

Scratchbuilding H0 Scale Freight Cars

How to get started building freight cars. An online clinic by Alan Saatkamp, MMR.

[Click here to download the PowerPoint clinic slides.](#)

Make Your Own Great Looking Pine Trees

Tools and misc supplies:

- Electric drill with a hook of some kind (I made one from a coat hanger)
- Wire Cutters
- Scissors
- Waxed paper

Shopping list:

- Ace Hardware
 - Sisal twine
 - 18 gauge wire
 - Cheap gray or black spray paint
- Lewis Drug
 - Hairspray – Aqua-Net Extra Hold unscented – cheaper really is better.
- Hobbytown USA
 - Fine Turf – weeds (shaker) Woodland Scenics
 - Other colors of fine turf if desired
 - Glue – Walthers Goo and gluing tips OR Sticky

Bond

- Hobby Lobby
- Brown floral tape

Instructions:

1. Prepare the twine a few days before you want to make trees.
 - Boil the twine in water for 30 minutes to soften and straighten the fibers.
 - Dry the twine by hanging it over a pipe or somewhere it can drip-dry.
 - Weight one end of the twine while drying to promote straightening of the fibers
2. Once the twine has dried, cut and sort the twine to length. For H0 scale, cut several strands of approximately three lengths of 2, $1\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch each. Sort into piles.



3. Decide what height you want a tree at. Take that figure times two and add about 4-6 inches. Cut this length of wire and fold it into a V-shape. Try to make sure the arms of the V are in a plane.



4. Apply adhesive to one arm of the V. Start and stop around two inches either end of the arm of the V. If you choose the Sticky Bond, then allow around 10 minutes for the glue to dry.
5. Take one piece of twine and begin to separate it into strands and flatten it out.
6. Place the strands onto the adhesive where the adhesive so that the wire intersect the strands at about mid-point at a right angle.



7. Repeat step 6 until you have covered the sticky part of the wire with strands.
8. Place the open ends of the V into a vice or clamp. The top of the wire forms a loop. Put the hook on the drill through the loop and gently twist the tree together.



9. Cut off the wire near the crown of the tree where there is no more twine.
10. Gasp the tree by the trunk and turn it while pausing occasionally to trim excess twine.
11. Spray the tree with gray paint to hide the wire trunk and light strands that form its branches.



12. Spray the tree with hairspray and immediately dust with the turf material over some waxed paper.
13. Dust away from where you paint and spray hairspray so that the excess ground cover remains dry and can be recovered for re-use.

14. Re-coat the tree with hairspray and a dullcote if desired.
15. For trees that will appear in the foreground, use floral tape to treat the exposed trunk

Notes:

- If you model in H0 or 0, use smaller 'N' or 'Z' scale trees to 'force perspective' that the trees are a long distance away from the viewer.



- We made many of these small trees on one cutting of wire and separated sets of twine strands by a few inches so he would only have to drill once for several trees.
- You may wish to use different colors to simulate different species, ages and health conditions of

Individual trees. Don't be afraid to overcoat or mix the turf material to get

- Try not to make your trees too much the same as each other individuals in each species can vary greatly based on growing conditions and genetics
- Research the trees in the particular locale you want to model to find out what species and characteristics you need to portray.

Douglas Fir



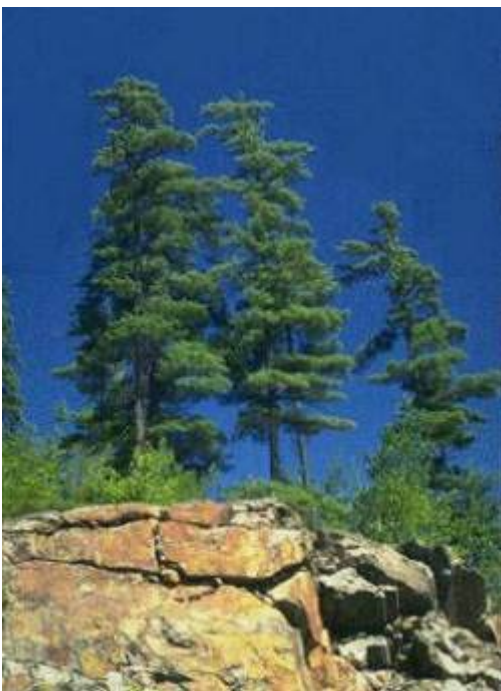
Douglas Fir

Ponderosa Pine



Colorado Blue Spruce

Colorado Blue Spruce



Western White Pine

Black Hills Spruce