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# **American Flyer Toy Trains - A Tradition in Collecting Toy Trains**

Ask any avid collector of toy trains about American Flyer, and chances are they'll be able to talk about these classic toy trains for hours. That's because American Flyer is a tradition in the production of toy trains and has been for years. Since the beginning of the 1900's, American Flyer has been producing top-quality toy trains and brought smiles to the faces of millions of people who received them as gifts or heirlooms. A truly unique find in toy train systems, American Flyer continues to be a popular name in toy trains and continues to bring happiness to today's children and collectors.

American Flyer toy trains began as an idea to develop a clockwork motor for toy cars in 1901 by a man named William Fredrick Hafner. In 1905, he developed a train that could be operated by a clockwork motor on O gauge track. After receiving several requests and funds for orders, Hafner enlisted the help of his friend, William Coleman, to begin producing these new models of toy trains. At the time, Coleman had taken over control of Edmonds-Metzel Hardware Company, who had experienced financial hardship in 1906. The two friends immediately started to produce toy trains by using the surplus manufacturing potential of Edmonds-Metzel. The production was a success, and by 1910 Edmonds-Metzel left the hardware industry and changed its name to American Flyer. Originally American Flyer toy trains were thought to be generic in comparison to its competitor manufacturer, Ives.

During the First World War, American Flyer's business expanded and eventually knocked out the German manufactures that produced the majority of toy trains sold in the United States. American Flyer introduced the first electric train in 1918. A windup device replaced the clockwork motor developed by Hafner and quickly became a popular toy among American children. Even with the growing popularity of American Flyer, the company still took second place to the Lionel Corporation - a rivalry that continues among toy train collectors today.

American Flyer toy trains are a popular display item at modern toy train conventions and shows, and are usually at the center of heated auction bidding. Although finding pieces from American Flyer toy train systems are not difficult, you can expect to pay top dollar for these classic toys. Even American Flyer catalogs are hot items up for sale and bidding at auctions and on the internet.

A simple search of the internet will provide you with a complete listing of where to find American Flyer toy trains and accessories. You'll find several options for attending shows and conventions that carry American Flyer trains, and you'll find several items up for bid on eBay. The prices range from \$20 for accessories to \$500+ for toy trains, box cars, cabooses, and tank cars. Once you find a collectible from American Flyer, it can be a quite addicting hobby to add more pieces and accessories to your collection!

You can also find this article published on [American Flyer Toy Trains - A Tradition in Collecting Toy Trains](#), and on the tag pages [American Flyer](#), [Classic Toy Trains](#), [Clockwork Motor](#), [Electric Train](#), [Financial Hardship](#), [First World War](#), [Fredrick](#), [Friend William](#), [Gauge Track](#), [Hafner](#), [Hardware Company](#), [Hardware Industry](#), [Ives](#), [Lionel Corporation](#), [Quality Toy](#), [Toy Cars](#), [Toy Train](#), [Train Systems](#), [William Coleman](#), [Windup](#).