

Pokémon fights Barbie for hot toy spot

The last buying splurge of the century looks set to become the Year of the Pokémon as pocket monster trading cards, video games, television series and feature films turn simple cartoon characters into a global craze worth £3.7 billion. Millennium Princess Barbie is a top seller for girls aged 9-12 and Alien Egg is the fastest growing craze among pre-teen boys



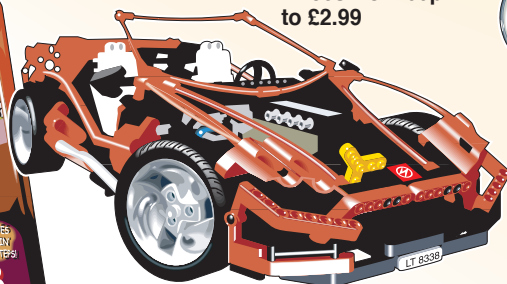
Pokémon: Playground craze with cards from £7:25 to Red and Blue cartridges for Nintendo Gameboy costing £25

Turbo-Z: Range of pre-programmed motorized cars. From £10 to £40

Movie tie-ins: Buy almost anything from *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace*. From £2.99

Alien Eggs: Combine the appeal of space travel with the fascination of goo. Each plastic pod contains "foetus" of space invader in sticky, jelly-like substance – gross! Prices from 99p to £2.99

WWF: Taking over from Action Man, wrestling characters from the TV show that actually sweat – eeeecchhh! Range from £5 to £30. Maximum Sweat: £10.99



Lego: Choose from *Primo* for new-borns, *Technics* for eight-year-olds and *Mindstorms* – Lego with a brain, sensors, motors and gears – for rich geeks. £2.99 to £165

DreamCast: Sega's Internet-ready playstation – with a data rate twice that of its nearest competitor, and higher-res action. Price £199.99, games from £39.99



Finger skateboards: Complete with mini-toolkit and changeable wheels. £2.99 to £6.99

The Stone: Cult web game – wear the stone and play the game. Somewhere on the Internet someone has the only stone that matches yours. £14.99

Barbie: From £4 for a simple doll, £17 for a Generation Girl and £35 for Millennium Princess

Bob the Builder: Loveable gang of building characters for pre-school boys and girls. Range costs £5.99 to £18

