

For Immediate Release



October 6, 2021

**“Battery-powered PLARAIL” for toddlers from 1.5 years old is coming!**

**“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL” Series**

**“Colorful Express Train Set” and “Thomas & Friends™ Set”**

**To be launched on Thursday, October 21, 2021**

Basic play of PLARAIL made simple and easy. Moms, dads and children are all excited!

TOMY Company, Ltd.

TOMY Company, Ltd. (Representative Director, President & COO: Kazuhiro Kojima, headquarters: Katsushika-ku, Tokyo) will roll out **“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL”** series battery-powered PLARAIL for toddlers from 1.5 years old as a new series for “PLARAIL” railroad toys. The first products of the series include **“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL Colorful Express Train Set”** and **“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL Thomas & Friends Set”** (SRP: JPY 5,500 each/tax included), to be released on Thursday, October 21, 2021, at toy stores, toy sections of department stores and mass retailers in Japan, online stores, specialty stores for PLARAIL products “PLARAIL Shops,” and TOMY Company’s official online store “Takara Tomy Mall” ([takaratomymall.jp](http://takaratomymall.jp)), etc.



“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL Colorful Express Train Set”



“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL Thomas & Friends Set”

This series was **developed with the concept that children can enjoy PLARAIL’s basic play of “letting a battery-powered electric train run on rails” for toddlers from 1.5 years old** with a set that includes rails already attached to a cloth map and a train.

Normal battery-powered electric PLARAIL trains are intended for children aged 3 years and up. **These are the only products that are battery-powered and run on rails designed for toddlers from 1.5 years old in the current lineup** (\*1).

As a toy designed for toddlers from the age of 1.5, cloth rails are already sewn on cloth maps in this series, so there is no need to assemble the rails. The connecting part of the cars uses a Velcro fastener, so they can be connected with one touch. And since you can let the battery-powered train run just by placing the wheels so they straddle the rails without particular attention to the groove on the rails, even small toddlers who have never played with PLARAIL can easily enjoy the simple play of letting a battery-powered train run on rails. Also, when they finish playing, the map can be folded

easily.

For children who are beginners with PLARAIL, connecting cars, assembling the rails, and correctly placing the train on the rails were major hurdles in becoming accustomed with PLARAIL play. In addition, feedback from many guardians of the children was that it was difficult or appeared difficult to assemble the rails for their children.

The “Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL” series eliminates the difficulty felt by PLARAIL beginners, expands the target age group, and minimizes the need for help from guardians while maintaining the fun of playing with PLARAIL, aiming at creating a product that allows more children to play independently on their initiative.

\*1 PLARAIL dedicated for playing by rolling by hand for target age of 1.5 years or older.



“First train toy! First PLARAIL” released in December 2018

When you roll it by hand, the train body sways while running, and the beads inside the body roll around and make a sound. It can only be played by rolling by hand and is not battery-powered. (discontinued)

Left image: Going out 923 Doctor Yellow, right image: Going out Thomas

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### <Features of the Product>

#### (1) **By simplifying PLARAIL play, help needed from guardians is minimized.** **Battery-powered PLARAIL that can be enjoyed from 1.5 years old**

##### • No need to assemble rails

For children playing with PLARAIL for the first time, the hurdle of assembling rails has been eliminated with a cloth map that does not require rail assembly. Cloth rails have been sewn on the map, so just spread it out on a flat surface and you're ready to go. Also, when finishing the play, the map can be folded easily. Children can quickly tidy up the room on their own.



“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL”  
Cloth map on which cloth rails are pre-sewn

##### <Differences in specifications between this product and normal PLARAIL>



When playing with normal PLARAIL, you connect rails and create a layout

##### • Easy to place on the rails

The rails sewn on the map are made of cloth. Place the car so that its wheels straddle the rail. With the normal plastic rails, the wheels have to fit precisely into the grooves, but this product doesn't require that, so even small children can easily place the train on the rails.



“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL”  
Rails pre-sewn on the map



Normal PLARAIL.  
There are grooves for the car wheels in the rails.

##### • Easy-to-handle connector part

Since Velcro fastener is used for the connector part of the cars, you can easily connect cars simply by pressing one part to the other. (Many PLARAIL connector parts use ring and hook parts)



“Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL”  
Connector part (Velcro fastener)



Connector part for normal PLARAIL cars.  
Ring and hook connector parts are used.

• Starts and stops with a single press

Press the button on top of the train to start (or stop). The large buttons are easy to press, so even smaller children can easily operate the train. The train can be run not only by battery power but also by rolling it by hand.



Switch for "Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL"



Normal PLARAIL ON/OFF switch

**(2) Since it is also designed to be played with normal PLARAIL cars, children can step up and play with it for a long time**

Push and GO cars can also be run on normal plastic rails (\*2). In addition, the illustration of the blue rails on the outer circumference of the cloth rails is drawn at the same scale as normal plastic rails, and once children get used to play, they can install normal blue plastic rails (sold separately) on the outer course for play. By using this product together with normal PLARAIL, they can step up and play it for a long time. (Normal PLARAIL is for ages 3 and up.) \*2 There are some rails which are not compatible.



▼ Comment of Toshiyuki Shiomi, Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo who supervised the product development

This product is made so that even toddlers of 1.5 years old can easily have fun with PLARAIL. Children have various interests in the movement of trains, colors and shapes, rails, etc., but the excitement they feel when they can connect cars or let battery-powered cars run on the rails is shared by all. That satisfaction fosters self-confidence, which leads to the development of children's desire to take on challenges and the ability to think things out.

**<Product Outline>**

Product Name: "Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL Colorful Express Train Set"

"Push and GO! Easy-to-Play First PLARAIL Thomas & Friends Set"

SRP: JPY 5,500 (tax included)

Launch Date in Japan: Thursday, October 21, 2021

Recommended Age: 1.5 years and up

Package Contents: Colorful Express Train Set . . . Front motor car (1), passenger cars (2), cloth rail map (1), dolls (2)  
Thomas & Friends Set . . . Thomas the Tank Engine motor car (1), freight cars (2), cloth rail map (1)

Batteries Required: Uses 1 AA battery (batteries are sold separately)

Sales Channels: Toy stores, toy sections of department stores/mass retailers in Japan, the specialty store for PLARAIL products "PLARAIL Shops," online stores, TOMY Company's official online store "Takara Tomy Mall" ([takaratomymall.jp](http://takaratomymall.jp)), etc.

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Official Website: [www.takaratomy.co.jp/products/plarail/tettei/set/pushdego](http://www.takaratomy.co.jp/products/plarail/tettei/set/pushdego)

Introduction Video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZBvXP2opUc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZBvXP2opUc)

Sales Target: 20,000 units (in a total of 2 types)

**[What is PLARAIL?]**

“PLARAIL” (Sales agent: TOMY Company) is a long-running series of railroad toys that marked its 60th anniversary of the sales launch in 2019. It is a brand loved across three generations. The prototype of “PLARAIL” is the “PLASTIC TRAIN AND RAIL SET” which was launched in 1959 as a toy made from plastic, a new material at that time when metal and wood-made toys were the mainstream.

The iconic blue rails were designed in a size allowing it to be played on the “chabudai” (a low, Japanese-style dining table), which families gathered around to have a pleasant time back then. This specification remains unchanged even 60 years after its sales launch and you can still enjoy playing by connecting the rails made at that time with the newest ones.

We will continue to develop PLARAIL as a brand that will teach children about their society, enhance their growth including creativity, and nurture communication of children and their parents under the familiar and attracting theme of “railway.” Up to present, a total of approximately 1,800 types and more than 177 million products have been sold in Japan (as of March 31, 2021).

**[About “Thomas & Friends”]**

Thomas & Friends™ is the name of the television series which is extremely popular among preschool children, celebrating the 75th anniversary of publishing of the original book in 2020. After appearing in The Railway Series created by The Rev W Awdry, Thomas became a popular character. Afterwards, the series was made into a TV series in 1984 by Britt Allcroft, a British TV producer. To date, it has more than 500 episodes and is aired in more than 230 regions and 67 languages around the world. In Japan, its history dates back more than 45 years since the publishing of the children’s books, and more than 30 years since the first airing of the TV series. The TV series is currently aired weekly on Sundays on NHK Educational TV. Furthermore, related products are developed across many touch points including diverse events, theme parks, and films, in addition to products such as toys, children’s books, and apparel products.

Official Website: “Thomas & Friends Channel” [www.thomasandfriends.jp/](http://www.thomasandfriends.jp/)

**[Inquiries on “Thomas & Friends”]**

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