

# Even Bricks look cute!

## Building Your Own Anime Style Figurine

By Mike Dung



### The Beginning

While I started playing with LEGO® bricks at the end of 2010, I was far from a MOC builder. Until I saw a wonderful anime style MOC in a blog, I never thought that an anime figurine could be made with bricks. MOKO, a Japanese LEGO builder, built a senior high school girl, it inspired me to build something by using bricks as you can see in picture 1. I was continuing to build small figurines with bricks and I thought it was time to start building something different!



Picture 1. Snow Miku in mini scaling.

### Vocaloid Bricks

My first figurine is a 1/7 scaled version of Hatsune Miku, who is a humanoid persona voiced by a singing synthesizer application developed by Crypton Future Media. As a virtual singer, she has a great amount of fans from the entire world, and I am one of them. Deeply addicted to her songs, I tried to build my own LEGO Miku. After two weeks, I finally completed it and posted the photos on my flickr account. Fortunately some LEGO brick lovers saw my MOC and gave me a lot of positive feedback, thus I decided to build the next one.



Picture 2. Hatsune Miku

There are many characters in the vocaloid family, and each one has its own characteristics and voice. Just like Miku, they also have many great songs. After making Miku, I also built Megurine Luka, Kagamine Rin, and Gumi. Since their main feature is music, I also built some proper instruments for them and presented them as a band. Every time I built a new



Picture 3. Vocaloid Band

figurine, I tried to use different skill to make them perfect. As you can see in picture 3 and 4, different costumes are made in different ways. Luka, the one with pink hair, has the more difficult costume since there is a yellow line on her cloth. I used a technic wedge belt wheel part to sketch the curve of upper body. The one with yellow hair, Rin, who wears shorts, is somehow easier to build. By using technic joint parts, she could move like a real person. The last one, with lime hair, Gumi, is a newer one in my works. As more kinds of LEGO® bricks are released, I could build the hair smoother.

In my works, I have built Hatsune Miku many times. Some of them are called "SNOW MIKU", the character design based on a pure white snow sculpture of Hatsune Miku. In Hokkaido,

"SNOW MIKU" festival has been held every winter since 2010. I have built 2013, 2014, and 2015 snow Miku, and I will build all snow Miku in the future! 2013 snow Miku was designed to wear a white kimono. In picture 5 you can see that I used a new way to present the kimono. The main theme of 2014 snow Miku was "Magical Girl". In picture 6, you can see the cute costume, and since every magical girl needs a pet, there is special pet by her side. In this year, the costume is themed "SNOW MIKU x Plants". I spent lots of time constructing the costume. It is hard to build a shawl with bricks in such a scale. After trying many times, I finally found a way to present it properly.



Picture 4. Gumi



Picture 5. Snow Miku 2013

Picture 6. Snow Miku 2014

Picture 7. Snow Miku 2015



## Anime Bricks

Besides vocaloids, I also built many figurines in different themes. Anime is one of them. Anime is a term used to refer to Japanese animated productions, featuring hand-drawn or computer animation. In my country, Taiwan, Japanese culture is related with us very closely and we can watch anime easily. The heroine in each anime has her own unique costume and characteristics. I often thought that if I could build them with bricks, it would be an interesting challenge for me.

The first one is Mikoto Misaka (picture 8), which is from the anime "A Certain Scientific Railgun". In this anime, some persons have special abilities such as controlling fire, electricity or even the mind. Misaka can control electricity arbitrarily. I built a scene to describe how she uses a coin as a railgun. Most of my anime figurines have postures that make brick-made figurines vivid.

The second is Nagato Yuki. She is from anime "The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya", which is the first anime I watched, so it is meaningful for me. If I didn't watch this anime, I would never build creations like this. In this work, I used a mudguard part to present the collar of the uniform. Since the character likes reading book, I built an appropriate scene for her: the library corner.



Picture 9. Nagato Yuki

The next one is a little different, the anime is not from Japan, it comes from America. RWBY is the animation created by Monty Oum, which is set in the fictional world of Remnant, which is filled with supernatural forces. The series focuses on Team RWBY, which consists of Ruby Rose, Weiss Schnee, Blake Belladonna and Yang Xiao Long. One day I saw the preview of this animation online, and I was addicted to the configuration of persona and weapon. At first I only wanted to build Ruby due to her cool weapon "Crescent Rose". But I thought that a team shouldn't be separated, so I built the others in two weeks. As shown in picture 10, each one has her own representative color. Ruby is dressed in a black blouse and a skirt with red trimmings, completed with a red cloak. Weiss wears a pale blue bolero jacket over a similarly colored thigh-length dress with a piece of black lace making up the neckline of the dress. Blake has long black hair and wears a ribbon. Yang wears a tan vest and has long blonde hair. I enjoyed building these characters since I used all my imagination to figure out how to represent their costumes and weapons.

## Game Bricks

Most of us play games in our life, and there are many people who build LEGO® brick models in game themes. Games can always inspire my imagination. With bricks, the imaginary creature or the high-tech robot can be built to satisfy everyone's dreams. The figurines I build often have some special features.



*Mikoto Misaka*

MikeVd

Picture 8: Mikoto Misaka

Picture 10.  
RWBY



Picture 11. Flandre Scarlet



Picture 12. Yuyuko Saigyoji

Picture 13. Reimu Hakurei



Picture 14. Shimakaze

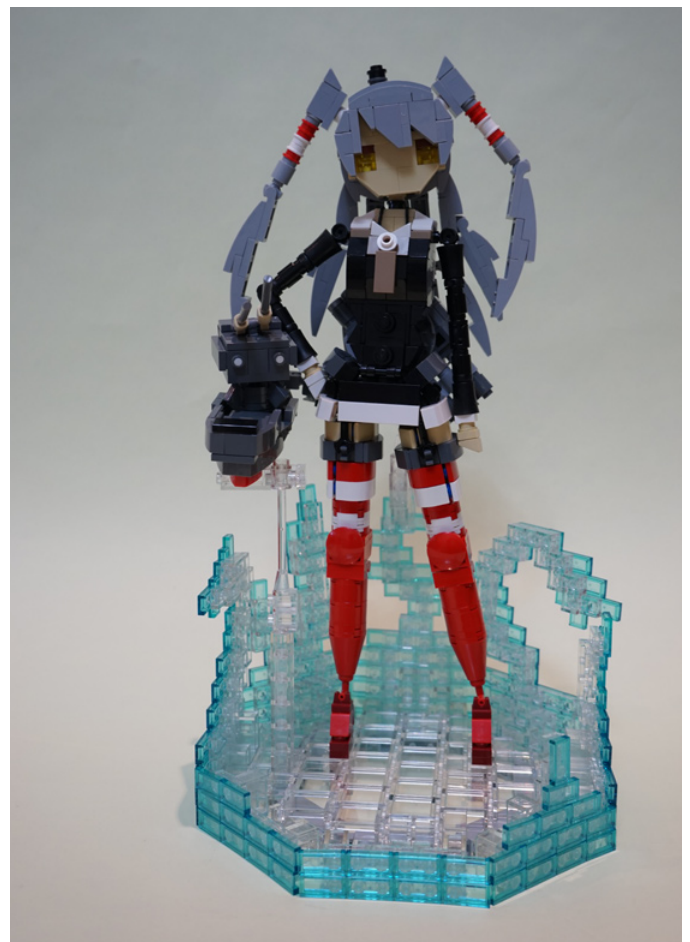


The first part is about the shoot'em up game "Touhou Project". Touhou Project is a game series focused on bullet hell shooters. All characters in this game are girls with different appearances. Until now I have built three of them, and I will try to build all of them in the future. In picture 11, a girl called Flandre is my first work in the Touhou Project. She is a vampire and has beautiful crystal wings. In the original design, she has eight crystals, arranged from her back to the tip of her wings, and they are presented in seven colours: light blue, blue, purple, pink, orange, yellow, light green and finally light blue again. To represent her wings, I collected the rare trans-light blue cone part for a long time.

A girl who is surrounded by two small formless phantoms is called Yuyuko. She is a ghost princess and wears a light blue and white kimono. I used the strap of LEGO® watch as a source material and it looks great! In this work, I started trying to use curved slope parts to make the sleeves and now I apply this skill to other figurines if they wear kimono.

The last one is the main heroine of most Touhou Project games, Reimu Hakurei. She wears a large red ribbon at the back of her head and usually wears a "miko uniform" with the red-and-white colour scheme. I built this character after Yuyuko since I watched an animation which describes the fight between Yuyuko and Reimu. The animation gave me inspiration and I decided to build both of them.

Then the final part is my "Kantai Collection", lit. "Fleet Collection", which is a Japanese free-to-play web game. The gameplay is centred upon building squadrons composed of individual characters represented as cards with different attributes, and then send those squadrons out on missions.



Picture 15. Amatsukaze

Each of the characters is an anthropomorphisms of a naval warship from World War II, depicted as girls, known as "Fleet girls". Up to now I only have built two fleet girls since that I did not play this game before. In this year I have started playing this game and I find out that there are so many girls that I can try to build them with bricks.

The two characters I built are destroyers: Shimakaze and Amatsukaze. Shimakaze is shown in picture 14 and Amatsukaze is in picture 15. Shimakaze typically wears a sailor collar and striped thighs. Family-like turrets by her side are called Rensouhou-chan which originated from Shimakaze's three turrets. She is my favorite character in this game and this inspires me to build one with bricks. I spent several days to figure out how to build her tights, fortunately, LEGO® released a part that could solve my problem. 1x2 curved slope part makes my work smoother and better looking. It's a pity that I cannot use tan parts to build her hair since the face and hair would be mixed together.

The last one is Amatsukaze. She wears black a sailor uniform and knee-high socks. Her black clothes are hard to represent with bricks if I have to consider the movability.

Finally I combined parts of cloth in the legs so it can have more postures. The most obvious feature of fleet girls is the weapon on their back or hand. Destroyers often carry torpedoes on their back and are equipped with turrets. I could present those details in the best way using bricks.

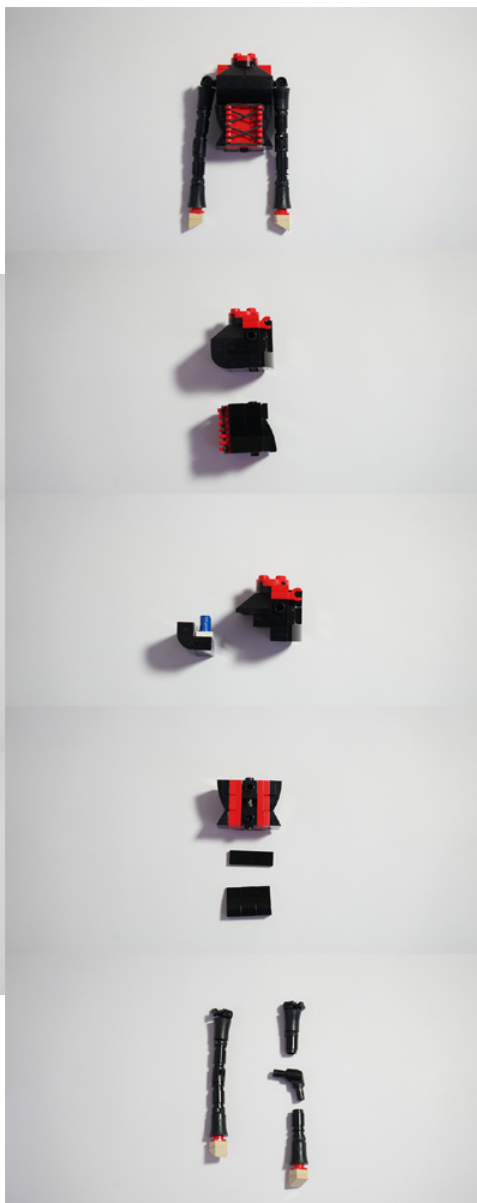
## Brief Instruction

Before building a model, I spend some time to find the model sheet. Then I figure out how to construct the costume. The main differences between each anime character are hair and clothes. So how to present it with bricks properly is the first issue I consider. Here I use Ruby Rose as a sample.

### Head

I use the same way to build the face as you can see in picture 16. Just use two inverted slopes, one 1x2 brick, and two 1x1 bricks (sometimes I use three plates instead) and you can easily build the face. How to build hair is the first problem when I am building. Typically I use a headlight brick as a base to build bangs. Depending on the different characters, the

Picture 17. Upper body of Ruby



Picture 16. Head part of Ruby



Picture 18. Skirt and Legs of Ruby



building technique is also different. Another issue is making a movable head. In order to make my figurines vivid, I use an easy technique to build the neck, which is shown in picture 16.

### Upper Body

Most girls in anime have big curves, thus using bricks to build the body is the most difficult issue for me. I usually start with the chest. In picture 17, you can see that I use slope bricks and inverse modified brick with curved top to compose the chest. Although there are many ways to build, I prefer this method. The next step is the belly and the waist. Most of my figures use curved slope or slope brick to build the waist. Bracket bricks are the best choice for me. But in this case, in order to present the details of Ruby's blouse, I tried another way. The arms part is much easier if the character wears a single color sleeve. Fortunately, there are not so many details in this case. I used some old parts to make the elbow better.

### Skirt and Legs

In this example, Ruby wears a black skirt with some decorations. The simplest way to build a brick skirt is using modified plates with bar frame octagonal. With this part and some plates with clip, you can easily build a nice brick skirt. In

my early works, I used hose parts to build skirts, but it is not stable at all. The last parts are legs and shoes. When I was building the first figurine, I found that if I use 2x2 round bricks to build both thigh and shin, the legs would look monotonous. I tried many ways and finally I found a great technique to present thighs. By using modified bricks with curved top and some cheese bricks, I could build thighs that the section is larger than a 2x2 round brick. The build method for the thighs is simply presented in picture 18. Shins are just using 2x2 bricks round if there is no other detail.

Since everything is prepared we can combine them easily as you can see in Picture 19, without her cloak the figurine could stand stable on a flat table. In fact, most of my figurines could stand without support. But in this case, Ruby needs some support if she wants to wear her cloak. With my brief guide, you could try to build your own figurine!

In the end, I am glad that I have this chance to introduce my brick figurines in this article. I often think that it is impossible to build a new character, but every time I keep on building and enjoying all the process. For me, LEGO® is the best way to enjoy my life!

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Picture 19. Ruby Rose