TinkerKit Kit came in today. This is another no experience (with wiring) needed to hook up type of thing, but no where near as educational as the Makeblock Kit

The TinkerKit Basic Kit is $79.02 + VAT (Yes it has a U.S. dollar sign and still charging European VAT?)

http://store.arduino.cc/product/K000001

I don't know if the ease of use justifies the high cost of this kit thou - and in some places it's even more.

I however found it for LeRoy Money - $14.00 on eBay, and even at $14 + free shipping I some how feel cheated.

So what comes in the Kit -

1 Sensor Shield (This is what makes it "easy" to hook everything up)

1 Button Module

1 LDR Module (Light Detection, a photo resistor)

1 Tilt Module (Ok, this is interesting, it's a mechanical tilt sensor)

1 Therm Module (This is a Thermistor, it's not really a sensor like we would think of temperature sensors)

1 Rotary Potentiometer

1 Linear Potentiometer (Yup, one potentiometer that is a knob, and one that is a slider)

1 Touch Sensor (not sure about this one, don't know if it's resistive or capacitive touch, but it doesn't look like much)

1 Relay Module

(AND HERE IS WHERE IT REALLY STARTS TO GO WRONG)

1 5mm Green LED

1 5mm Yellow LED

1 5mm Red LED

1 10mm Green LED

(Now mind you, the modules do have a small circuit and a voltage regulator on them, but still...it's 4 LEDS people)

4 20cm cables (Ok, need the cables to hook up stuff, Makeblock gave you cables as well, they however didn't count them as part of the components)

2 50cm Cables

1 100cm Cable

There is really nothing special about any of the modules, other then they do all seem to have a small circuit and a voltage regulator on them, but otherwise nothing over special)

The shield maybe the only thing that is special, and on the Arduino website it retails for $12 + VAT To be fair I've seen the shield being sold in the states for quite a bit more. (Up words of $25)

The box is even cheaply made - and made of thin cardboard.

the components, other then the shield, are all in static bags, and just put in the box, no type of packing or anything to keep it from getting damaged. The shield is in a smaller box, that is very much like the box the Arduino Uno comes in, it does have it's pins "protected" in Styrofoam.

There are no instructions in the box, the Tinkerkit website has been off line for over a year now, and even when it was up and running had issues with disappearing for days at a time.

And even thou the Makeblock did have some fairly common sensors and parts included, the kit gave you ideas, information, sketches, and a sense that the kit has value - it also includes 2 modules that retail for $20 or more (grated that is based on the prices on Makeblock website) and not eBay prices. And the Makeblock shield retails for around $20 - so there is clearly $60 dollars worth of stuff in just those three items.

Makeblock also gives you a small servo, and a real temperature sensor

the other modules in the box retail from $5 to $8 - the modules don't feel "cheap" either. They are placed in a nice "protective" moulded plastic holder that holds them in place nicely. The box itself has a magnetic closer, is not a cheap box, feels like it can handle a small beating. One draw back is that if you don't put the wires back in just the right spot, the box can be a little hard to close.

So, I haven't tried to use the Tinkerkit yet, it should be pretty easy to use. The Makeblock that comes with it's own UNO clone, is incredibly simple to use.

Conclusion - $57 dollars well spent - $14 dollars were wasted in making this post.