



Robo-1

Tomy's Robo-1 is a robot arm of conventional design controlled by means of two joysticks. It is not capable of operating under program control. The startling thing about it is the cost — less than ten per cent of the price of the least expensive teaching robot arm (see page 314). Of course, the construction is much less robust, as injection-moulded plastic is used instead of sheet metal. The arm relies on visual feedback and control by the user, rather than using precise stepper motors. Again, with ingenuity, the Robo-1 could be interfaced to a home computer



TOMY ROBO 1 COURTESY OF HAMLEYS

Big Trak

While it may resemble a Tonka Toy, or one of the other robust toy vehicles for the younger child, Big Trak is in fact a floor robot in disguise. Completely self-contained, it is programmed by entering direction and distance codes on a keypad mounted on its top surface. With a little ingenuity, a conventional home microcomputer can be interfaced with Big Trak via a parallel or serial port. The vehicle could then be guided under program control, which would introduce the possibility of branching into a different sub-program should a particular set of conditions be encountered



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