

Marc contacted me earlier this month and asked if I would be interested in reviewing Stikfas, which he now stocks in the [how to store](#) . I agreed and he sent me the "Omega Male, Armored Night with Stallion", one of the deluxe kits. A few days later it arrived in the mail.

First Impressions

When I opened the kit I was a bit surprised at the size, I guess it's because I'm accustomed to LEGO figures. The first thing you have to do when you pull it out of the box is cut it out of the form, I would twist the pieces out and I found that fingernail clippers were really good for cutting of the remaining jagged edges where it had been connected. This took me about 20 to 30 minutes because it included 7 forms for the man, horse and all the accessories. They give you instructions for the basic man and the horse, but they don't tell you how to put the armor on, and at first it was a bit overwhelming but as I figured it out I began to get a glimpse of the massive level of customization. Most joints have little engraved letters on them to tell you if they are for the right or left side the figure. One of the things I really liked was that if the arm/leg/chest had a little socket for putting armor or weapons on it, there was a replacement that did not have a socket, you if you want your knight unarmored he won't have 8 square holes in him. The horse however, does not have these replacements. I spent the rest of that day just playing with different combinations and accessories, it was very fun. If you already have a basic Stikfa with no accessories you will be glad to know that all of the non basic sets have enough stuff to equip at least 2 (if not more) figures!



Further modification

One of the cool things about getting a kit that had 1 human figure and 1 nonhuman figure was

combining all the pieces together and getting some really weird creatures. I managed to create this Minotaur creature, except instead of a bull head it had a horse head. I imagine that combining addition kits will greatly increase the amount of creatures you can make. Customization does not just stop at replacing parts; I have seen some really cool modifications at the [Stikfas forums](#), from simple paint jobs to complex creature recreations.

Animation

Along with the kit itself Marc also sent me 6 of his [3mm tie down magnets](#). I was having a bit of trouble getting these into the feet and I accidentally managed to stick one magnet a bit too deep into one of the horse's feet, I then found the easy way to put them in, take a piece of metal and stick the magnet to it, then press the foot over it until the magnet is in, there is no way you can push it in too far if you do this. The magnets work great on a metal surface, but when your character is loaded down with gear some of the extreme poses that the character is holding can sag. If you plan to animate on top of a non-magnetic surface you will most likely have to resort to the use of sticky poster tack, which you should have on hand anyway just for unexpected needs. As it was, the joints in the horse would not have been strong enough to animate if the knight had been sitting atop it, also because the knight has magnets in his feet holes it would be difficult to stick him in the saddle (this is where sticky tack would come in handy). You should be able to firm up joints by painting them with enamel paint. But quite frankly the idea of animating a knight on horseback was a bit scary to me so I decided to use [CompositeLab Pro](#) to make a short film where my Minotaur battled my knight, the reason I needed to use a green screen was because you can't build both Minotaur and knight at the same time so I had to cheat. When you animate with a Stikfa decked out with accessories make sure they are real solid and won't slide around while you animate with it, a gauntlet on my knight's left hand was really loose and I had to be careful so that it would not slide around on the wrist, you should be able to use sticky tack or even Elmer's Glue to fix this.

The human figure had a huge range of motion and was very easy to strike epic poses and get some great pantomime into it. The horse however was not quite as flexible, the knee of the rear leg had a very limited range of motion, and these are the legs I used on the Minotaur, so it is quite possible to animate them, but not nearly as easy as the horse's front legs or the human legs. All of the weapons that came in the kit had a square on them which could be inserted into square holes on the back of the armor and on a utility belt. I thought it would be difficult to take a weapon out of one of these brackets in animation because how well they are attached, however I was wrong and found it easy to make my puppet remove a sword from its back.

LEGO Compatibility

Before uploaded this review I ran a movie I made with my STIKFAS by some [Brickfilmers](#) and ask them what they thought about it. They brought up a few things I did not think about. One question was, do they have holes in the bottom of there feet that work with LEGOs? The answer is no, they do not, however if you take a 3/16 inch drill you can drill a LEGO computable hole in the foot, just don't drill it over the square hole so you can keep your tie-down options open.



The other question asked was do STIKFAS hands work with LEGO equipment? And yes they do, any swords, shields, flagpoles, and whatever that you got with your LEGO sets can be used by STIKFAS, stikfa weapons, however are just a bit loose in LEGO hands, you could fix this with sticky tack though.

Overview

I would defiantly classify STIKFAS as animation friendly toys. If you tried claymation and found it to be hard or have done LEGO animation and find it limiting then Stikfas are for you. They are also a cheep and simple way to start for people who have not tried any kind of stop motion at all. It was nice change of pace for me to do something much quicker then my clay project. Before I reviewed this toy I made a short animation, because it is my firm belief that the best way to test stuff for animation is to animate with it. I made this short film Arena in two days and it turned out great, to speed things up I shot without frame grabbers so with a bit more time and a little better set up the animation could have been even better! I can recommend Stikfas to anyone that is looking for a semi complex yet cheep stop motion character.

Download Arena

STIKFAS Toy Review by Chris Boyer

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Sunday, 23 May 2010 13:19 - Last Updated Monday, 16 May 2011 06:11



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