



North Carolina LEGO Train Club
300 Victor Hugo Dr.
Cary, North Carolina 27511

December 9, 2003

News & Observer
Attn: Matt Ehlers
215 S. McDowell St.
Raleigh, NC 27601

Matt:

From December 1st, 2003 through January 4th, 2004 the North Carolina LEGO® Train Club (NCLTC) will have our train layout on display at South Hills Mall as part of their Christmas theme. We will have a large train layout constructed entirely of LEGO® bricks on display. Our layout is approximately 17' long and 12' wide and will have three trains operating simultaneously.

On Saturday, December 13th from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM NCLTC will host a building day where a play area will be set up where kids (and adults) can build with a large pile of LEGO® bricks and run a LEGO® train. During the building event we will be collecting canned food on behalf of the Food Bank of North Carolina. Each person who makes a donation will have an opportunity to win a LEGO® train set we are giving away. The building event runs.

We would appreciate any coverage of our event you might be able to provide. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at either via e-mail at mike_walsh@mindspring.com or via phone at 919.349.5833.

Enclosed please find some additional information on our group and the event itself. More information and pictures from previous events can be found on our web site: <http://www.ncltc.cc>

Sincerely,

North Carolina LEGO® Train Club

Mike Walsh

Enclosures (5)

cc:



THE NORTH CAROLINA LEGO® TRAIN CLUB IS IN TOWN



FROM NOVEMBER 28TH THROUGH JANUARY 4TH
A 12'X17' TRAIN LAYOUT CONSTRUCTED ENTIRELY
OF LEGO BRICKS WILL BE ON DISPLAY IN FRONT OF
TOM'S TRAIN STATION AT SOUTH HILLS MALL.



North Carolina LEGO Train Club

www.ncltc.cc

info@ncltc.cc

Tom's Train Station

www.tomstrainstation.com

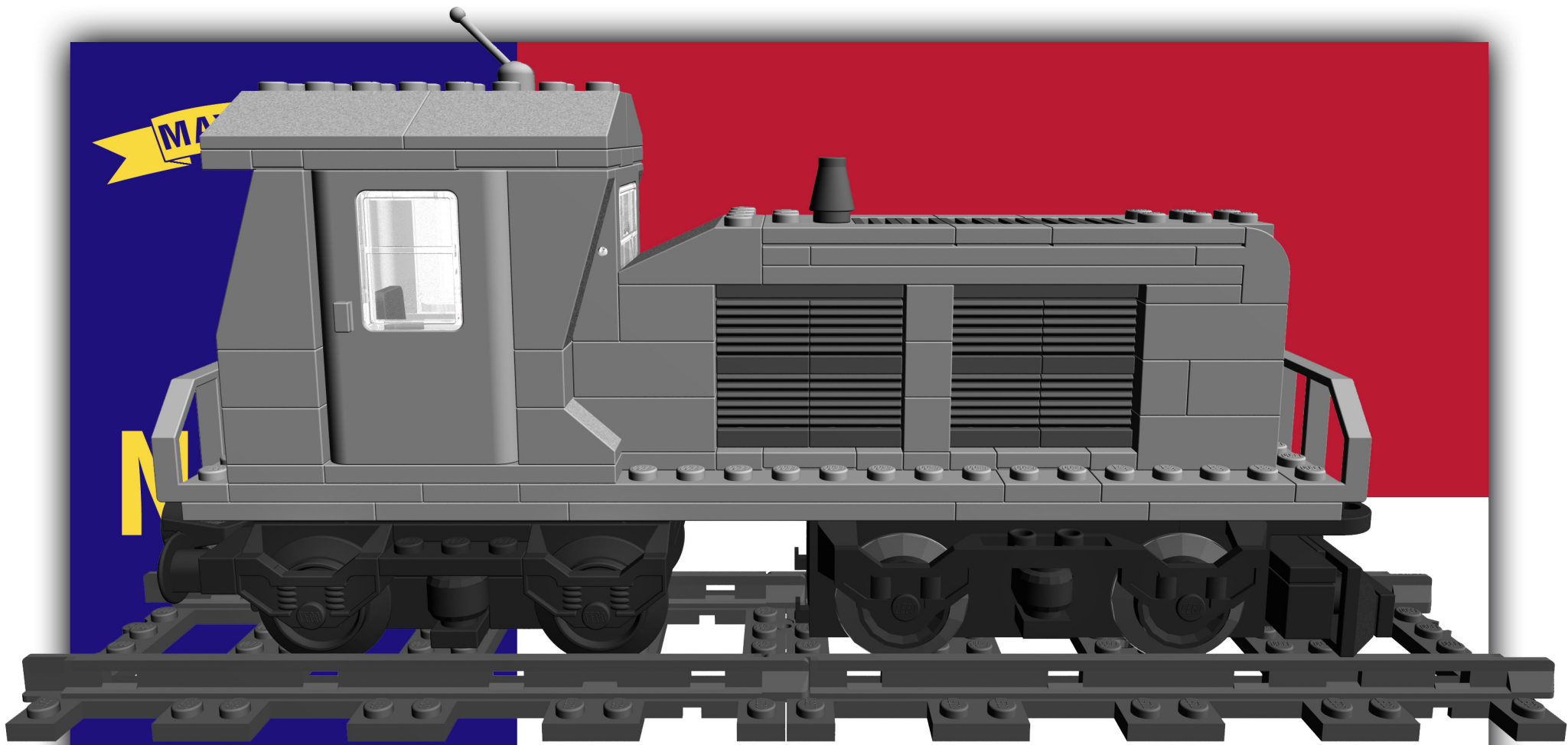
(919) 388-7246

South Hills Mall

1201 Buck Jones Road

Raleigh, NC 27606

THE NORTH CAROLINA LEGO® TRAIN CLUB INVITES YOU TO BUILD WITH US!



NCLTC
North Carolina LEGO® Train Club

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2003 1:00-4:00 PM

THE NCLTC PLAY AREA WILL BE SET
UP WHERE KIDS (AND ADULTS TOO)
CAN BUILD WITH LEGO BRICKS
AND RUN A
LEGO TRAIN.



BRING TWO CANS OF FOOD FOR
THE FOOD BANK OF NORTH
CAROLINA AND BE ENTERED IN
A DRAWING TO WIN
A LEGO TRAIN SET.





LEGO® Train Display

FAQ

(Frequently Asked Questions)

Please Do Not Remove

<http://www.ncltc.cc>

info@ncltc.cc



I didn't know LEGO® made trains. Are they something new?

LEGO® trains have been around since the 1960s in one form or another. In 1966 came the first sets with track and battery powered motors. LEGO® trains are usually divided into three groups based on their operating voltage, but all are compatible to a certain extent. They all run on the same gauge track, measuring just over 4 LEGO® studs internally. Battery trains (4.5V) and 12V DC electric trains were available concurrently through 1992. Unfortunately, the 12V sets were never available in North America. The current 9V series has been available since 1990, and is the main focus of this display. A fairly comprehensive review of LEGO® trains was collected by Matt Bates and is hosted on the North Georgia LEGO® Train Club web site [www.ngltc.org/train_depot].

This stuff isn't "real" model railroading, is it?

LEGO® trains are toys as well as models. They are similar in ambiance to the classic toy trains of the early 20th century, in that they cannot be, and are not intended to be, exact scale replicas of prototype equipment. They can get close, and are a significant challenge to build and operate as they involve more "scratch building" than most commercial scale model railroad kits. And, they're kid pleasers.

Are they kits or do you just make them up?

Many of the trains here today are from regular LEGO® kits, but most of what you see is custom designed and built. These custom models were built by AFOLs (Adult Fans Of LEGO®), using standard LEGO® bricks, without any instructions. Try to guess which models are originals! The nice thing about LEGO® trains is that you can always change what you have built. If you don't like the original LEGO® designs, you can change them into anything you can imagine. It's the ultimate in kit bashing, with no waste as your mistakes just go back in your parts bins!

Is this ALL yours?

All of the LEGO® you see on the layout is privately owned. The buildings, mountains, vehicles, trains were assembled by the group of people participating in the show layout. The LEGO® Company has very generously donated most of the LEGO® bricks in the "kid's play area". We would like to thank The LEGO® Company for their help in making the "kid's play area" a reality.

I've never seen LEGO® like this in stores, where do you buy the sets and parts?

Unfortunately, few stores carry LEGO® trains, and if they do, it is a very limited selection. Most of the parts and trains you see here were bought directly from the LEGO® "Shop at Home" service. You may reach them by phone at 1-800-835-4386 and they will send you the latest catalog. You may also go to the LEGO® website [LEGO.com] and look under trains for the current selection to buy over the web.

In addition, there are a number of AFOLs who are marketing their own designs, targeted at the adult hobbyist who enjoys additional features and complexity. Visit 'The Guild of Bricksmiths' website [www.bricksmiths.com] for more information.

You'll also need parts to make your own creations; lots of them! One of the best resources for individual LEGO® parts is BrickLink [www.bricklink.com]. Other websites you'll want to visit are the official LEGO® site [www.lego.com] and the LEGO® Users Group Network

[www.lugnet.com]. LUGNET™ is the place online where all things LEGO® are discussed. If LEGO® makes it, there is a discussion forum for it on LUGNET™. Without LUGNET™ (and its "predecessor", the Rec.Toys.LEGO newsgroup), none of us would have "met", and you wouldn't be seeing this display today.

How can I contact you for more information?

You may contact NCLTC by sending an e-mail to info@ncltc.cc. NCLTC is an informal group of adult LEGO® enthusiasts based in the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill and extended area. More information on NCLTC can be found at the NCLTC web site [www.ncltc.cc]. At this site you'll find photos of our layouts from past shows. You are also welcome to read and/or participate in our discussion group [news.lugnet.com/trains/org/ncltc/]. We are always looking for more people to contribute to the layout. If you are interested , please don't hesitate to contact us.

Are there other groups like yours?

Yes, in fact there are quite a few and more forming all of the time. Two groups in particular pioneered the large scale group LEGO® train layout. The Pacific Northwest LEGO® Train Club (aka PNLTC – www.pnltc.org) formed in 1997 and exhibited at the Portland GATS show that year. The Greater Midwest LEGO® Train Club (aka GMLTC) has one of the more impressive layouts as all of the modules are constructed entirely out of LEGO bricks and all of the bricks are owned by one individual! Some pictures of this layout can be seen on the GMLTC web site [www.gmltc.org]. Visit the International LEGO® Train Club Organization (aka ILTCO) web site [www.iltco.org] to see additional LEGO® Train Clubs and where they are located. The ILTCO web site also has an extensive library of resources for clubs starting out.

This is great, but it sounds expensive. Are many specialized parts required?

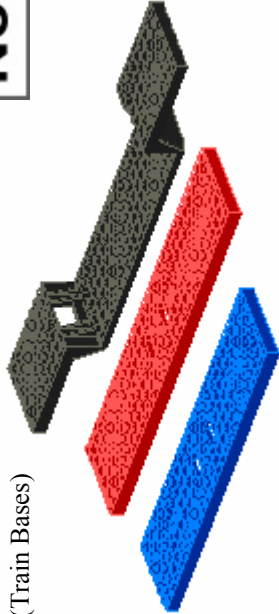
You can get started relatively inexpensively, (costs per car are similar to high quality G or tin-plate) as the train specific parts needed are a very small percentage of the total parts in any given model. The "kid's play area" is a great example of this. The layout consists of a figure-eight track which is constructed from three boxes of curved rails (4520), one box of straight rails (4515), and a cross track (4519). In addition to the train itself, a typical LEGO® train set includes an oval of track (16 sections of curved track and two or four sections of straight track) and a speed regulator. The only other train specific pieces are train wheels and a train motor which were provided by members from NCLTC. The other pieces are the same "bits of imagination" you'd find inside any other LEGO® set. Of course, the usual way to start with LEGO® trains is to buy a set that has all the necessary pieces and add parts to it. The diagram on the following page illustrates the various LEGO® train parts.



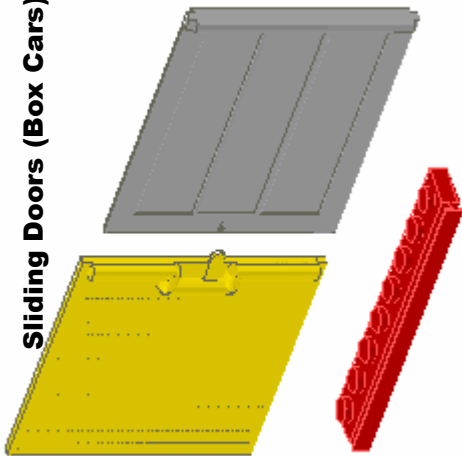
LEGO® Train Elements



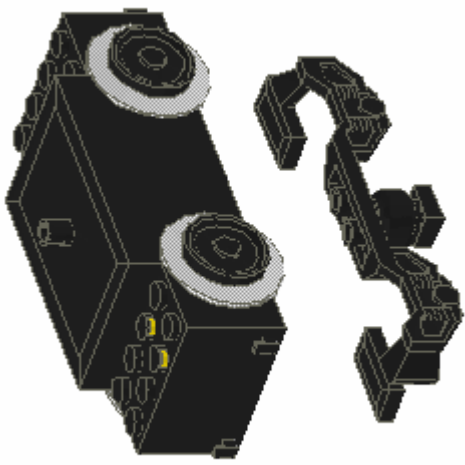
Wagon Plates (Train Bases)



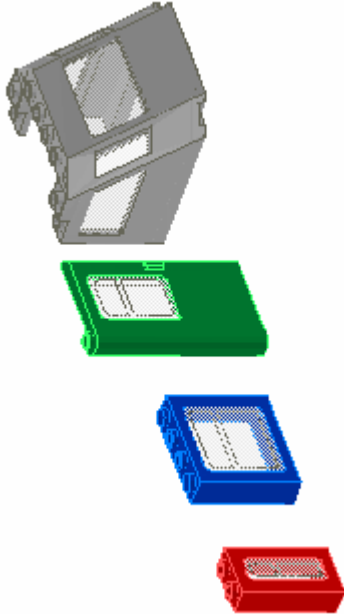
Sliding Doors (Box Cars)



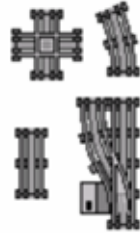
9V Train Motor



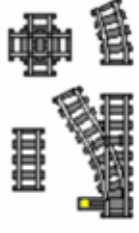
Train Windows



12 V Train Track



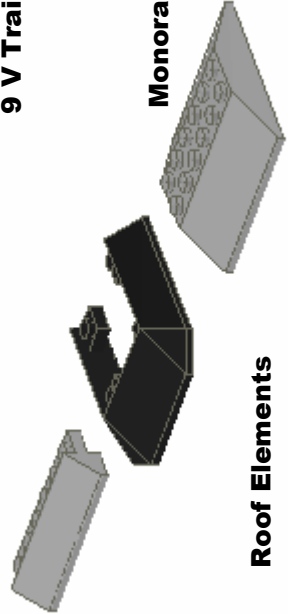
9 V Train Track



Monorail Track

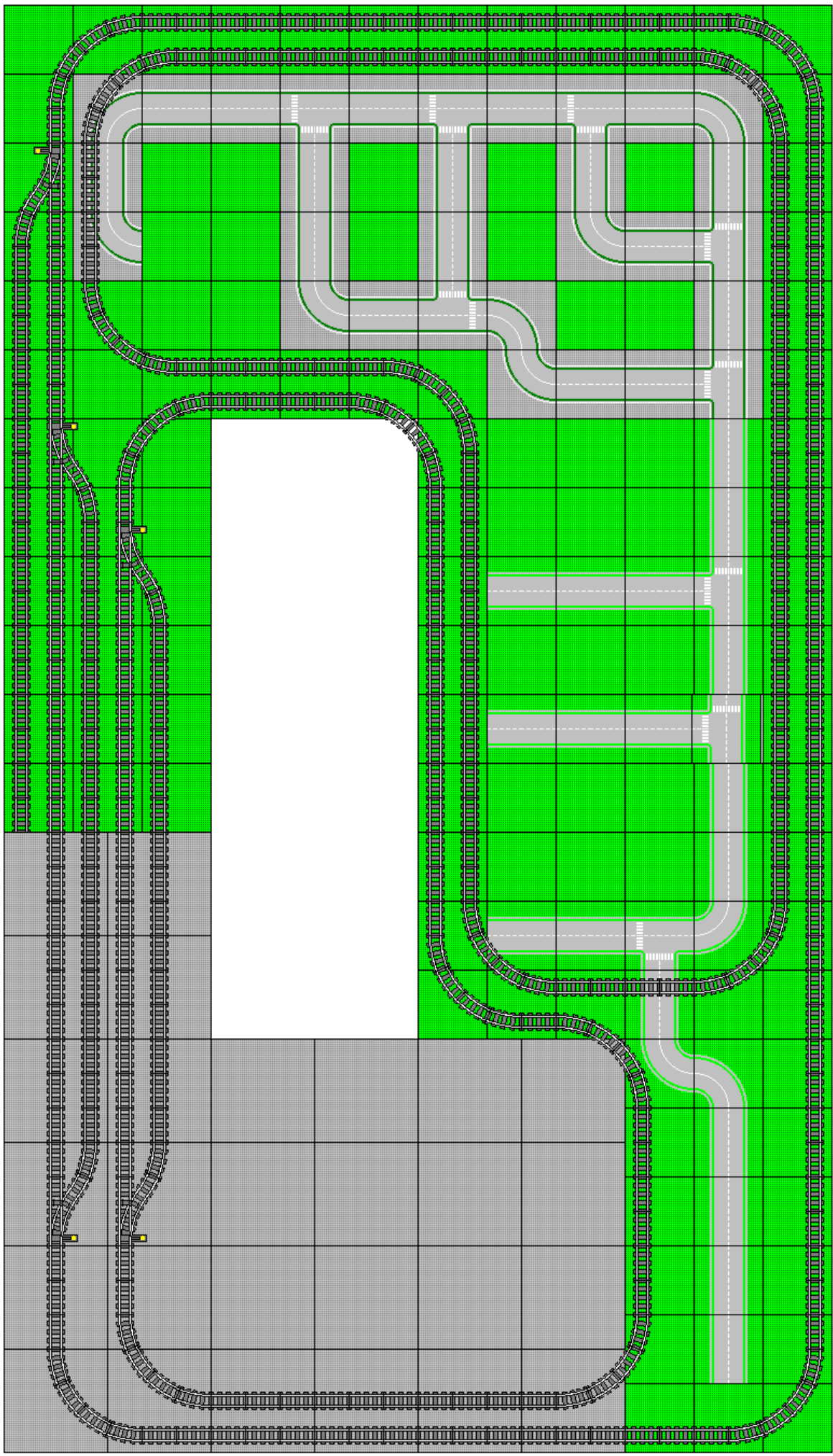


Roof Elements



Wheels and Truck Ele-





Layout dimensions:
 Studs 682, 394
 Imper. 17'10", 10'4"
 Metric 5.46m, 3.15m

Layout area:
 Studs 268708
 Imper. 185.11 sq ft
 Metric 17.20 sq m

Part No.	Quantity	Colour	Class	Description
6322	18	Default	Road (Green)	Straight Road
6320	3	Default	Road (Green)	T Junction
6321	3	Default	Road (Green)	Curved Road
2360	6	Default	Road	T Junction
2358	17	Default	Road	Straight Road
2359	7	Default	Road	Curved Road
626	108	Default	Basic	Baseplate Green
628	28	Default	Basic	Large Baseplate
2867	69	Default	9V Train	Curved Track
2865	268	Default	9V Train	Straight Track
2859	3	Default	9V Train	Right Points
2861	2	Default	9V Train	Left Points