

Corvair 95 Toy & Model Update

By Steven Spilatro, 2018

As their full-sized templates were rolling off Chevrolet assembly lines in the early 1960s, miniature Corvair 95s of tin and plastic were being packed off to toy store shelves. While often nonchalant with the styling details, the Toy Makers gave FCs clever new employment and added imaginative new models to the R10 line. In Corvair Toy-World, FCs served in the military, carried dogs to the pound, bussed children to school, and delivered commercial goods to market, and fantasy Corvair 95 trucks serviced airports, construction sites, and fire departments. In that world we found Loadsides laden with beverages and even a cage to transport big-cats at the zoo; Rampsides came with one or two ramp gates, carried campers, and towed boats and cars; and the ever utilitarian Corvan doubled as a coin bank and soap bottle – possibly anticipating the day when the full size version would become a meticulously detailed money pit in the Concours De Elegance. Today, long since GM shuttered the Flint and St Louis lines, toy manufacturers continue to deliver new Corvair 95 scale models, hopefully attracting a new generation of enthusiasts to preserve the remaining full scale originals.

Articles about various Corvair 95 toys have appeared in the Corsa Communique, chapter newsletters and a variety of model enthusiast's magazines. The last complete list was compiled by Dave Newell for CorvanAntics way back in 1981 and included 23 toys from eight manufacturers. Since then the list has grown substantially as different versions of vintage toys have come to light and new manufacturers have entered the market. So the time has come for an update.

This article identifies nineteen manufacturers with a fleet of almost 80 different toys. This is a somewhat fuzzy number depending up what is considered to be a "Corvair 95" toy. Certainly, it should have a forward control cab and some of the other key FC features, such as the body side contour lines, double lamp headlights, side ramp for a Rampside, and

double side doors for a van. However, similar versions of a toy are listed separately only if they had different product numbers; thus, Structo and MSW vans that differed only in color are grouped together. And only toys and models produced commercially (not unique items crafted by hobbyists) are included.

I'm much indebted to the real authorities on Corvair 95 toys, Dave Newell and Gary Swiatory and Joe Darinsig for feedback, photos, and information used here and on the Corvanatics "Corvair 95 Toys" web page (<http://www.corvair.org/chapters/corvanatics/Toys.php>), which has additional photos and paraphernalia pertaining to Corvair 95 toys. The toy descriptions presented here originally ran as an article in the CORSA Communique 40(4), May 2018.

There are two sections to this booklet.

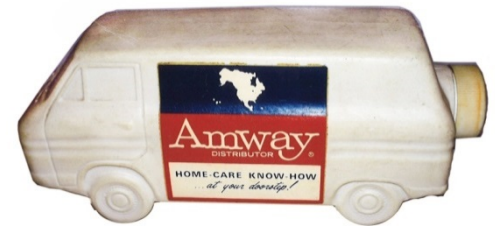
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Amway (1960s - 70s)

Amway, the vender of health and home products, distributed plastic bath soap bottles modeled after a 1964 Corvan. Maybe not really toys, but surely a lot of fun.

They were produced in two versions. 7.3L x 2.5W x 2.8H inches.



1. Amvan Corvan.

This promotional item made of white plastic and containing children's bubble bath was first distributed in 1965. The bottle lacks side contours along the front of the rear quarter panel where a red, white and blue sticker reads "Amway Distributer Home-Care Know-How ... *at your doorstep.*" This bottle was accompanied by a die cut 3.5" x 2" business card featuring the van.

2. Super-van Corvan.

Green plastic and containing children's shampoo, this bottle became available in the mid-1970s.



There are no contours along the entire rear quarter panel, providing lots of space to apply an assortment of colorful "Drag-N-Van" or "Vacation Van" stickers.

Andy Gard Corporation (1960s)

Andy Gard, producing out of Leetsdale, PA, made a plastic Rampside with a light blue body and white cab top and headlights. The toys initially rolled on white wall tires with metal hub caps, but in later years the whitewalls and hubcaps were eliminated. The version with the added dog kennel is well known. 11.5L x 5W x 5H inches. (Also see notes about Irwin toys.)

1. Blue Rampside.

The open bed Rampside came with a hand-truck and outboard motor that could be conveniently loaded up the fold-down ramp. Product #233.



2. Kennel Truck Rampside. For this toy the bed was topped with a plastic 12-bay kennel. The clear plastic cover opens allowing plastic dogs to be placed in (or set free from) their individual compartments. Product #358.

Asakusa Toy Company (1960s)

The Asakusa Toy Co. (Asakusa, Japan) marketed toys under the 'A1' trademark. They were similar in construction to, though slightly larger (9"L) than Tatsuya toys and had a friction drive. Asakusa made the only toy Corvair vans (#2 & #3 below) with rear doors that opened.



1. PAA Airline Greenbrier - style 1. Solid dark blue. Has older globe+half-wing logo that had been replaced in the mid 1950s (compare with later style logo on the Tatsuya toys). This toy had lithographed side windows and rear doors

2. PAA Airline Greenbrier - style 2. Solid light blue. Same logo as on dark blue van, but this one has actual side window openings and rear doors that open.

Structo



Premier



Tatsuya



3. Red Greenbrier. Solid red with actual side windows and rear doors that open.

Three Asakusa fantasy “Commercial Corvans” have a colored lower body panel and roof separated by a white panel, and are decorated with text and iconic images for three delivery services.

4. Bakery Corvan. This toy is red. It is lithographed with “Bakery” and pictures of sliced fruit cakes on the sides and with a toque-capped chef on the roof.

5. Fruits Corvan. The Fruits Corvan is blue and white, and is lithographed with “Fresh Fruits” and a pineapple on both sides and the rear.

6. Milk Corvan.

This toy is yellow and white with elaborate farm-themed graphics, including a large cow on the rear and a field with cows on the sides. The top bears an image of a milk bottle.



Best Model Car Parts (2017 -)

Best Model Car Parts, located in California, has been producing an assortment of resin cast model car parts and conversion kits since 2011. The Rampside kit was introduced in 2017.



1. Rampside. This 1/25 scale resin cast 1961 Rampside is not a reproduction of the earlier Premier, and was fully remastered. It is rather detailed with 34 pieces including everything except the tires and windows.

Brooklin Models Lmt. (2015 -)

Named for the town in Canada where the company was established in 1974, Brooklin Models moved to Bath, England in 1979. The company specializes in American classic automobiles made of white metal, an alloy of tin and silver, which are individually hand-assembled and painted. The Greenbriers weigh-in at a hefty 377 g (13oz). 4L X 1.75W X 1.5H inches.

1. Red Greenbrier. This two-tone red Deluxe model is outfitted with chrome bumpers, hubcaps, front headlight/grill assembly, etc. A nicely detailed 1962 with few design flaws. Product # BRK213.



2. White Greenbrier. Non-stock exterior white with blue contour line, otherwise similar to red Greenbrier. Product # BRK213X.

3. Greenbrier towing a Yenko Stinger. This is the BRK213X Greenbrier with an autotransport trailer carrying a white Yenko Stinger. Greenbrier is also outfitted with a black roof rack accessible with a ladder over the left rear door. Product # BRK-213x-139x-109x.

Eldon



Irwin



MSW



Asakusa



Chinese Manufacturers



Corvair Models (Premier reproduction)



Chinese manufacturers (1960s)

The tin toys made in China in the 1960s lack toy manufacturer logos but have product numbers in which the letters identified

the type of toy: ME for military vehicles, MF mostly cars and trucks, and MS for various figures and dolls. There are two MF Corvair 95 toys, and both appear to be copied, more or less, from the Japanese Tatsuya toys. Among other changes, they were stripped of the bourgeois commercial “Corvair-95” and “Chevrolet” insignias.



1. **Tiger Van Loadside.** Two-tone red with a white cab and “Tiger Van” and images of some suitable prey species printed on either side. A blue plastic “cage” covering the load bed and holds a small toy tiger. Product # MF-797 on the license plate.

2. **Blue Rampside.** Two-tone light blue knockoff of the Tatsuya Rampside, including ramp doors lithographed on both side panels and a white upper cab. Product # MF-756 on the license plate.

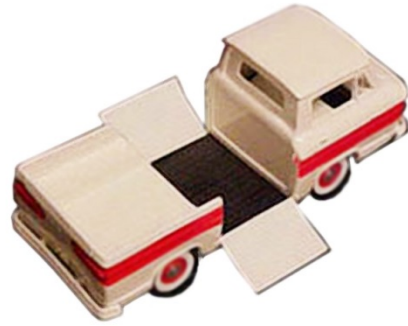
Corvair Models (2000s)

Corvair Models (Jacksonville Beach, FL) made resin cast Corvair model kits for a short while in the early 2000s. The most common version is a knockoff of the Premier Rampside, even marketed in a copy of the original box. However the model was also made with variations in the side ramp. 6.5L x 2.5W x 2.5H inches.

1. **Loadside.** Model lacking the side ramp.

2. **Rampside.** A replica of the Premier kit.

3. **Rampside – Dual ramp.** The Rampside kit with ramp doors on both sides.



Eldon Industries (1960s)

Eldon Industries was a major international toy manufacturer from the 1950s – 1970s, well known for their “Selectronic” slot car sets, as well as other plastic cars, trucks, and boats. Eldon made a single Corvair 95 toy.

1. **Blue Rampside.** These were made of light and dark blue plastic for the body, cab top and front grille assembly. It has a clear plastic windshield and front seat but lacking a cab floor, dashboard and engine compartment. Whitewall tires are embossed with “Eldon”, with red or yellow hubcaps. 13.5L x 6W x 5.5H inches.



Hot Wheels (2015-16)

Fifty four years later, Hot Wheels finally added Corvair 95s to their extensive line of models. All three versions of these fantasized Greenbriers are produced with the same tooling and have a monster engine extruding from the rear end and surfboards on the roof, differing only in the paint and decoration. 3L X 1.25W X 1H inches.

Vintage FC Toy Packaging

Amway



Andy Gard



1. Airport Lift. The container was spring activated with a friction windup. When released, the container slowly raises up and the front lowers over the cab; 14L x 4.5W x 6.6H (9.3H elevated) inches.



2. Cement Mixer. Has a rotating cement bowl.

3. Dump Truck. Has a bed that raises and bumps using same mechanism as the airport lift. 12.5L x 5W x 5.5H inches.

4. Ladder Fire Engine. This is the most elaborate of the Yonezawa (and maybe of all FC toys), rigged with a large spring-loaded extension ladder. There are smaller ladders on both sides .manned by Firemen. This really is a beautiful toy. 14.5L x 4.5W x 5.5 H inches.



1. Real Riders Custom Greenbrier. Metallic blue with red pinstriping. Marketed individually (Product # HW2322) or with 5 other classic cars in the Red Riders Heritage Series (# HW2553).



2. Snoopy Custom Greenbrier. Red with Snoopy cavorting in snow on side panels. Packaged individually (product # HW7028) or with 5 other classic cars in the Peanuts Pop Culture Series (# HW3740).

3. Chunky Custom Greenbrier. Silver with red accent lines, surfboards and “Chunky” on the sides. Packaged individually (product # HW3616) or with 5 other classic cars in the Nestle Series (# HW3963).

Irwin (1960s -1970s)

Irwin was Canada’s largest toy manufacturer until its demise in 2003.

Although they found greater success later with the frisbee, slinky and hula hoop, earlier

efforts included plastic Corvaire 95 toys. The toys were assembled from a chassis (with integral seat, headlights and license plate), body exterior, and steering wheel insert. Rampsides were packaged individually or with trailers. Irwin made the only Corvaire 95 vans with side doors that swing open. 8.5L x 3.75W x 3.75H inches.



1. Military Ambulance Corvan. Body and chassis same color, which ranged from olive to bluish green; came with “Medical Corps” and medical cross stickers.

- 2. Red Delivery Corvan.** Red body and blue chassis.
- 3. Autotransport Rampside.** Red Rampside pulling trailer and pickup. The pickup is undersized and apparently from a toy series of smaller scaling.

- 4. Boating Rampside.**
Red Rampside pulling trailer and motorboat.

- 5. Military Rampside.**
Body and chassis same color, which ranged from olive to bluish green; came with “Marines” and star stickers.



- 6. Red Rampside.** Red body and Blue chassis.

Andy Gard reissues In the late 1960’s, having acquired the competitor’s tooling, Irwin reissued Andy Gard’s Rampside and kennel truck under their logo. A dump truck toy (Product #313) also shares the Rampside cab top and headlight/grille assembly, but the name “Cab-Over Engine Gravel Truck” indicates that it is not intended to be a fantasy Rampside.

- 7. Rampside.** Same as Andy Gard version, but with Irwin sticker. Product #233-A.
- 8. Kennel Truck Rampside.** Same as Andy Gard version, but with Irwin sticker. Product #358-A.

Corvans have three vents embossed on the upper rear quarter panels which were not present in the actual vehicles; this is the only model in which these have been highlighted with black paint. This toy is also very rare.

- 11. Coca-Cola Delivery Loadside.**
Two-tone yellow.
Came with a folded card stock insert in the load bed printed with cases of the beverage. Must be a Loadside since it lacks the side ramp.



- 12. ABC Rescue Rampside.** Solid white with a gray stripe. “ABC Rescue Truck” encircles a triple-A emblem on either side.

- 13. Blue Rampside.** Two-tone dark blue. Known versions came with either “1069” or “1961” on license plate.

- 14. Light Blue Rampside.** Two-tone light blue.

Yonezawa (1960s)

Yonezawa was Japan’s largest post-WWII toy manufacturer. It marketed four large fantasy tin toy trucks with cabs that incorporated Corvair 95 design elements. The toys were made from pressed steel with rubber tires and metal hubcaps. These are the only Corvair-95 toys that came with the steering wheel on the right side.

3. Red Greenbrier. Two-tone 8-door model. Same comments as for the green Greenbrier, Know example has “1961” on the license plates.

4. School bus Greenbrier.

Yellow with gray and black side stripes. This toy has a rear license plate off-center reading "1069A" along with the more common "1069" printed on the front plate.



5. Telephone Service Truck Corvan. Solid green with Bell System emblem and text.

6. Meyers Arnold Corvan. Solid white with “Meyers Arnold for Pleasant Shopping” emblem on side panel. Has a custom license plate (HS-86-737). This toy is very rare, conceivably made for the Meyers Arnold Company of Greenville, SC.

7 & 8. REA Express & REA Air Express Corvans. Solid green with silver roof, with a red and white diamond shaped “REA” emblem. This toy came in two designs; one reads "REA Express" on the side panel and "Truck Plane Ship Train" across the back doors, the other reads "Air Express" on the side and rear, but also has “Air Express Out Delivers Them All” on the rear quarter panel.



9. Red Corvan. Solid red, no rear windows.

10. Standard Drug Company Corvan. This is the only KTS Corvaire 95 toy lacking a license plate. All of the KTS

M. E. V. Originals (1990 – present)

M.E.V. produces epoxy resin cast classic vehicle slot car bodies mounted on a HO racer chassis. Offerings include Corvaire coupes, Lakewood and FCs. 2.5L x 0.88W x 1H inches.



1. Greenbrier. Two-tone or alternative color schemes, nicely detailed, white bumpers, chrome grille and headlight assembly. Clear plastic windows around.

2. Rampside. Similar features to the van. Load bed is covered (to hide the HO racer motor).

MSW (1964-65)

MSW, Metallspielwaren Weimar (“Metal Toys of Weimar”), was formed in 1960 as a national controlled enterprise (VEB) of the GDR (East Germany). Their Chevrolet Transporter toys were Corvans constructed of a plastic body, sheet metal undercarriage and front flywheel (friction) drive. The headlights are clear plastic, license plate reads “MSW-95-65”, and back-end has round taillights and a large hatch-like rear window. These are the only FC toys with two front half bench seats. Along with the four models and different color schemes listed below, other versions of this toy may have been made, and it was soon replaced with a similar



toy based upon the Chevy Van with a large rectangular grill, square headlights and a sliding sunroof. 6L x 2.5H x 2.5W inches.

1. **Centrum Corvan.** “Centrum” on side panels. Single version known of red plastic with silver stripe along body contour and white text.

2. **Circus Fix Corvans.** “Circus Fix” on side panels. Four versions known: 1 - white plastic with silver and black stripe along body contour and red text; 2- yellow plastic with silver and black stripe and red text; 4- yellow plastic with silver stripe and green text; 4 - blue plastic with black stripe and white text.

3. **Nescafe Corvan.** “Nescafe” on the side panels. Single version known of red plastic with a black stripe along body contour and white text.



4. **Service Corvans.** “Service” on side panels. Three versions known: 1 - Blue plastic with silver stripe along body contour and white text; 2- red plastic with silver stripe and white text; 3 - yellow plastic with silver stripe and red text.

NEO Scale Models (2016-)

Neo Scale Models was founded in 2009 by the Dutch company Replicars, which up to that point had only been a model car importer. The 1963 Corvaire 95s (produced in China) are reasonably accurate resin models with few design errors. 4.2L x 1.5H x 1.8W inches.

10. **Riding Academy Rampside.** The "Riding Academy" toy is a Rampside pulling a horse trailer with two horses. Product # 254 (1966). 20L x 4.75W x 6H inches.

Tatsuya (1960s)

These tin toys were manufactured by Tatsuya in Japan using the KTS trademark and imported by Franconia Products, Inc. (NY). Tatsuya was the most prolific Corvaire 95 toy manufacturer, producing 14 known versions of their friction driven toys. The toys have a clear plastic windshield and lithographed exterior, interior and bed. The body is made from pressed steel, and the tires are rubber with metal hubcaps. The lithography of some features that did not agree with original FC design, such as the Rampside with the outline of a ramp door printed on both sides. Most have “1069” on the license plate, but as noted below, some of the toys have a version with plates that read “1961”. Dave Newell has suggested that those with “1961” were early versions.

8L x 3.25W x 3.25H inches.

1. Green Greenbrier.

Two-tone; 8-door model - has side doors lithographed on both sides. Assumed to be Greenbriers since there are windows all the way around despite both front doors carrying a "Corvaire 95" emblem. Came with “1069” or “1961” on the license plates.



2. **PanAm Air Service Greenbrier.** Blue lower and white upper 8-door model. This toy has a more recent Pan Am logo (globe with curved parabolic lines) unlike that of the Asakusa Pan Am van (described above).

4. Air Terminal Service Rampside. This three toy set packaged an American Airlines Sky Chef lift truck (#303) and Fire Rescue Truck (#307) with an early style Rampside (#195). Product # 908 (1962).

5 & 6. Camper with Early or Late Style Rampside. The camper model substitutes a plastic box-like camper for the Rampside bed liner. The side ramp is removed and replaced with the camper door. The colors of the body and plastic camper varied and included (body color/camper color) blue/light blue, copper/tan, gold/white, light blue/light blue, olive/olive and teal/olive. Product #203 (1961-67), #235 (1967-69). 10.5L x 4.5W x 6.5H inches.



7 & 8. Fisherman with Early or Late Style Rampside. A Rampside open bed or a camper package towing a trailer and boat. Red plastic trailer and red and white plastic boat. Product #197 (1961-1962), #204 (1963-66). 20.5L x 4.75W x 6H inches.

9. Fisherman Camper. Like the fisherman Rampside, but with a Rampside camper #304 (1965) 18L x 4.5W x 5H inches.



1. Red Greenbrier. Two-tone red Deluxe model with chrome front window trim, bumpers and hubcaps. Product # NEO46525.

2. Turquoise Corvan. Two-tone turquoise with same level of detail as Greenbrier but with standard trim (white bumpers, hubcaps, and no front window trim). Product # NEO46527.



3. Turquoise Rampside. Two-tone turquoise with standard trim with same level of detail as other models, including the load bed. Product # NEO46526.

Pennsylvania Elks (1960s?)

The actual manufacturer of this unique item is unknown, and it was likely a very limited run for a special event. But it's cool enough to include here.



1. Greenbrier bank. Solid white, blow-mold bank was produced for the Pennsylvania Elks. Has coin slot on top and "Home Service Program" and the Elks Logo embossed on the sides.

Premier Products Company (1960s)

Premier Products Co. was located in Brooklyn, NY. Except for the Corvair Models reproduction, this was the only Corvair 95 assembly model.

1. Rampside. The plastic parts were molded in red/orange, blue, brown, orange/white, and swirly “marble-cake”-like colors. The body and roof were assembled from separate pieces; chrome parts included the bumpers, light bezels, grille and hubcaps. An engine was located under the bed cover. 6.5L x 2.5W x 2.5H inches. Product #1261.



2. Yesterday and Today Rampside. This double kit packaged a #1261 Rampside with a #1293 1907 Mack Dump truck. Both kits were packaged in a single box. Product #190.

Stahlberg – 1960s

Stahlberg was a Finnish company that specialized in making dealership promotional models for a variety of foreign car manufacturers, mainly Volvo and Saab from the 1960s to about 1992. These are very rare.

1. Loadside. Made of multi-piece plastic construction, with vivid red, white and blue colors. Black wheels with white hubcaps. 10.5L x 5W x 5H inches.



2. Dump Truck. This fantasy toy has the same red two-tone Loadside cab and a red rear subframe on which is mounted a shallow flat, blue dump bed that hinges from the rear. 11L x 5W x 5H inches.

Structo (1960s)

Structo operated in Freeport, IL from 1911 – 1973 with a name chosen to convey the “indestructo-ble” quality of their pressed steel toys. All of their Corvair 95 toys had a solid body color and rubber white wall tires and metal hubcaps, which was upgraded to mag wheels in the final production year. The ramp of open bed Rampside can be lowered.



1. School Bus Greenbrier. Had solid yellow body with the white plastic cab adornments. Has windows around but shy one on each side behind the cab. Product #196 (1962-63). 10.5L x 4.75W x 5H inches.

2 & 3. Early and Late Style Rampside. The cab of early models (1961-2) has front roof support pillars angled forward. In later years the cab better reflected an actual Corvair-95, but only the early style cab was adorned with a plastic roof air horns, mirrors and movable wipers. The colors of the body and plastic bed liner varied over the years, including (body color/liner color) blue/white, copper/tan, gold/white, maroon/tan, olive/olive, red/white, red/tan, red/yellow, teal/tan, and yellow/tan. Only the yellow and gold models sold in 1969 came with mag wheels. Product #195 (1961-62), #194 (1963-66), #230 (1967-69). 10.5L x 4.5W x 5H inches.