

As 'Woolworths' turns 100, Woolworths.co.uk celebrates the most popular British toys of the past 100 years

Iconic brand commemorates its centenary with a look at the most popular toys from 1909-2009

This November marks the 100th birthday of Woolworths, the British brand at the heart of so many high streets and which was re-launched this summer as Woolworths.co.uk.

Woolworths opened its first ever store in Liverpool in 1909 and instantly became one of the UK's number one choices for toys. Although the last high street store closed its doors at the start of the year, the brand lives on at Woolworths.co.uk. The new online Woolies features over half a million products; including hundreds of thousands of toys, games, party and nursery items for children of all ages. Everything featured on the site has been selected with the help of a million UK families who told the brand what they wanted to see brought back.

To celebrate 100 years of the Woolworths brand, Woolworths.co.uk is looking back at the most popular toys of the past century, highlighting just how much has changed since Frank Woolworth first set up shop. Whilst some of the toys from years gone by remain popular, today's children are most likely to be playing with toys inspired by TV or film – such as Star Wars, Transformers, Peppa Pig, In The Night Garden and X Factor.

100 online toy bargains to celebrate 100 years

To mark the occasion, Woolworths.co.uk has selected 100 of today's children's most popular toys and is offering them at a 25% discount. Offers are available on many popular brands including Star Wars, Disney Princess, In the Night Garden, Peppa Pig, Vtech and Playskool*. The offers are live throughout Woolworths birthday week (from 2nd November until Monday 9th November.)

Free Pic n' Mix with every order on the 5th November

Woolworths.co.uk is also giving a free bag of Pic n' Mix to every customer placing an order on the 5th November.**

Here is a look at the top British toys from every decade sold at Woolworths over the past century***:

1909



Kewpie Doll

Kewpie dolls and figurines were one of the most popular toys of the early 1900's and were based on comic strip-like illustrations that appeared in Ladies' Home Journal. The Kewpie dolls were sold in FW Woolworths and started the huge demand for dolls in the UK toy market. Dolls are still one of the most popular toys sought after by young girls today.

1919



The Hornby Train

The Hornby Train was a model train made by Meccano and was based in Liverpool, the same town where Woolworths first made its name. The Hornby brand went onto to be a huge success with families worldwide.

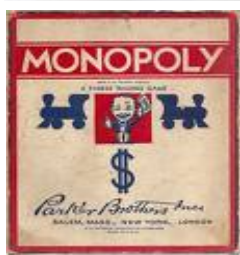
1929



Duncan Yo-Yo

US entrepreneur Donald Duncan can be credited with making the Yo-yo one of the most popular toys of the 20's. The Yo-yo has continued to be enjoyed by both children and adults alike long into the 21st century.

1939



Monopoly

Monopoly, the famous board game was patented in the 1930's and is one of the most commercially-successful board games in history with 485 million players worldwide. It continues to be a hugely popular game played by families everywhere.

1949



Lego bricks

Lego bricks were first introduced to the toy market in the late 1940's. The 'Automatic Binding Bricks', a forerunner of the LEGO bricks we know today were first introduced in four colours.

1959



Barbie Doll

Barbie was first introduced in 1959 as a teenage fashion doll and in its first year of production alone sold over 350,000 Barbie dolls. More than 40 years later, Barbie continues to be one of the most popular toys available as she has changed to reflect the times.

1969



James Bond Aston Martin toy car

This model Aston Martin DB5 car, was launched by Corgi just before release of the James Bond film Thunderball in December 1965 and was hugely popular in this decade.

The Aston Martin DB5 became one of the most famous cars in the world and the Corgi version became their most popular product with over seven million sold world wide.

1979



Trivial Pursuit

Trivial Pursuit was developed in the late 1970's and became an instant hit sensation with UK families. Its success was based on the development of worldwide pop culture and the game still remains an after dinner favorite today.

1989



Rubix cube

As of January 2009, 350 million cubes have sold worldwide making it the World's top-selling puzzle game. It is also widely considered to be the World's best selling toy ever.

1999



Pokemon trading cards

The Pokémon Trading Card Game was a collectible card game based on the Pokémon video game series and was a huge hit in the UK toy market in the late 1990's. Upon its release Pokémon immediately became one of the most sought after card games in history.

2009



X Factor Karaoke Machine

This X Factor Karaoke party gift set for girls and boys is Woolies' most popular selling toy so far this year. Complete with illuminated mirror ball, karaoke machine, two microphones and CD twin pack with 30 tracks its top selling status demonstrates how much TV brands and programmes dictate the toy market in the current day.

Matthew Jacques, head of brand at Woolworths.co.uk, comments:

"Toys are a huge part of Woolworths heritage and as the brand approaches its 100th birthday, they continue to be one of our key offerings. With our online shop, we are able to stock hundreds more than ever before, including all the major brands that families love."

Steve Fulford from Toys Of Yesteryear Museum comments:

"Woolworths has been closely associated with toys in the UK for as long as I can remember, families across the country must be breathing a sigh of relief that it is back! The most popular toys have changed hugely since the beginning of the 20th century when it was less about noisy interactive games and more about games with which children could entertain themselves quietly. However, the ongoing popularity of toys which can be played by all the family show that the classics are still a huge hit, with board games, Yo-yo's, dolls and brain games such as the Rubix cube as successful as ever".

Woolworths.co.uk

Woolies has always been known as one of the UK's most popular toy retailers, retaining its position as Britain's third biggest in recent years. In addition to being one of the leading online providers of toys, Woolworths.co.uk continues to be a one stop shop for everything British families could need, stocking Ladybird clothing, kids' school uniforms, family entertainment items, outdoor games, outdoor lifestyle essentials, toys, nursery items, books, dvd's, blu-ray, technology, party purchases and music.

*For a full list of all 100 items featured in the 25% off Toys offer , please contact Golden Goose PR on 0207 376 0070 Woolworths.co.uk@goldengoosepr.com

Shopping and delivery

It is simple and easy to fill each 'virtual basket' and proceed to check out at Woolworths.co.uk. Orders made by 4pm will be next day delivery for most of the stocked items. For bigger items,

customers will receive a call to arrange a convenient delivery date. Standard next day delivery cost is £3.95, bigger items will cost £5.95.

**One Pic n' Mix bag containing 2 x 100g sweet selections is available for all customers. Customers ordering from the Woolworths Party shop will receive their free bag of Pic n'Mix with their order. Customers ordering from the Main shop or Entertainment shop will be sent their Pic n'Mix separately.

Further information

To request high res visuals or to request any further information about Woolworths.co.uk, please contact Katie Hancock, Laura Wood or Miki Haines-Sanger at Golden Goose PR on 0207 376 0070 Woolworths.co.uk@goldengoosepr.com.

***Information on toys from the past 100 years comes from the Toy Retailers Association (www.toyretailersassociation.co.uk). More details on Toys Of Yesterday can be found at <http://www.toysofyesteryear.co.uk/>