

HOW do you collect Dinky Toys? Do you simply buy haphazardly as new models come on to the market, or do you specialise in collecting certain models? For example, some collectors specialise in obtaining sports cars, others buy only military vehicles, while some enthusiasts select models which are sensible additions to a model railway layout.

Dinky Toy collecting can be a serious business and very enjoyable if you decide to build 'theme' collections. However, before you decide to embark on series or theme collecting, much careful thought must be given to the matter before you actually start buying. It is not advisable to draw out all your pocket-money and go charging down to the nearest model shop to buy everything in sight. If you did this, you would soon be in financial difficulties. There are more than 150 models in the current Dinky range, varying in price from 3s. 0d. to almost 30s. 0d., which will give you some idea of how much

Theme collecting of Dinky interesting hobby! Here's

CLASSIFY

by Chris Jelley



The 'public service' group includes, not only buses, but anything that performs a public service. Here we have No. 978 Refuse Wagon, No. 292 Atlantean Bus and No. 289 Routemaster London Bus.

it would cost. It is far better to begin slowly, but sensibly and gradually build up your collection.

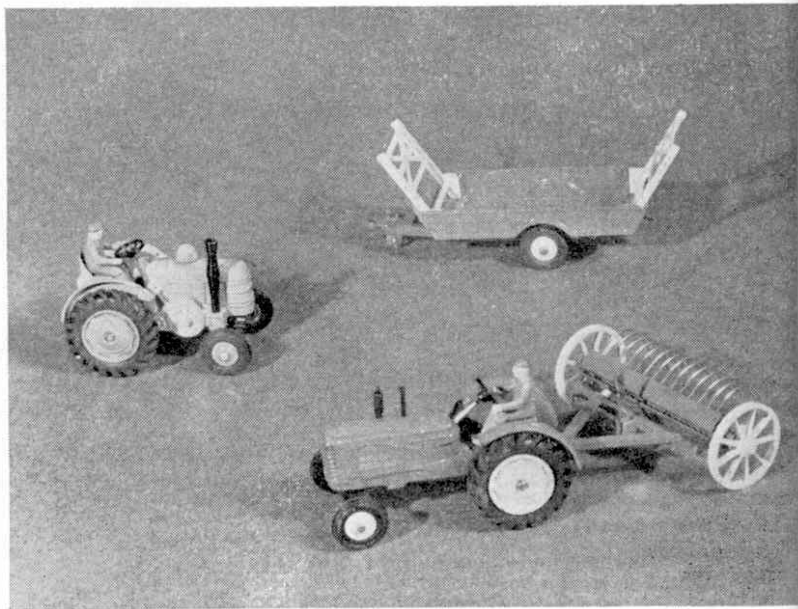
Distinct Groups and Subdivisions

A study of a Dinky Toy catalogue, which your local dealer will be pleased to supply, will show that models fall into as many as ten distinct groups: saloon cars, sports cars, racing cars, commercial vehicles, army equipment, farm equipment, public service vehicles, emergency services, aircraft and engineering site equipment. At least one of these groups, the emergency services, can be sub-divided into police, ambulance and fire service vehicles and there are several other models which do not come under any heading. For the sake of argument we will gather these under 'miscellaneous', incidentally, in 'public service', I not only include buses, but also such items as refuse wagons.

I cannot, of course, list every model in every group. In any case, it is not necessary, as the majority of models automatically fall into their respective sections, but there are a few that might cause confusion. The Standard Atlas Kenebrake, No. 295, is one example. Is this a commercial or a public service vehicle? It could be either. Again, what about the Foden Dump Truck? Would this come under 'public service', having a bulldozer blade, or under 'engineering site'? The A.A. Mini Van is another, 'public service' or 'commercial'?

These three examples alone, show that the hobby is not all plain sailing. A good deal of thought can be involved.

Of all the groups, the hardest to define is 'miscellaneous'.



Country collectors often try for farm machinery. Shown here are No. 320 Halesowen Harvester Trailer, No. 301 Field Marshal Tractor, and No. 300 Massey-Ferguson Tractor with a Hayrake No. 324.

In many cases, the only way of placing a replica in this category is by first ruling out all the others. Obvious candidates, however, would be television equipment and 'oldies' such as the Model T Ford. If enough of the latter 'veteran' type are produced in the future, these could, of course, form a group of their own; but until then, I do not recommend isolating them.

Two further members would be No. 177 4-Berth Caravan and No. 796 Healey Sports Boat on Trailer, although most other possibilities rely on your own individual judgment, depending on the job for which you feel they are generally used. For instance, I am inclined to place the Universal Jeep, No. 405, in 'miscellaneous', yet you might prefer 'commercial'. In some instances, it is plainly a matter of opinion.

How to begin

Assuming you have decided to take up serious collecting, how would you go about starting? I have already pointed out the inadvisability of buying every model that comes along and have explained about the various different groups. The idea is to choose any single category—whichever appeals to you most—and concentrate on only collecting models in that range. It sounds easy, but don't be misled. Several factors must be taken into consideration.

Each group contains many individual Dinky Toys and it will not be possible to purchase them all at once. Consequently, you must first decide whether it is better to try for a few of the more expensive ones, or many of the cheaper ones.

Toys can provide a very how to form your collection

YOUR DINKIES



Examples from the 'army' section: from the back, No. 689 Medium Artillery Tractor, No. 693 7.2" Howitzer, No. 686 25-pounder Field Gun, No. 687 Trailer for 25-pounder Field Gun, No. 688 Field Artillery Tractor, No. 670 Armoured Car.

You must also remember that the range of available models does not remain unaltered for long. New miniatures are constantly being introduced and old ones withdrawn. Try to get those that you think might quickly disappear from the market because, once a Dinky has been withdrawn, there is little chance of it being re-introduced.

You might ask how you are expected to know which models are likely to be withdrawn. A fair question, but there is a way that, while not being 100 per cent successful, acts as a very good pointer. Production of Dinkies usually ends for one of two reasons: either the real-life vehicle becomes so obsolete as to make continued manufacture of a die-cast reproduction impracticable, or the tools used in manufacture wear out.

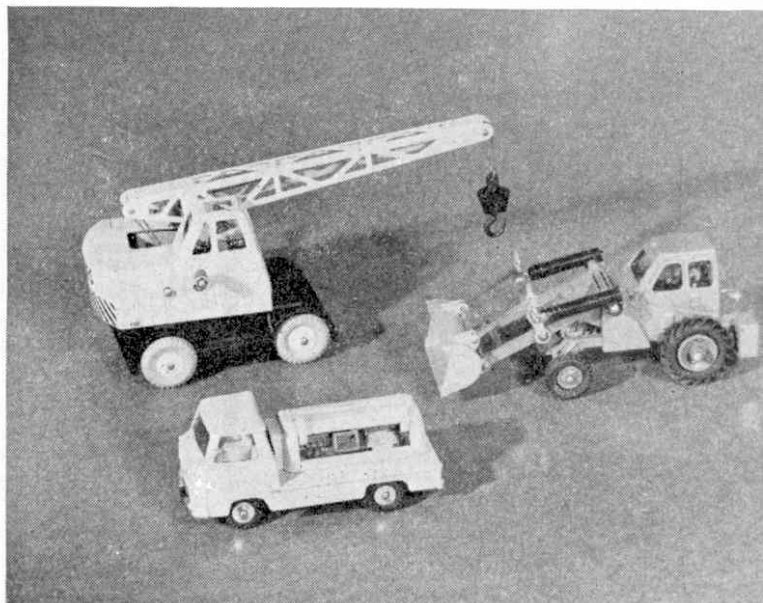
This means that you need to keep an eye on the full-size motoring world to find out what is happening, while at the same time studying the current miniature range. Naturally, the tools for those models which have been in production longest stand most chance of wearing out first. I therefore suggest that these be given priority.

Increased difficulty

Even if you manage to acquire all current replicas in the chosen group, you cannot sit back and relax, for it is then that the hobby become more difficult. The reason? The only way to add to your collection is to go for obsolete models and it is no easy job. As soon as a Dinky Toy is withdrawn, collectors everywhere snap up the last models remaining in the

shops, with the result that it virtually disappears from the market. This is when collecting becomes really interesting. You must search out obscure little shops, where you might find a forgotten 'gem' in old stock. But, most important of all, you should enter the second-hand market; search the classified advertisement section of magazines; contact other collectors; arrange exchanges and always be on the look-out for a chance to buy what you need. The classified section of the 'M.M.' is of enormous help in all these matters.

If you are successful in completing, as far as possible, your particular group, you can branch out by moving on to another category. The same suggested rules, of course, still apply and you have the additional interest of watching for new releases falling into the first section. Having finished group No. 2, you can try a further group, then another and so on, until all types are covered.



Engineering site machinery has a special appeal to many collectors. This picture shows No. 971 Coles Mobile Crane, No. 437 Muir-Hill 2-WL Loader and No. 436 Atlas Copco Compressor Lorry.

There are many sorts of collectors operating today, but Dinky Toy collectors have a distinct advantage over most of them—they are able to use their collections in all kinds of different ways to increase the pleasure which can be had from the models. With your own collection, for example, you can take a piece of hardboard, paint roads on it, add houses, trees, hills and other scenery and end up with a really good layout.

Photograph your collection

Or, if you are interested in photography, you could take table-top pictures of various models in realistic scenes such as have often appeared in these pages in the past. I, myself, am always interested to see good table-top photographs and am pleased to publish them here, if the opportunity arises. There is no doubt about it—collecting Dinky Toys can be fun!

Before signing off, I must explain why I have departed from my usual practice of describing the month's new Dinky Toys and the actual cars on which they are based. It is not, as might be thought, that we have no new models for March, a glance at the advertisement pages will show that two are scheduled for release, but simply that, at the time of writing, I do not have enough material and photographs on hand to give you all the customary information. Rather than skimp my job, therefore, I felt it would be better to wait, and report all the facts and figures next month. Besides, it has given me the opportunity to cover a subject which, I am sure, is of interest to many readers.