HM Review

Devin Troy with Eric Umble

Snap Circuits Extreme

Elenco's electronics kits bridge the gap between modeling and science & education.
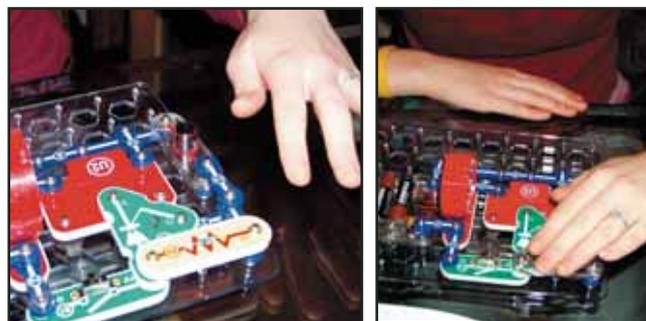
Snap Circuits Extreme is a fun-to-build, educational set that I really enjoyed working with. Its directions are clear and easy to understand, especially for those who are visual learners. Everything is printed as a picture, and the pieces in the Snap Circuits set are labeled with either numbers or letters. This allows experimenters to match each piece to the picture so they can identify them easily. Parts fit into the plastic work grid, just like the picture, to complete each project.

A description of how each project is activated, such as waving your hand over a light or flipping a switch, accompanies each drawing. It's all explained very clearly,

Devin Troy assembles one of the many PC interface projects from Elenco's Extreme Snap Circuits set.

and makes assembling any of the experiments completely hassle-free.

My friend Eric and I had a good time putting the Snap Circuits Extreme projects together. The grid is clearly labeled so you know exactly where to place each part. I just pressed down with a light force and the pieces snap right in. It's simple and fun, and all the projects work.

The set includes many different kinds of components, all color-coded in red, green, yellow and white. Parts include a speaker, light, siren, and even a pair of battery holders. The blue parts are used to connect the components. It's cool to experiment with the different pieces and find out what each one does.

Projects vary from wailing sirens to digital numbers that flash on a board. Eric and I made several projects and found them interesting to operate. Some are complicated and others are simple, so we did several. Each project took us approximately 10 minutes to complete.

I studied the instructions and told Eric which pieces I needed. He passed the parts and I would snap them in. Then, we followed the instructions to turn it on. The proj-

The Police Car Siren starts and stops as a hand is drawn over a component on the circuit board.

ects never failed, and our reward was to see each project actually work.

This set comes with a PC interface that connects it to a computer. After installing the CD, we assembled a project, then attached the interface clips to the +/- terminals on the oscillator and plugged the other end into the PC. When we opened the program, bright green waves were going up and down on the screen. The waves would change and get farther apart, then get taller and round over, changing every few seconds. When we flipped the switch, the waves got short and far apart.

Lighted letters or numerals flash in the digital display.

It was fascinating to watch the screen as the energy flowed through the project. I really enjoyed the Snap Circuits Extreme set. It has wonderful projects for people of all ages, and I highly recommend. **HM**

Elenco's entertaining Snap Circuits Extreme project set features CD-ROM software and a PC interface.