

DETAILING PASSENGER CAR INTERIORS

by Joe J. Nichols Sr.

PREPARING THE CAR. Replace the plastic wheel sets with metal wheels, such as Kadee JayBee, etc. We will need to remove the inner surface of the brake shoes so that the wheels roll freely. Remove the horn-hook couplers and body-mount Kadee, McHenry or similar couplers. Apply handrails, handgrabs, roof vents, antenna (if needed) and diaphragms. Install marker lights and rear roof light on observation car, and drumhead if needed. On postal cars, install the mail pick-up catcher. Run the cars in a train until you are completely assured that it is mechanically satisfactory. To add weight, and remove any weights from inside the car, we want to place the weights inside the underframe. Cut slots in a piece of wood, 5.5 mm wide and 9.0 mm deep. Attach a wood piece on each end to prevent the lead from running out the ends. Melt some lead on the kitchen stove and pour into the slots. When cool, remove the lead strips from the wood slots, clean up with a file, cut to correct length and glue lead strip inside the frame with white glue. Remove any projections on the surface of the floor. Cut a strip of 2-ply Strathmore board, .020" styrene or Manila file folder to fit inside the car to form a floor. Cut out the notches where the roof tabs snap into place thru the floor. Cut several of these at one time, since the same size fits most cars. The floor for headend cars will probably need to be cut to a shorter length to fit, and the end of the observation car floor will need to be rounded to fit. Mark off the window locations. Measure from the lower edge of the window to the floor and adjust the height of all interior components to compensate for the higher floor. Measure from floor to top of car sides and this will be the height of the partitions. I use 6'9" . Cut several strips to this size from .020 plain sheet styrene. Study various passenger car floor plans to determine what interior components will be used. Fit partitions and components to match your car's window pattern. We don't want a partition to lie in the center of a window.

POSTAL AND BAGGAGE CARS; Wood plank floors were usually used in headend cars. See floor plan. Partitions, personnel cabinet and letter sorting file are built up using the partition strips. Mail sack sorting racks are built up of .020 styrene and .019 brass wire. Commode and stove may be commercial castings.

COACHES; Partitions are made up as shown in floor plans and to conform to the model's windows. Items such as toilet tissue, handbasin, mirror, light, paper towel dispenser, and door handles are applied to the partitions before the partitions are glued to the floor. The seats are built up of balsa or basswood. Form a template from flat brass with one shaped to seat bottom and another to seat back with headrest. Cut a strip of balsa to the exact width of the seat back template. Slide the template back and forth along the wood strip until the wood conforms to the shape of the template. Repeat for the seat bottom. Paint these strips with a SOLVENT type paint (Floquill, Model Master, etc.). Do NOT use a water-base paint (such as Polly-s, Model Flex, etc.), because these make the wood grain swell and distorts the shape. Make a cutting jig to cut the seat bottom and seat back to the width of a coach seat, and glue the two parts together with seat back leaning back at a suitable angle. Round off the edges with an emery board, and glue on arm rests. Glue figures in the seats and glue seats onto the floor.

DINING CARS; Install partitions as indicated. The refrigerator, stove, counter, sinks and cabinets are built up of styrene using the same technique as the cabinet in the postal car. Paint all the kitchen surfaces shiny silver to simulate stainless steel, and

paint handles and stove top black. Build up tables using styrene and cover with heavy-duty aluminum foil to form table cloths and paint these flat white. Glue on correct size sequins to represent plates, and small discs to represent saucers. Paint these flat white. Cut the cups from white plastic insulation that has been stripped from wire. Using fine multi-stranded picture-hanging wire, cut short pieces and glue one strand on each side of the plate to represent silverware. Form a flower vase from a short piece of colored plastic insulation, glue on a tiny piece of green foam rubber and paint the tips of the green foam a bright color to simulate flowers.

SLEEPING CARS; Refer to floor plans and form partitions as indicated and to conform to the model's windows. Some cars had Pullman berths, some had sleeping compartments such as roomettes, drawing rooms, master bedrooms, etc. Add chairs, couches and hoppers (fold-up handbasins and commodes) as indicated. Restrooms are fitted out as described earlier. Apply brass wires as safety bars inside windows where the aisleway extends along the outer wall.

OBSERVATION CARS; Again, refer to the floor plans. Some cars might contain sleeping compartments, a buffet, a barber shop &/or beauty parlor, desks and tables, couches and chairs. The rear of the car was a large parlor area with several seats.

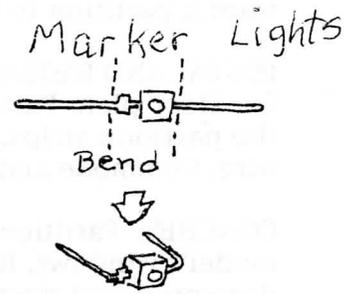
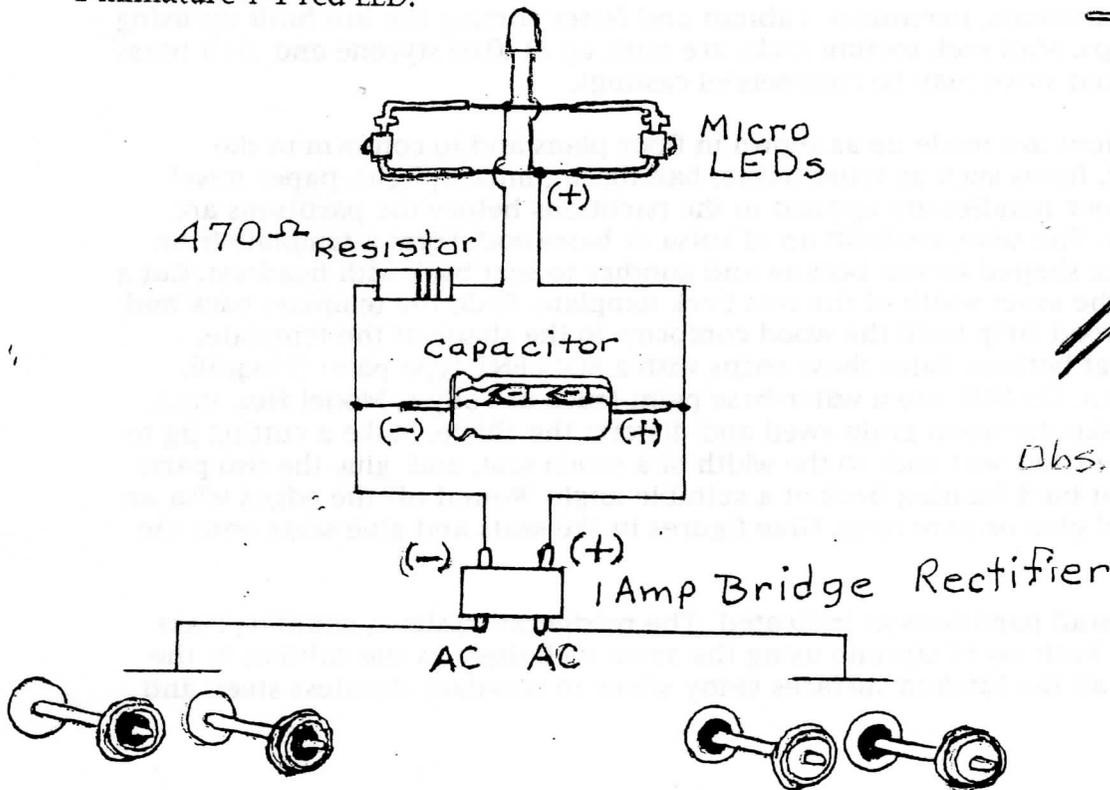
By mass-producing the parts, it saves time and assures uniformity.

A simple circuit for adding track-powered marker lights and a rear roof light to observation cars is as follows;

Components;

- Metal trucks insulated one side,
- 1 amp bridge rectifier 35v,
- 470 ohm resistor,
- 2,200 mfd capacitor,
- 2 micro LED's, red
- 1 miniature T-1 red LED.

Circuit for marker lights for cabooses and observation cars.



Obs. Rear Roof Light