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[Marx Toy Trains](#)

At the end of World War I, in 1919, Luis Marx started a toy company. The company was called Marx and Company and was co-founded by Louis brother, David Marx. The company's motto was to, "give the customer more toy for less money." The company enjoyed a long run of success, surviving the both the Great Depression and the second World War, before it closed its doors in 1978, six years after Louis Marx sold the company to Quaker Oats. During the Great Depression the Marx Company had over \$500,000 in debt, a debt that was more then covered by its \$3.2 million in assets.

In addition to several international plants, Marx had three plants in the United States, two in Pennsylvania, and one in West Virginia. One of the places that they sold their toys was in the Sears Roebucks magazine.

Some people feel that during its heyday, Marx and Company actually sold more toy trains then any of the other toy companies. The first train they sold was the Joy Line, which they sold on commission for the Girard Company. Shortly after his company started selling the Joy Line, Louis Marx arranged for the Girard Company to design a toy train specifically for Marx and Company. Eventually the Girard Company was purchased by Marx.

In the marketplace, Marx trains were noticeable because they were normally smaller and cheaper then the ones made by the Lionel Company and American Flyer. The Marx Company designed electric toy trains that featured an open frame motor, this motor features a gear that is fixed to one end of the axle of the armature. The company seldom varied from this design. Post World War II, Marx and Company started to make trains out of plastic. More expensive versions of Marx toy trains included a smoker that heated smoke fluid to produce smoke.

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Marx trains typically have a copper shoe pickup. On a Marx motor, the center rail pickup, is typically made out of copper strip.

Until the late 1950's Marx made their toy trains with a fat wheel. This fat wheel makes it virtually impossible for Marx toy trains to negotiate the switches and crossovers of Lionel tracks.

Older models of Marx trains feature open switches. Marx and Company designed their switches so that the wiring was similar to the wiring in two rail switches. Three wires, red, green, and black, go directly to the the switch.

Most of Marx scale freighters featured a a low truck with small wheels. Marx used a dovetail design for their tilt couplers. Marx tilt couplers are incompatible with Lionel couplers. The tilt couplers were one single molded piece. In later years, Marx made one piece knuckle couplers that have to be coupled by hand.

Most of the original Marx and Company motors have a metal frame and metal gears. A few of their later designs have frames and gears that are made out of plastic. Some of the cheaper toy trains that Marx designed can't reverse, they can only go forward.

About the Author

Bob Roberts, ex PE teacher, did not start playing golf until he was well into his 50's but now plays two to three times a week. He knows the pitfalls a beginner faces and has written two websites targeted mainly at high handicap golfers. For more information about his tips for golf go here====> [Start Playing Golf](#) and [Tips For Golf](#)

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