

Children will enjoy recognising and learning about the vehicles they see on their roads with this set of eight double-sided wooden pieces. There are so many details to explore in the artwork. Being able to recognise the vehicles in this set is a good step to appreciating those people who use them to come to our aid daily or when it's an emergency.

Key vocabulary

- Ambulance, delivery van, fire engine, police car, recycling lorry, roadside recovery van, taxi, and tractor
- Inside, outside
- Community helper
- Help, helps, helping, helped
- Wheel, steering wheel, tyres, brakes
- Engine, seat belt, mirror, exhaust
- Petrol, electric
- Drive, drives, driving, driven, drove
- Road
- Smooth/curve
- Pointed/edge
- Big/bigger/biggest
- Small/smaller/smallest
- Long/longer/longest



- Sort
- Compare
- Similarities
- Differences
- Different from / similar to

Activity ideas

Using the vehicles



- Use magnifiers to explore some of the details on both sides of the vehicles. If you begin with the exterior, discuss what the children think might be shown inside the vehicle. If you start with the interior, ask the children what clues there are as to what the vehicle is used for, and by whom.
- The vehicles face in different directions, enabling them to interact with each other, creating opportunities for small world play. Using the interior images allows for further development of storytelling skills:

Fire engine

- What do the firefighters need to put out fires?
- What equipment is in the back of the fire engine?
- What might you need to wear if you are a firefighter?

Ambulance

- What might be in the ambulance's cupboards?
- Who drives an ambulance?
- What do they do?

Police car

- How do you know if a police car is coming?
- What might be in the boot of a police car?
- How do police officers help us?

Roadside recovery van

- What tools does the mechanic need to fix the broken-down car?
- What would he do if he couldn't fix it?
- Why is his van orange and yellow?

Tractor

- Who uses a tractor?
 - What do they use it for?
 - Why are its back wheels so big?
- Discuss the engines of the vehicles. There is a mix of petrol and hybrid/electric engines (delivery van and taxi).
 - How do the engines look different/same?
 - Why do some have these big batteries?
 - It would be great if you could look at actual examples of these engines. Perhaps a family member, local garage, farmer could help.
 - The children will have seen these vehicles and are likely to have stories related to them. Invite the children to tell these stories and answer questions about them.
 - Play a barrier game during which one child describes a hidden vehicle to a partner, who needs to try to work out what it is. Take photographs of the vehicles to create a prompt sheet.

Taxi

- What's in the suitcase of the man in the taxi?
- Where would you like to go in a taxi?
- What is the taxi driver and the man talking about?

Recycling lorry

- Where did the recycling lorry collect the rubbish from?
- Where is it taking it to?
- What happens to the recycling when it's put in the lorry?

Delivery van

- Who do you think the parcels are going to?
- Who would you send a parcel to?
- Why is that?



Create and make

- Use construction materials, cardboard boxes and so on to build garages for the vehicles. The children will need to consider if each vehicle has specific needs. The fire engine garage may need doors that open quickly, the home of the recycling lorry will need somewhere to dispose of the waste.
- Make the following available in your outdoor space: large constructions equipment, tyres, wooden blocks and planks, milk crates, and large boxes. These will act as an invitation for the children to build their own community vehicles and use them for role play. Include open-ended dressing-up materials to enrich the storytelling.
- Trikes and pedal cars can represent vehicles from the set. Provide pavement chalk so that the children can create road layouts. These can be washed away afterwards using brooms and buckets of soapy water. Good for core strength and control.

- Attach a felt pen to the back of a toy vehicle with moveable wheels. Roll the vehicles over a large sheet of paper to create drawings/patterns. Good for controlling movements and assessing appropriate pressure.
- Cover a tray with two primary paint colours. Run a toy vehicle through them to create a secondary colour.
- Leave a range of simple musical instruments for the children to experiment with. Ask them to compose a warning sound for the fire engine. This can be extended by asking them to create sounds for the ambulance and police car that are different to each other and the fire engine.

Games you can play

- Attach a balloon to the top of a toy car with moving wheels. Use a pump to inflate it and see how far the car travels under air power. Repeat this with other vehicles, giving children the opportunity to use the pump.
 - Which vehicle went the furthest?
 - Why do you think it did?
 - How can we measure how far it went? Perhaps lay some books out end to end and count them.
- Leave a range of construction materials, including wheels, alongside a ramp as an invitation to the children to build and test their own vehicles.
- Create large lowercase letters and draw road markings on them to indicate how they are written. Follow the patterns using a toy car.



Extending the learning

Caring for our world

- It is important to think about how we look after the world.
 - What do we recycle in our nursery/setting?
 - How do we sort it for the recycling lorry?
 - How might we get better at this?
 - What other ways are there to get to places instead of using a vehicle?
 - How else can we look after our world?



Children's books featuring vehicles

Duck in the Truck by Jez Alborough

How a Fire Engine Works by Lara Bryan and Caroline Attia

How a Recycling Truck Works by Lara Bryan and Giovanni Mederios

Car, Car, Truck, Jeep by Katrina Chapman and Nick Sharratt

Look Inside Things that Go by Rob Lloyd Jones and Stefano Tognetti

That's Not my Fire Engine by Fiona Watt