

A track slider will help keep your track clean by Byron Fenton

A slider under some of your cars will help keep your track clean. I got this from Sherman Zell during the convention. He runs these on his very long trains, usually 30 to 40 cars or more, says these work great. See attached pictures of my version. I did not get any details from him, just saw them and made my own. If your track is very dirty these will bump along, with cleaner track they do not. Sherman said no additional weight is required. This will help keep your track clean, but will not clean a dirty track. This type of device has been used in the smaller scales for the same purpose.

Here is how to do it. See attached pictures and drawing. These dimensions are for the narrow gauge cars, if you are running the longer standard gauge cars you could make them longer, also you should make sure the width will work on you curves, it may be necessary to make them wider or locate them closer to one end of the car. I picked the 3-1/2" bolt centers by looking to see where the holes would be on the car, this seemed to work the best, and you can use some different dimensions if it works for you. The following should work for most applications

Material list:

Plywood 1/2" x 5" x 3-1/8" taper both ends on the bottom, see drawing.

2- #10-24 x 2-1/2" flat head machine screws with washers and nuts.

9/64" (#28) drill for the #10 screws, and counter sink with a 5/16" drill.

2- 7/32" brass tube 2" long.

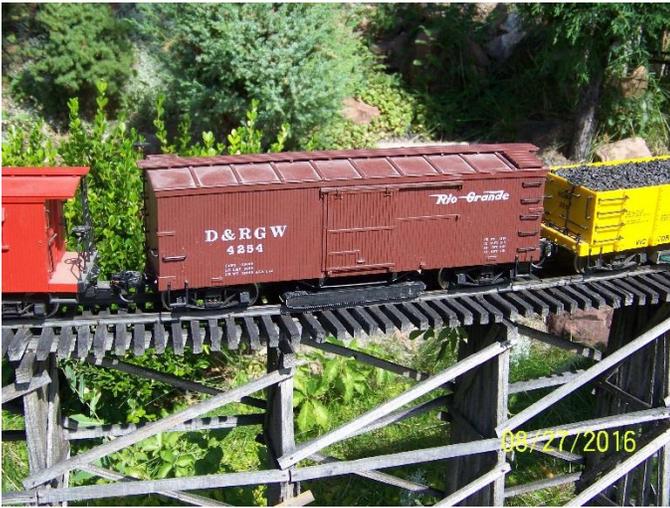
2- Brass strips 1/32" x 1/4" x 2-3/4" lg., drill 3 1/8" holes.

6- #4 x 3/8" self-tapping screws and a 1/16" drill.

Flat black spray paint.

Drywall sanding screen 180 grit, cut to 7-7/8" long, I have not tried the coarser grit of 100, might be OK. Cutting this is hard on regular scissors, use cutters for metal if available.

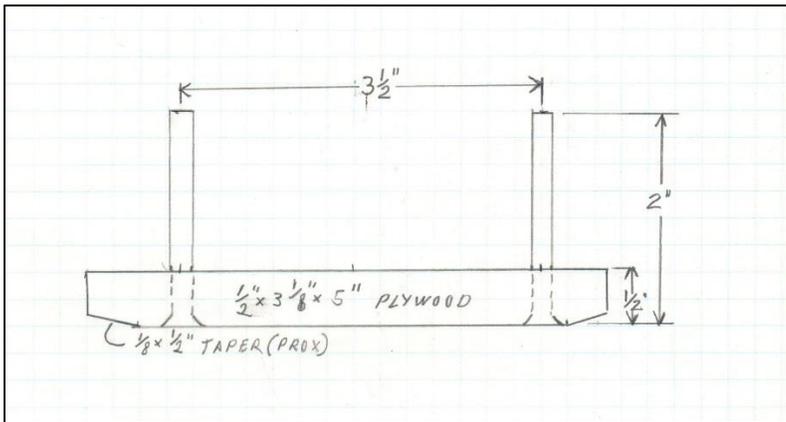
Start with Plywood 1/2" x 5" x 3-1/8" taper the ends about 1/8" by 1/2", drill two 9/64" (#28) holes 3-1/2" apart centered on the block. Use a 5/16" drill bit to countersink the bottom side of the holes. Thread the #10-24 X 2-1/2" flat head machine screws from the bottom up through the wood. Put a washer and a nut on the top of the wood. Then slip a 2" long brass tube down over the machine screw, using a side cutter crimp the tube near the bottom to insure it does not work up and off the screw and then screw it down tight to the nut. With this method you can remove the tube and the screw if needed, alternately you could glue in on. Take a brass strip about 2-3/4" long and drill three 1/8" holes in it to secure the screen. Place this strip on the block in the location to hold the screen, mark the hole locations and drill 1/16" holes. Run the screws down into the holes now and then remove them. At this point I would install the brass strips with the screws, and paint the assembly flat black, (it is not necessary to paint the brass tubes), this makes it much easier to put the brass strips in the correct location when installing the screen, as this area will not be painted. Remove the screws and brass strips. Cut the screen to 7-7/8" long and wrap it around the wood block, with about 1/8" projecting on one side, attach on one end with the brass strip and screws then make it as tight as possible and attach the opposite end. Then cut the wide side to about 1/8" projection. Make sure the tops of the screws have the same C-C distance as the bottom (3-1/2"). Next you need a car to put this under, if you use a car with truss rods make sure it has at least 3/4" clearance above the rails. Drill two 5/16" holes 3-1/2" apart on the centerline of the car, they do not have to be centered on the length of the car, just make sure the wheels will clear the block, if it is not centered.



Car with painted slider in place



Unpainted track slider



Drawing of slider, see text for details