

A plan for a 5'x9' table on 2 levels with maximum possibilities for realistic operations.

I built a smaller version of this plan back in the 80s on a 4' x 6' table, but I could and did use Atlas curved turnouts and a double slip switch then.

Later, I added more tracks using the XTrackCAD program to fit it on a 4' x 8' table, but using Atlas track and also still Set-track curved turnouts. I never built it.

Now I've used the XTrackCAD program to expand it to 5' x 9', but now using just Atlas track & turnouts. I have not built it but maybe someone will find it useful.

This plan is based on ideas in the book "Track Planning for Realistic Operation" by (I think) John Armstrong. It features: ease of construction on 2 levels with a ramp up to the upper one, a double track Main Line to run 2 trains round and round, 2 yards with a Branch Line between them for point to point operation, 2 turntables so you can use steam locos, a hidden circle of track to park trains, the Main Line uses 18" curves and #4 & #6 stitches & the Branch Line has some 15" curves & Atlas Snap Switches because the locos will be smaller there, and you could add a few 1 car sidings in a few places. You could easily run 3 or even 4 trains/locos at the same time. A line across the table shows where a scenery cliff is located and a view block at a tiny tunnel.

The XTrackCAD program doesn't let me easily attach it to emails or forum threads. I had to print it, scan it, and then attach the scanned file.

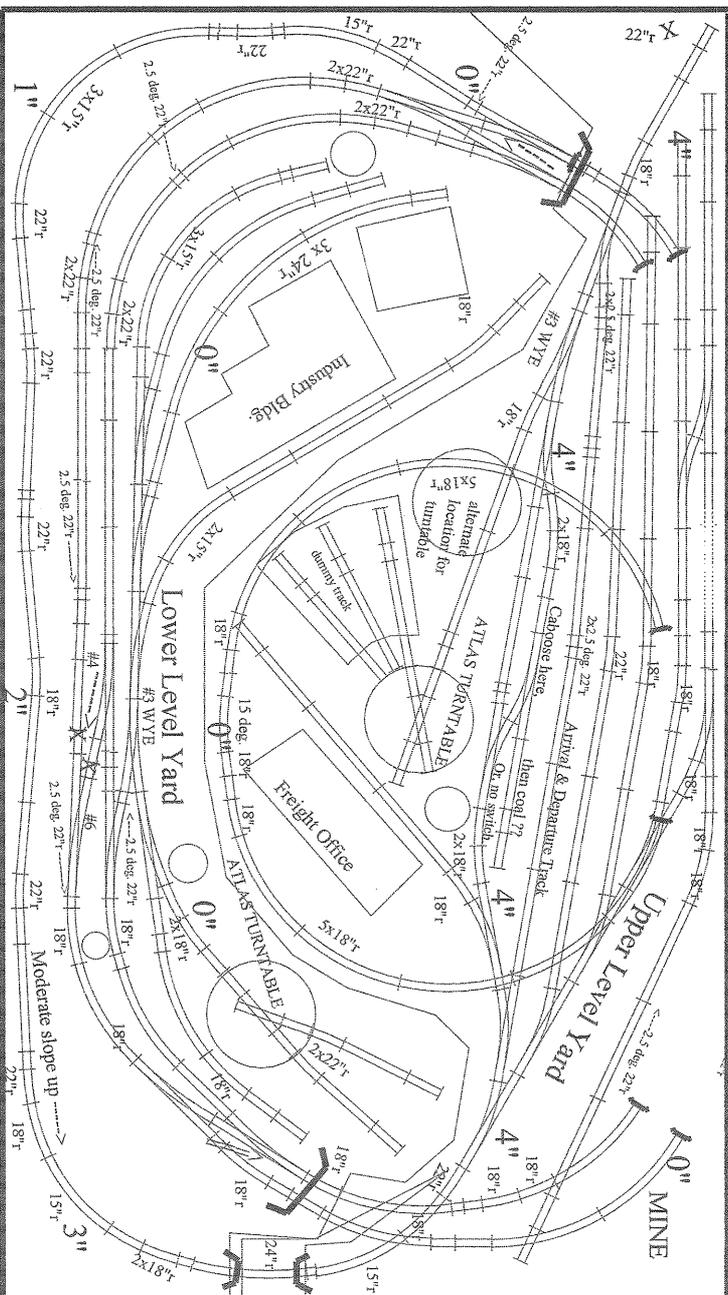
The printing process has some bugs. I had to show the hidden circle of track as visible when it should be hidden and the same for other hidden tracks. I drew the hidden tracks under the runaround for the mine above the table for viability. I made bold tunnel portals to show where the tunnels are supposed to start.

HO Scale

The double crossover is under the Mine's runaround.

All small pieces that don't have a radius given are straight pieces.

I show the lower level hidden tracks here so you can see them more clearly. I used a double crossover because both needed to be in the same place. I hope the double crossover does not cause reverse curve derailments.



Two level HO plan on a 5'x9' table, with branch line & 2 yards. You will need to cut a hole to reach the hidden holding track.

Lower level has a double track Main Line, with 3or 4 crossovers. It uses mainly 18" curves & #4 Atlas switches & 1 #3 Wye.

It has a long tunnel with a holding circle to hide trains. If it had 15" radius you'd have more room in the Lower Yard.

It has a yard with one #6 switch and an Atlas 9" turntable. The upper level has a larger yard with Atlas Snap switches.

The branch line has 15" red and a steep slope up to a yard. The yard has 1 #3 Wye switch and another Atlas turntable.

There are 2 sidings. I is a big Mine.

The optional double crossover lets trains make much shorter runs from the lower yard up to the upper yard and to return.

It does allow a lot more flexibility, though.

I use a lot of 7.5 & 2.5 deg. 22" rad. curved tracks because, I need those small amounts of curvature or they're easments.

The "X's" indicate where the tracks don't quite align perfectly. I show the turntables strangely to show how I got the angles right.

The turntables are a little far from the table edge, a long reach. The 2 hidden holding tracks are about 99" & 72" long.

The lower yard departure track is 72" long, track below it is 81".

I see you using 8 car (+ loco & caboose) for the mainline trains, and 4 car (plus) for the branch line, but 6 cars will fit.

I hope the 22" piece in the branch line near the 2' mark does not cause derailments because it is a reverse curve.

I'm trying to make it look more separate from the mainline.