

Brio

In a world of plastic and disposable products, it's good to have the option of long lasting, wooden toys. The Swedish manufacturer Brio takes pride in using only the best materials. They may be a bit more expensive than some toy rivals, but their products won't break five minutes after they are opened. The range is mainly known for the train sets but there are plenty other toys for sale. These toys are particularly suitable for the younger child; they are safe and easy to use but still stimulating.

The company opened a toy museum in 1984 where their head office is located in the village of Osby in Sweden. This was fitting as the company began here. They named it Brio Lekoseum and it displays other manufacturer's products in addition to their own, including Barbie dolls. It's a very child friendly place and children are encouraged to play with the toys and games. There is a playhouse to explore, board games, computer games, a model railway and Father Christmas greets visitors in his house and workshop.

The best selling wooden train sets come with engines, tracks, buildings and accessories. The original non-electric design, using connecting magnets, is still available but there is also battery powered and remote control versions now. You can build a whole railway world with freight wagons, tunnels, bridges and a platform station.

In addition to trains, there are construction kits that are good for developing eye and hand co-ordination called Brio-Mech, wooden hammer and nail sets and building blocks. The blocks can be transported in a cart. Various push along and pull along cars and trucks are available and there is a forklift and wagon set. Children love to create their own imaginative worlds and Brio supplies the goods. They will love the firebrigade play set and the garage play set. There is also a police car with police officer and an ambulance with ambulance person.

Younger children will enjoy the large piece jigsaws, various puzzles and shape sorting box. Brio claim to be the largest wooden toy manufacturer in the world. They have certainly built a reputation for quality. The toys are in attractive colors and help the child's development as well as entertain. There is nostalgia for traditionally made toys in the face of computers and electrical wizardry. Brio's toys can be banged about a fair deal without coming to harm. The only problem is how to get Dad away from the trains.