minecraft.

Furthermore, there are 5 minifigs in the set: Steve, a skeleton, a zombie, a creeper and a spider. They come with some weapons and tools, like the iron sword, iron pickaxe and a bow. Steve wears the iron helmet and iron armour. They are awesome, and very close to the game characters. These minifigs include some new elements. The creeper body is made with a new specific piece. The heads of the rest of minifigs have a cubic shape, like the original ones in the game. And they are printed with the same pattern as the game. The



weapons and minifigs tools are new, with a grid pattern shape, in the same way they are shown in the game.

The building process is fun. The whole scene is divided into different spaces that are combined to form the mine. This structure is not full of blocks like the game, it has many clear areas that allow you to play in all the different rooms of the scene without removing any bricks. There are two parts, the surface at the top and the mine in the bottom. The surface has many grass blocks and 2 trees built in the blocky style of Minecraft. You have stairs to go down into the mine. This part of the construction is made up of three levels. The first level is full of Blocks, some of them labeled with the letters "TNT". They are placed with other blocks in a mechanism that simulates an explosion that blows off a small section of the level. If you place the blocks correctly this feature works very well. In the other side we have a chest and another set of stairs.

The next level contains a railway system for the mine wagon. I tried to slide the mine wagon and it worked very well, including the curved segments. In this level there is also a small waterfall that ends in the bottom level. The railway is placed on a ramp that goes down to the last level. This level is intended to be the base of the mine, and the part with the most valuable resource blocks: diamond. The mine structure is decorated with many elements, like wooden poles, very similar to the ones shown in the game. Many areas of the mine are full of blocks. They are placed over "Plate Modified 2x2 with Groove and 1 Stud in Center", so they can be change very easily. You can change the locations of the resource blocks to hide them or change the overall appearance of the mine with little effort. The same can be applied to the elements of the mine, they can be combined in many ways to create countless different mine scenes.

This feature of "building yourself" is the most interesting characteristic of this set. It is designed to encourage the builder to build more things that the ones shown in the instructions. Furthermore, this set can be combined with the rest of the Minecraft sets, so you can build large scenes or structures with many different combinations. Every landscape or structure built in Minecraft can be assembled in real life with LEGO® bricks, and this sets adds the characters available in the game.

There is an interesting element that amazed me: the blocks. They are recreated with elements that measure 2x2 studs by 4 or 5 plates. This set comes with some grass and gravel blocks. But there are some resource blocks also, like diamond, coal and redstone blocks. They are built with very common parts, so it is very easy to build new blocks to add to your Minecraft scene. I would use blocks of 5 plates tall, so you can build pure LEGO® structures of 5 bricks tall to use as supports to your Minecraft structures. The structures would provide strong connections. In this way you would be able to move, remove and change your blocks inside your structure without dismantling the whole structure, so that you could play Minecraft with the LEGO® bricks.

If you are not fan of Minecraft, this set can be a great opportunity to get a very interesting assortment of parts, with many bricks, plates and tiles that can be used in countless constructions. In short, I think this set is great, regardless of whether you are a Minecraft fan or not.

I hope LEGO® will add some small sets to increase the number of blocks we can use in our customized Minecraft worlds built with LEGO bricks.

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