

Review: 21304 Doctor Who (LEGO® Ideas)

Set: DOCTOR WHO

Set number: 21304

Parts: 623

Contains: 4 minifigs and 2 daleks



By Jetro

Pictures by Jetro & LEGO® SystemA/S



LEGO Ideas is a curious beast. Thousands of submissions are made every week and many of those never make it past a handful of votes. A few lucky (or should I say well-designed and properly presented) submissions make it to the 10.000 votes necessary to be reviewed by LEGO®, and of those only a couple are made into actual sets.

Doctor Who is one of the latest products to come out of this series and is, by any standard, a curious, but interesting choice for a set.

Who is Doctor Who? The doctor is old; ancient by human standards. No one is exactly sure (possibly not

even he himself), but the figure is somewhere around 2000 years. But more importantly, he has been on TV for a very long time. The first Doctor Who episode was broadcast on November 12, 1963! The show ran until 1989 and then went on hiatus. A film was produced in 1996, but the complete return of the Doctor came on March 26, 2005 the series was relaunched with the Episode "Rose".

For those who have never watched an episode (shame on you!) the show can probably be best described as a science fiction series with a sprinkling of British humour. The Doctor (the self-assumed title/name of the main character – no other name is ever pronounced) is

a time lord and travels in a spaceship disguised as a police box, named the T.A.R.D.I.S. (Time And Relative Dimension in Space).

Of course the actor representing the doctor is not the same, and as a matter of fact changes ever so often. This is accounted for by the fact that just like a cat has nine lives, the doctor has a good few too and when faced with a particularly complicated crisis can shed his old persona and regenerate. This explains the fact that the LEGO set under review comes with not one, but two doctors (the 11th and 12th).

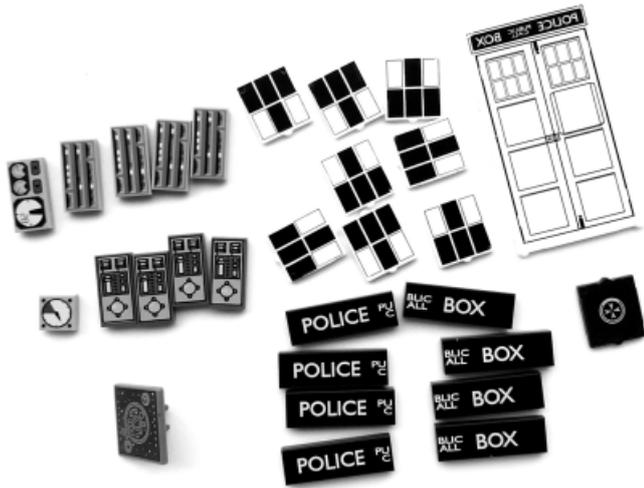
Although he is very much a loner he likes to travel with a companion who fulfils a very similar role to doctor Watson in a Sherlock Holmes story – it gives the doctor a reason to explain, pontificate and find his way back. 21304 comes with a minifigs of Clara Oswald, the latest companion to travel all time and space together with the doctor.



One of the inescapable facts of the series (and one that has been turned into a running joke in the series) is the fact that the T.A.R.D.I.S. is “bigger on the inside”. This has been very well captured in the LEGO set. While the blue Police Box can be displayed as a single element in a beautiful dark blue, after removing the roof it can also be folded open to reveal its interior, the console room (just one of many, but the only one to be shown normally) that holds the (you guessed it) console from which the doctor decides where or when to travel to. The console has been very well captured in LEGO, including all manner of control interfaces on the six panels around it as well as the time spinner at the top.

Time to have a closer look at the details of this set. Aside from the quality packaging that all LEGO Ideas sets have, one of the first things that drew my attention was the large number of printed elements in the set. There isn't a single sticker and some of the printing is really spectacular, giving the set a real quality feel.





The mechanism that allows the T.A.R.D.I.S. to open for example, requires the printed tiles on three of the four sides of the blue box to be split in two, but after closing it the printing matches up beautifully.

Another interesting design feature is the fact that the console as a whole is built around an axle, meaning

you can easily pull it out. Doing so allows you to store the entire set in its original box..

In addition to the two doctors and companion, the set comes with two Daleks, the most traditional enemy of the doctor. The models are brick built and slightly larger than they really ought to be (they should be smaller than the minifigs), but they are well designed and a feast to the eyes. The final minifig is that of a weeping angel, possibly the most frightening of all the monsters that populate the Doctor Who universe.

21304 – Doctor Who is a real (LEGO) collector’s item. It beautifully captures the spirit of the series (even though I would personally have preferred the 10th doctor with Rose as his companion), and the inclusion of the green tipped sonic screw driver and the 11th Doctor’s fez just go to show to what lengths LEGO has gone to make this set “just right”.

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Acknowledgements: LEGO® SYSTEM A/S for the set.