

MCS DATABASE 2010: Intro; notes; abbreviations

GENERAL

The Database parameters are those thought to be most useful, and they have been taken from MCS, OSN, and other sources. Where possible dimensions have been checked by actual measurements, but even then it should be remembered that they have often come from a single sample. Variations may occur from wear, manufacturing tolerances, or changes deliberately made by the manufacturer at different times.

The basic sort is alphabetical, with COMMENTS opposite each entry that contain additional information, and notes that may help to bring the system to mind.

In order to get all the information across one page opening, many abbreviations (codes) have been used. These, which sometimes vary from column to column, are shown in lettered groups on the rear cover. Where abbreviations are used in a column, the appropriate group letter is shown at the head of the column. The only exceptions to this are the narrow columns that separate the main columns. They are normally empty but sometimes house the abbreviations given in Codes A - these have the same meaning in all the 'narrow' columns, and they always relate to the entry on their immediate left.

Except in the DATES column one or more hyphens (-- for example) indicate that the feature doesn't exist in that system. Blank spaces show where data are lacking.

Part 2 contains sorts by Country and TYPE (see below) but with a reduced number of parameters and without the COMMENTS. It also lists all the Reference Codes (see REF below) arranged in alphabetical order, and the brand names used for sets which are covered under POLYLONG in Part 1.

NOTES ON THE COLUMNS

REF (Reference Codes) These are used mainly to help in moving from one page to the opposite one, but also sometimes to save space in the COMMENTS.

NAME The names of the systems generally follow MCS practice except that Cyrillics have been transliterated. MCS is not entirely consistent in that sometimes the maker's name is given followed by the name of the system, and sometimes one or other is used on its own. Partly because of this some cross-referencing has been included, particularly where there are differences between the names in the /NZ & /FB versions of MCS. MCS names that are not used are still included but with no details, and the new Name is shown in the Comments column. Where different names have been used for one system, in different markets for example, or in the same market for bilingual sets, all the names that are known are listed, but the full details may only be included once, with cross-references to & from the alternative names.

Mfr (Manufacturer) This column needs completing but the intention is to give the manufacturer if more than one system has come from the same maker, or, in some cases, where a system has been made by more than one company. Codes used so far are at 'B'.

TYPE (of System) Each type of system is allocated a two-letter codes from List 'C', using the priorities given in OSN 4/72. A second code can be used to allow cross-referencing, but so far this has only been employed to a limited extent.

CY (Country) 'D' Codes. This is the country of the company that made the system itself or who had it made for it, unless the name was changed for a specific market. Thus STEEL TEC was made in China but is listed under U.S.A. because the parent company, REMCO, is American; and BUILD-X, though the parts were MERKUR, is Canadian because the name was used only in Canada.

-DATES- (Manufactured From---To) The Years are shown by their last two digits, spaced apart by 3 hyphens. They are followed by any necessary qualifying Codes ('E'), which for the start year supplant one or more of the hyphens. To avoid confusion, 20th century years through 1910 are in italics. End dates in particular are often uncertain because products were in the shops well after production ceased.

Matl (Material) This shows (Codes 'F') the main materials from which systems are made; brassware or a few plastic parts are not noted.

THREAD This column is the thread of the Nuts & Bolts. Common abbreviations are used rather than Codes, and examples are shown at 'G'.

BS (Boss) - THREAD Codes for the types of boss are given at 'H' The threads used in tapped holes in bosses are again at 'G'.

DP (Diametral Pitch) The value given, to nearest integer, is for straight gears. The corresponding value of the Module is usually given under COMMENTS if it looks as if it was the original parameter.

Parts (No of different parts in a system) Tools are counted, except special tools in DIY sets, but not literature. Where a system existed over a long period of time, all different parts are included in the entry, even if they were not all current together.

Pitch (Hole pitch) Given in mm, see Codes 'I'.

dST, dBS, DAXL dST is the i/d of holes in Strips or the nearest part if a Strip wasn't available to be measured. dBS is the diameter of the bore of bosses, but is not given for 'eyelet' bosses unless the internal diameter is inappropriate to the size of the Axle. DAXL is the o/d of Axle Rods. All values are in mm with normally 1 decimal place. Integer numbers denote poorer information, sources often give nominal sizes. 'm' after any of these values, & after the hole Pitch, indicates that the total variation found was more than 0.1mm, and a mean value has been given. (dBS & DAXL were often quoted to 2 decimal places in earlier editions of this Database, but the variations often found, & the difficulty of measuring bores accurately, did not justify continuing such precision)

A 't' in the narrow column after DAXL indicates the use of Threaded Rods (or Bolts) as axles in the system, with, unless otherwise noted under COMMENTS, the same thread as the N&B. (In Part 2 the 't's' are on the right side of the TYPE column.)

NB N is the shape of the Nut, B that of the Bolt head - see 'J' Codes.

MF M and F are the material and finish of the Nut and Bolt, as given by Codes 'F'.

A/F The size of the nut across flats in mm, see Codes 'K'.

DHD The diameter of bolt head in mm (or A/F for hexagonal heads).

COMMENTS Most of the abbreviations used are in Codes 'L.' Some others from Codes A-K also occur and their meaning should be obvious from the context.

MORE INFORMATION PLEASE

There are many gaps in the Database & if you have any information on any of them, or spot any errors, please let me know. Equally suggestions for improvements in the layout, & any other comments, will be welcome.

Codes 'A' (for narrow columns after each entry)

* means see note under COMMENTS on the right-hand page. With more than one * on a line, the notes are in order.

? some significant doubt
+ more than

a approximately
e estimated

k known
m mean

p probably
t Screwed Rods or Bolts are used as axles (only after DAXL).

w hole pitch, only for holes in wheels or discs, e.g. in some DIY systems.
x multiples of value shown, including half.

Codes 'B' (Makers)

AK August Kirchoff

BM British Metal

BR Braglia

BU Butcher

CK Construction

(later Eitech)

EP Epoch Co.

FA FALT

FL Fleischmann

GB Gabriel Erector

GE Gédé

GT Gilbert Erector

HU Hustler Toy Co.

HW Hans Wunsch

ID Ideal Erector

JP Jouets de Paris

KM Keim & Co.

KO Kosmos

KR Krause & Co.

MA Märklin

MC Meccano

MD Martinaud

ME Merkur

MF Meccano-France

MK Markes & Co.

MR Mercator

MT Metalcraft

MU Meccano USA

PH Philips

PL Polylong

RI Richter

SK Stockmann

TE Temsi

TR Trix

WA Walther

WK Wilhelm Kraus

WS Wisdom

Codes 'C' (Types)

AR Certain Argentinean

AS Aerospace

BD Buildings

BX BAUFIX type

CH Certain Chinese

CK as CONSTRUCTION

CR Road vehicles

DK as DINKY BUILDER

DY DIY type

ER ERECTOR type

ES Electrical/science

HA Certain Hungarian

PR Professional type

LG Hole pitch >12.7mm

MA MÄRKLIN type

MB Matchbox & similar

MC MECCANO

ME MERKUR type

ML Very like Meccano

MM MC & MA features

MP Meccano principle but significant differences

NM Non-Meccano type

OO Not enough data to classify

PH PHILIPS type

RT Mainly Rods/Tubes

SM Hole pitch <12.7mm

ST STABIL type

TR as TRIX (inc MCX)

UK Certain UK

Codes 'D' (Country)

AL Australia

AR Argentina

AS Austria

BE Belgium

BS Belarus

BU Bulgaria

BZ Brazil

CA Canada

CL Chile

CN China

CO Colombia

CZ Czechoslovakia or Czech Republic

DE Denmark

ES Estonia

FI Finland

FR France

GE Germany (GD if made in GDR)

GR Greece

HK Hong Kong

HU Hungary

IC Iceland

IN India

IS Israel

IT Italy

KO Korea

JA Japan

ME Mexico

NE Netherlands

NO Norway

NZ New Zealand

PO Poland

RH Rhodesia

RO Romania

RS Russia

SA South Africa

SD Sweden

SL Slovenia

SP Spain

SW Switzerland

TA Taiwan

TY Turkey

UK UK

UN Ukraine

UR Uruguay

US USA

YU Yugoslavia

VE Venezuela

Codes 'E' (Dates)

Examples:

20a = after 1920

20b = before 1920

20c = circa 1920

20k = known in 1920

20l, 20m, 20e = late, mid, early 1920s

20s = 1920s

W1,2 = WW1,2

95+ = production in 1995, & continuing at that time as far as is known.

p or ? after any of the above, as in Codes A.

Codes 'F' (Material/Finish)

a [spare]

b buff

c rubber

d see end *

e grey

f [spare]

g green

h white

i [spare]

j cream

k black

l see end *

m see end *

n brown

o orange

p plastic

q card

r red

s silver

t stone

u blue

v various colours

w wood

x gold

y yellow

z transparent

A Aluminium (Alloy)

B Brass

C Copper

D Dull plated

E Grey metallic

F Steel

G Green metallic

H White metallic

I Iridescent

J Brown metallic

K Black metallic

L Metal

M Chrome plated

N Nickel plated

O Orange metallic

P Bright plated

Q Bright Zinc plated

R Red metallic

S Stainless steel

T Tin plated

U Blue metallic

V Various

W Cadmium

X Gold metallic

Y Yellow metallic

Z Zinc (Alloy)

* l, m, d preceding colour means light, medium, or dark. Eg. lr = light red.

Codes 'G' (Threads)

Examples:

6BA

1/8W = 1/8" BSW

8-32 = diameter code – tpi (as used in USA)

M4 = 4mm Ø coarse metric

4x.8 = dia x pitch(mm)

5/32x40 = dia" x tpi.

a after any = approx.

(for details of threads see OSN 7/169, 8/203, 16/459, 20/587, 21/618)

Codes 'H' (Bosses)

b separate threaded boss

c collet fixing

d double-tapped

e eyelet

k key fixing

o not tapped

p push fit

t tapped

s single-tapped

- no boss

Codes 'I' (Hole Pitch)

Lg, Sh, value not known but >, < 12.7mm.

Var variable.

w after: in Wheel or Disc.

Codes 'J' (N&B)

A cheese with slight taper &/or rounding.

B button

C cheese

D dome

F fillister

H hexagonal

K countersunk

M mush

P pan

R round

S square

T tapered cheese

V various

U truss

W wing

Lower case letters are used for crosshead Bolts; and underlined lower case for Bolts with a recess for a key, with or without a screwdriver slot.

Details of heads are given in OSN 20/585 & 21/618.

Codes 'K' (Nut size)

If exact size unknown:

L = large like MÄRKLIN

S = small like

MECCANO #37c

Codes (Comments)

AB Angle Bracket

abt about

A/C Aircraft

AG Angle Girder

al light alloy

ald instead of

alt alternate

brkt bracket(s)

bs boss(es)

btm bottom

c circa

cat catalogue(s)

cf compare with

CL centre line

cren crenellated

ctr centre(s)

d, dia, Ø diameter

DAS Double Angle Strip

diff different

d/t double tapped

e early, earlier

est estimated

exc excluding

fl(gd) flange(d)(s)

F/Pl(ate) Flanged Plate

fr from

h hole(s)

hd head(s)

id inside diameter

ill illustrat(ed)(ion)

inc including

k known

l, lg long(er), large(r)

lt light

man, man'l manual

mkd marked

ML MECCANO-like

od outside diameter

pat patent

perf perforated

p, pl, plas plastic

p-f push fit

pl plate(s)

P/Pl(ate) Perf. Plate

PL parts list

ply pulley(s)

PN part no.

poss possible

prob probably

pt part(s)

qqf sometimes

rd round(ed), road

SAS Single Angle Strip

sf except

sim similar

sl slight(ly)

sldt slotted

sm small(er)

sp hole pitch, spoke(s)

sp, spec special

Spkt Sprocket

sq square

ss without

s/t single tapped

std standard

str Strip(s)

thrd thread(ed)(s)

Trun(s) Trunnion(s)

typ typical

var various

vert vertical

w with

whl wheel(s)

W/P Wheel/Pulley

+ plus

> up to

MECCANO PN's, sometimes preceded by 'M', are used to describe parts, so a M126 is a Trunnion & Flat Trunnion. These PN's are also used to describe modified parts, thus a 7h 126,a means a Trunnion & Flat Trunnion but with holes replacing the cut-outs.