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Jimu robot unicornbot

UnicornBot has an enchanting light-up LED horn.Photo: UBTECH RoboticsA main controller brick serves as UnicornBot's brain.Photo: UBTECH RoboticsStep-by-step 3D instructions guides the building process.Photo: UBTECH RoboticsAdjust the servos to make the robot move!Photo: UBTECH RoboticsProgram UnicornBot using Blockly.Photo: UBTECH Robotics What It Is The JIMU Robot Mythical Series: UnicornBot Kit from UBTech is a robotic unicorn that kids can build and program. Building your UnicornBot:To assemble your unicorn robot, you'll need to download the free JIMU app. Within the app, you'll find the digital instructions guide that provides a step-by-step, 360-degree, 3-D guide to build your unicorn bot. Once constructed the UnicornBot features motion sensors, a color sensor, and DC motor. Connecting Your Bot:To connect your Bot via Bluetooth simply it on and the app will immediately search and find it. It took ours mere seconds. You may find that the app will need to update your software to ensure optimal performance. Playtime:We suggest heading to the Learning tab to get started. Here you can run through different Lessons to figure out how to program your unicorn with different commands. There are a total of 10 levels of lessons to complete. You won't be able to access the upper level lessons until you complete all prior activities. The JIMU program uses the drag-and-drop Blockly language to allow kids to visually code their unicorns. For those that are familiar with UBTech, aside from this being the first unicorn, it's also the company's first JIMU Robot with a built-in color sensor. This means you can change up the color of your unicorn's horn. As you work through the activities, the unicorn's interactions will become more advanced. You'll also learn shortcuts to duplicate actions and more. If you want to further challenge yourself, each level gives you a star rating 1-3 depending on how fast you complete the code. Repetition won't just earn you a higher star but also help further reinforce the lessons you learn.If you are looking for a bit more free-form coding, there's also a few other ways kids can play through programming within the app. With Controls, kids can essentially use the app as a remote control to do set commands such as move the bot forward, backward, as well as setting specific gestures. For further customization, the Coding section provides you with all the tools you've used in the lessons to create your own programs. If you're already pretty familiar with Blockly, this is also a work-around to doing the lessons to access the more advanced functions. For example, kids can use Blockly coding to program the LED horn to change colors in response to what it senses, or code actions to the robotic servo motors to create more horse-like movements (using the Action section). Is It Fun? There's a lot of open-ended play to this coding toy and it's worth emphasizing again how simple and straight-forward the instructions guide was to put the toy together. In some ways the build can be just as fun as the coding for kids that like construction play. The fact that this robot is also a unicorn adds an extra element of magic to the 'wow' factor of bringing coding creations to life, and making it perhaps more appealing to young female coders as well. Who It's For The JIMU Robot Mythical Series: UnicornBot Kit is for ages 8 and up. In terms of the challenge level for this coding toy, it's intermediate in part due to the build, which requires more than 400 pieces. This is also a toy that will grow with your child as their coding skills advance to keep challenging them in new ways. What To Be Aware Of The JIMU app is free for Apple and Android devices. It took us about an hour and a half to put our JIMU Unicornbot together. The instructions within the app were some of the easiest digital follow-along instructions we've come across. Additional app features include the Community tab, where you'll find examples of top creations and programs created by fellow JIMU builders and coders. This includes programs for other JIMU products such as the JIMU Robot MeelBot Kit. There's also a Create tab, where you can store your own creations and programs. An AR feature is also expected to be available within the app, but as of this write-up has not yet launched. A USB cable is included for charging. In the tech world, the word "unicorn" is synonymous with billion-dollar startups. One such company is China-based Ubtch Robotics, which is best known for intelligent humanoid robots and the STEM-friendly Jimu Robot line. Getting to unicorn status is never easy, so it's fitting that Ubtch's latest robot is not only a unicorn in form factor but requires hard work to make it come alive. The \$120 Jimu Robot Mythical Series UnicornBot Kit gives kids an opportunity to learn basic coding, so they can assemble the bot before ascribing behaviors to its light-up RGB LED horn and making it move. At a launch event in Los Angeles recently, young guests swarmed various hack spaces, getting hands-on time with robotic kits, chasing robot unicorns and swooning over a "real" unicorn (a remarkably patient, dolled-up pony). Unicorn Feedback Loop One 7-year-old was looking doubtfully at the makeshift arena as three UnicornBots butted differently colored horns. "What do you think of the UnicornBot?" I asked. "I'm still deciding," she said, thoughtfully, clutching the digital tablet that powered the UnicornBot at play. "Do you already have a robot of your own?" I asked, curious. "Of course!" she replied, astonished. "I have three, including the Star Wars one [Ubtch's Stormtrooper]." Done talking, she turned away, and, by tapping a few buttons on the touchpad, worked out the UnicornBot had been programmed to "drink" when it saw the color blue. Satisfied she'd cracked what was going on, she clicked again and rushed after the robot as it made a dash for the perimeter. Cross-Culture Confusion Interestingly, Ubtch's newest robot almost wasn't a unicorn, because the mythical single-horned creature isn't much of a cultural icon in Asia. Lindsay Aust, Director of Global Product Marketing, who joined Ubtch Robotics from connected toy company Sphero, explained how, and why, she pitched the UnicornBot concept to the Shenzhen City-based management team in China. "I have a 9-year-old daughter, who's fantastic, and she loves robots, has a maker space at school, and can put together robots a lot faster than I can. However, she didn't resonate with the other Ubtch robot characters, but she does love unicorns," said Aust. So Aust pitched the UnicornBot concept to the team in China to broaden their robot line appeal. "They were really confused, at first," laughed Aust. "They thought a unicorn was something along the lines of 'My Little Pony,' which it's so not. We then backtracked, made the UnicornBot a lot more technical, and robotic, with smooth-motion servo motors in her neck and hind legs, and powerful DC motor for combined movements." Aust and her team brainstormed a proper kit (440 pieces in total), which takes about two hours to put together, a coding platform based on the Blockly visual programming language. "Using drag and drop on the iPad or Android tablet, they pick up the Blockly code format pretty quickly, using eight color cards to program different actions, and switch out shades on her LED horn," explained Aust. Ubtch is planning to release an AR experience for the holidays. Kids can place their UnicornBot inside an (augmented) enchanted world, and develop those all-important imaginative narrative skills, which will differentiate them from our silicon cousins in the future workplace. Lynx: Impressive But Pricey As part of the event's show and tell, Ubtch brought along other robots in its range, including Lynx, a 17.3-inch-high, 18 degrees of freedom (DoF) programmable robot that retails for \$799.99. A young guest named Tristan wandered over as I was examining Lynx. He gasped, then peered at the underside of the robot, trying to see how it turned on. "Pretty cool, huh?" I said, looking around for an Ubtch staffer with a robot passcode. "Oh yes," Tristan responded. "Do you have a robot of your own?" I asked. He looked astonished. "I'm only in third grade!" he said, which made me wonder if there's an agreed cut-off age for robot ownership, in line with the "when do I get a smartphone?" question. A demo technician showed up and Tristan reluctantly stepped back from the robot but looked hopeful. He wanted to see if this adult could make the robot work (as I obviously didn't have the magic password). Suddenly Lynx came alive and did a small dance to a bass-heavy version of "Jingle Bells." Lynx has multiple (gravity, gyroscope, capacitive touch) sensors, five input digital microphone array, and a 1080p camera. Yes, this means Lynx can "see" and has face detection but not recognition. He does, however, work with Alexa to perform skills like yoga backbends, video calling, and calendar management. An "avatar mode," meanwhile, means Lynx is a remote presence robot, giving you "take over" operation, via the Lynx app, to check in on home, read bedtime stories, wave to say "hello" and even give a hug. Lynx is seriously personable. I want one. Of course, I can't justify the high price point for the relatively low functionality. But there's something about Lynx that would fit right into my life, perched on the side of my desk, keeping me company as deadlines approach. Something to consider for the holidays. As I left the L.A. rooftop, more children surged in, gasping with equal pleasure at the pony and the UnicornBot robots. Clearly there's no fear of our future silicon overlords here. Plus this generation are already coding them, so they know who's in charge (for now). The Jimu Robot Mythical Series: UnicornBot Kit is \$119.99 and available at Target, Sam's Club, Apple Stores, Amazon, and jimurobots.com. This newsletter may contain advertising, deals, or affiliate links. 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