



ABOUT THE LEGO[®] STAR WARS[™] DESIGN TEAM

LEGO[®] Star Wars[™] started in 1999 and we have made new models for the product line every year since then. The LEGO Star Wars design team consists of 11 model designers and 2 graphic designers. The team is a mix of brand-new designers with fresh new ideas, and experienced LEGO Star Wars designers with many models under their belts.

This is an ideal team for creating new, innovative LEGO Star Wars models, as well as revising and improving previous LEGO versions of classic and iconic Star Wars ships, vehicles and scenes. The focus of our main LEGO Star Wars product line is to make cool, fun, and inspiring models for children.

For fans and adults, we have the opportunity to make even bigger, more challenging models with special attention to accuracy and details. These models are fun and exciting to develop, but also a huge challenge! We always do our very best and hope you will enjoy building them.

Happy building!

Jens Kronvold Frederiksen Creative Director, LEGO[®] Star Wars[™]







Ralph McQuarrie © & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.

ABOUT THE A-WING STARFIGHTER

The A-wing Starfighter you now own is a feat of Rebel resourcefulness: after the Empire rejected the earliest Kuat Systems Engineering's R-22 A-wing model, Rebel cells modified it and turned it into the RZ-1 - a fighter craft even faster than the TIE interceptor, ideal for high-speed strikes and reconnaissance missions. One of the earliest Rebel units to enter these fighters into battle was Phoenix Squadron - an elite group of A-wings in one of the first larger Rebel collectives - in a fight with Darth Vader[™]. Later, when the Empire increased production of standard TIE and experimental fighters, Alliance techs reworked the RZ-1 into a fighter that could outrun them all. Lighter, nimbler and harder to handle, the re-engineered RZ-1s blasted their way through the greatest Rebel victory against the Empire: The Battle of Endor[™]. Behind the scenes of the film the A-wing Starfighter was one of the two Rebel starfighters designed especially for the *Return of the Jedi* film in 1983. In fact, the name 'A-wing' derives from it being the first of the two designs. Conceived by *Star Wars*[™] designer Ralph McQuarrie, the original concept art had blue markings - later changed to red because of the limitations of bluescreen technology at the time.





FACTS AND SPECIFICATIONS

A-wing Starfighter facts

Manufacturer	Kuat Systems Engineering
	RZ-1 A-wing Starfighter
Class	Starfighter

Technical specifications

Length	
Width	4.6 m / 15.2 ft
Height	
	Novaldex J-77 Event Horizon
Hyperdrive	Incom GBK-785 Hyperdrive Unit
	Sirplex Z-9 Deflector Shield Projector
Weapons	Borstel RG-9 Laser Cannons
	Dymek HM-6 Concussion Missile Launcher
Crew	1 pilot

Source: starwars.com

Storyboard for Star Wars: Return of the Jedi (1983) © & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.



LEGO® *STAR WARS*™: A-WING STARFIGHTER

Q: The A-wing Starfighter has the markings of a cult classic, having faded in the background after Return of the Jedi only to enjoy a renaissance of sorts in later years. How high was the A-wing on your wish list of models to work on?

A: You could say it's a bit of a 'niche' model, considering how little you see it in the classic *Star Wars*[™] saga. We like to keep an eye on different fan forums and fan-generated media, so we've known for a long time that the A-wing is a fan favourite. We like to give fans what they want, so Jens Kronvold Frederiksen Creative Director LEGO® *Star Wars*™

this model has been high on our Ultimate Collector Series wish list for many years.

Q: This isn't the first appearance of the A-wing in the LEGO[®] Star Wars range. How many times has it crossed your desk over the years?

A: I actually worked on the first LEGO A-wing Starfighter, a small play theme unit, around the turn of the millennium - the second year of LEGO *Star Wars*. Looking back now, that model looks quite funny, very brick-built, far from the sleeker designs we make today. We've done the A-wing several times as a play theme model, both as an individual and as part of a bigger set. It's a popular one!

Q: How did you and your team come to the decision to make this version of the A-wing now?

A: Partly, it had to do with the fact that a lot of the fanbase really loves models from the classic *Star Wars* saga. Plus, we were really taken with the awesome dark red and white look of it.

But the main reason behind it was accuracy. We knew that we could make an accurate ship out of existing LEGO pieces except for the cockpit canopy, because it has such a special shape. In the past we simply didn't have an element that could accurately replicate the canopy, but once we got the opportunity to create a special element and get the canopy right, we jumped at the chance.

Q: For people who may not know, LEGO keeps their range of existing pieces really tight. You don't just get to produce whatever pieces you want for any new model.

A: Exactly. We also know that the fans, especially the grown-up ones, really like seeing existing pieces used in a new and surprising way. We do our best to make our models as accurate as possible, and very often that means looking at existing elements in a completely new light. If we can get around a design problem with existing pieces, we'd always choose to do that.

Q: How common is it that you have to hold off working on a model until you can create a missing element from scratch?

A: In the earlier years it was very rare that we'd create new elements for our Ultimate Collector Series models, but we've done it more often in later years. However, our aim is to create the models from existing pieces and show the world that you can basically build anything out of LEGO[®] bricks, even incredibly elaborate models like these. We really only create a special element when we're facing a big design problem that we just cannot solve within the existing brick range – cockpit canopies are typical design headaches, because they're see-through and you can't just combine a few elements creatively to replicate them.

Cockpit canopies are tricky – and not just for us designers. We know fans can sometimes find it difficult to apply stickers to the canopies. In order to make things easier on everyone, we now include two sets of stickers. People can use one set as a practice run, so to speak, and then have a do-over if they find their first application was not perfect. This is the case with this A-wing set, and any future LEGO *Star Wars*[™] Ultimate Collector Series model with canopy stickers.

Q: The A-wing is a highly streamlined starfighter, stripped down to its most basic



James Clyne © & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.

combat and speed elements. Was this a challenge for the design team?

A: You're right, it's a rather unusual *Star Wars* model because it doesn't really look that much like a spaceship – its somewhere between a fighter jet and a race car – and that did pose a challenge. Most of our Ultimate Collector Series models have lots of small details and elements, and here you've got these big streamlined surfaces.

One of our big discussions was around the number of visible studs against the use of flat panels. On Ultimate Collector Series models, you'll always see quite a lot of studs because we want it to look like a LEGO set. In this model you'll see more flat surfaces than usual, because of the natural look of the A-wing.

Q: You have a grandson who's very keen on LEGO sets. Will you be building your very own A-wing together?

A: This one may be a bit too challenging for him. Plus, he's a huge LEGO NINJAGO® fan, so I'm still trying to convince him that LEGO *Star Wars* is as cool as NINJAGO. Maybe the A-wing will do the trick!

MEET THE MODEL DESIGNER

Q: The A-wing is a classic, yet it's gotten less attention than other rebel fighters over the years. How did it feel to be entrusted with its design?

A: After appearing in *Return of the Jedi*, the A-wing seemed to take a back seat. But there's so much to it! It's the fastest starfighter in the rebel fleet, excelling in reconnaissance missions or as an interceptor. As a fan of the classic LucasArts Star Wars[™] computer games and an A-wing pilot myself, creating the Ultimate Collector Series version of this incredibly cool classic design was a dream come true.

Q: What makes this model stand out among other LEGO[®] Star Wars builds?

A: LEGO A-wings have always been a regular sight in toy stores, but this is the first time this ship



Hans Burkhard Schlömer, Designer, LEGO[®] Star Wars[™]

gets the Ultimate Collector Series hero model treatment. Only an extremely select few designs are chosen to receive this honour – it took the A-wing over 20 years from the start of LEGO *Star Wars*.

Q: The A-wing has taken different shapes through the course of its history: the original *R-22* prototype, the *RZ-1* from Return of the Jedi, and the improved *R-22*. Which design elements did you bring into the LEGO model from these different iterations?

A: The LEGO Star Wars team wanted to go for the most iconic version of the A-wing, which in our opinion is the one you see in *Return of the Jedi*. In fact, the dark red details on this model show that this is a very particular A-wing indeed: this is the fighter that crashes into the bridge of the Super Star Destroyer *Executor* during the Battle of Endor[™], leading to its collision with the second Death Star[™].

Q: Did you have a particular starting point when designing the A-wing? Does size or brick count matter?

A: Since the A-wing is just slightly bigger than a sports car, the model could not be in scale with other Ultimate sets. The size of the pilot seat should give you a good idea of the fighter's real dimensions. LEGO windscreen elements usually only come in increments of 2 studs/units, so the initial question was whether to go with a 6- or 8-wide windscreen. The first version I built, based

on an 8-wide windscreen, was way too big and still wouldn't have featured any more details that a smaller version could. Brick count doesn't really matter - only making the best model possible does.

Q: The A-wing is an extremely lean craft - little more than a cockpit with two engines. However, Ultimate Collector Series models are usually very rich in detail. As the designer of the model, are there any features and details you're especially proud of?

A: Aside from the building techniques required to design and attach the curved hull sections, there are two notable details I'd like to highlight: there are curved openings at the back of the A-wing. On the studio model, they turned out to be air intakes from F-16 fighter jet model kits! I also added rotating guns, because some publications mention them even though I believe there's no screen evidence of them. It's a nice added feature.

Q: When designing this as well as other Star Wars[™] models, how do you imagine people interacting with your work - as something to admire, or something to play with?

A: Appreciation of LEGO[®] Star Wars sets takes many forms, from playing with a model to collectors keeping the box sealed. The ideal for Ultimate Collector Series sets is of course for them to be built and eventually displayed proudly on a shelf or desk. You can always pick up another box later on for collecting, right?



Star Wars: Return of the Jedi (1983) © & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.



Wesley Seeds IIm paints A-wing model for Star Wars: Return of the Jedi (1983) © & ™ Lucasfilm Ltd.



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