



# Get, set, LE-GO!

For both kids and adults, these iconic building block toys are a popular draw. As the Danish company celebrates 90 years, Mumbai fans reveal their collections and share tips for amateur collectors

## Push your creativity

ALL of eight, Aarit Choudhary began to immerse himself in the world of LEGO amid the first lockdown, wowed by the endless possibilities the colourful building blocks held. His parents were relieved to find him enjoying himself without resorting to screen time, his father Animesh Kumar admits. "Currently, he has at least 15 sets, which would amount to 8,000 pieces. We started documenting his creations and collections on Instagram [[@lego\\_cr8tor](#)] to encourage him," Kumar shares. Some of his unique collections include a Taj Mahal set and an ocean exploration set. But to ensure that little Aarit continues to push his creativity, his parents focus on getting him the city and classic collections that allow him to craft different models — airports, a sanitiser, a police heist and more.

### Pro tips:

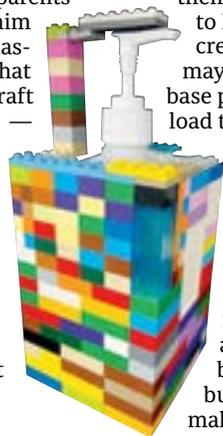
• **Design:** While building models, first, make a rough sketch of the structure that you are planning to build.



The eight-year-old and his father, Animesh Kumar, build a set together; (below) a hand sanitiser

• **Basics first:** It's always good to start with LEGO classic sets that come with colourful basic bricks. Once you are proficient with them, you can move on to LEGO city, LEGO creator and more. You may need to get a LEGO base plate as well. Download the LEGO Building Instructions app for free.

• **Building game:** Look around for some inspiration. The bricks are mostly squares and rectangles. To become a master builder, you can try making curves.



## Be money-wise

Mahim-based content strategist Chirag Shah's tryst with LEGO kicked off when he was a kid. "LEGO allowed me to realise my creativity in a 3-D form. But it was expensive and back then, I thought it was a pipe dream to have my own collection," shares Shah (@mr. capt\_shah), who started inching towards his dream once he started working. In the past four years, Shah, who is obsessed with minifigures, has gathered 75 of them. "I focus on collecting superheroes. I have the entire Justice League and Avengers sets; I also have the Batmobile



and Thanos' ship collectibles. The Guardians of the Galaxy ship is also on its way."

### Pro tips:

• **Save up:** If collectors, especially children, are interested in building a collection, teach them to start early and save up. This practice will help them in the long run.

• **Handle with care:** Don't try to stick LEGO pieces like minifigures on magnets; it damages them and reduces their value. Keep the parts intact and don't let the colours chip off.

• **Clean:** Use a small brush or ear buds, and dry-clean the pieces as much as possible.



Chirag Shah's (inset) LEGO minifigures army



Mrunal Shah (above) and his team built a (left) six-foot Ganapati last year

## Keep exploring

Mrunal Shah, founder of Sunday Bricks (@sundaybricks), which conducts workshops for kids in Vashi, is a LEGO fan and an educator. Shah — who has been collecting these building block toys since he was a kid — harnesses the power of LEGO to help children develop fine motor skills, a sense of balance and STEAM skills. "When my son, Suhaan, was about five, I introduced him to LEGO, but he didn't enjoy it initially. That got me thinking about ways to make it interesting. This led to Sunday Bricks in 2017. As both of us started building together, along with other kids, our collection grew to half a million pieces. I then started studying early education to understand how blocks can help kids," he tells us.

### Pro tips:

• **Explore interests:** LEGO has multiple verticals; explore your passion.

• **Organise:** Keep your pieces in plastic containers instead of the boxes they come in to avoid termites.

• **Note for parents:** There's a lot that children can learn from LEGO; giving them the option to explore is important.

**'LEGO or building block help children with fine motor skills, and a sense of balance'**

Mrunal Shah



## Ready to play?

As part of its 90th anniversary celebrations, the toymaker has created a LEGO Playground in different cities, including one in Mumbai. Head to this suburban mall to explore a mini-figure hall of fame, a speed champions arena, new exciting sets, goodies and more.

**TILL** August 21; 12 pm to 8 pm  
**AT** R CITY Mall, Ghatkopar.

By Sukanya Datta

# Let's do the Samba

A weekend pop-up promises to bring the flavours and vibrant character of Brazilian food and culture to Khar

**SHRIRAM IYENGAR**  
shriram.iyengar@mid-day.com

FOR someone who grew up in the 2000s, Brazil represented the samba flair of o jogo bonito (football, the beautiful game) for this writer. Yet, the country carries within it a dense intermingling of culture, cuisine and language, beyond football. Aparna Bhat, founder of Traveling Thali, seeks to explore those multiple facets of the country at her weekend pop-up

on Sunday.

"The idea of these immersions is to expose people to cultures that they are not familiar with and enhance their curiosity in them," Bhat, who has been conducting similar events over the last two years, tells us. With a three-course menu and drinks, followed by a session on Brazilian-Portuguese language and a session by Capoeira Academy India, the event promises a holistic approach.



There are a number of similarities between Indian and Brazilian cuisine and languages. "This is because the Brazilian culture is a mix of indigenous, Portuguese and African influences. A lot of dishes and ingredients trace their roots to Africa and Asia," Bhat says. An example, she says, is the Brazilian dessert of cocada, which finds its parallel in the Goan dessert of kokad — a dessert prepared with fine semolina and coconut. "Bhindi [lady finger] is also commonly used in their cuisine," she remarks. Dishes on display will include pao de queijo — gluten-free Brazilian cheese bread; cassava fries with chimichurri and acarajé com vatapá that traces its roots to Africa.



Kaushal Karkhanis; Aparna Bhat



(Clockwise from left) A capoeira session; cassava fries with chimichurri; cocada; (inset) acarajé com vatapá



into Brazil without having to visit, because not everyone can travel all the way to Brazil," she reasons.

**ON** August 21; 11.30 am onwards  
**AT** Mangal Mitra, 16th Road, opposite BPM High School, Khar West. **LOG ON TO** @thetravelingthali **CALL** 9833929724 **COST** ₹1,500

For the session, Bhat is teaming up with fellow traveller, Kaushal Karkhanis. "Kaushal and I approach it from different angles," she explains, adding that Karkhanis brings his travel experience to match Bhat's ongoing language studies in Brazilian-Portuguese.

"The objective is to immerse