

Review: Junior Tradesman First House

The Junior Tradesman kits have been a huge success! The kits encourage children to learn about the fundamentals of house building while having fun at the same time.

We looked at the First House kit, which has everything you need to build an actual bricks-and-mortar house. You get a floor plan, mini bricks, mortar mix, wooden lintels and plastic window frames, roof supports and doors.

First, you need to mix up the mortar. We found that we needed to use the entire packet and it mixes up quite easily. The mortar is non-toxic and will dissolve in water, so once you've finished your construction you can dismantle the house and start again (extra packets of mortar are available for around RM15).



Now the real fun starts. Using the floor plan you simply start to lay down bricks, smoothing on the mortar just like the real thing. Half-bricks are supplied so you don't need to break any full-sized bricks in half. Concentration is needed to make sure you don't miss out any important elements, like a window frame, but it is very easy to take a wall down to correct a mistake if you go astray.

Children towards the bottom of the target age group will need supervising and encouraging. Inevitably, the first build will turn out a little rickety, but that's where the reusable nature of the product comes in – you can practice until you get it right.

We also found that a younger child, of just over four years of age, was fascinated by the concept, so the Free Play set (around RM75 and aimed at children of three and up) will likely have strong appeal for its target age group.

Having let our first effort dry overnight we had a sturdy (if slightly amateur-looking) house. The temptation was there to take the house to pieces and start again, so longevity should be good. There is also the possibility of getting creative and making your own building plans, and adding a garage to your First House is easy thanks to the Garage add-on set, which costs around RM88.

The Junior Tradesman First House is fun and educational - and you might just end up with a builder in the family.

Durability: 4/5

Longevity: 4/5

Value: 4/5

Score: 82%

Conclusion: A quality product - children who enjoy construction toys will love the chance to try their hands at 'real' building.

http://www.toytalk.co.uk/2007/02/review_junior_t.html

For purchase order or information, please contact 0178862687 OR hawlinn.childeducation@gmail.com