

# All Aboard!

A Comprehensive Introduction to Model Trains



Perfect for Beginners and Newcomers Alike!

**BY GEORGE RENO**

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## **Introduction**

**HELLO, AND WELCOME TO ALL ABOARD!, A COMPREHENSIVE INTRODUCTION TO THE FUN AND EXCITING HOBBY OF MODEL TRAINS. THIS SPECIAL GUIDE WILL HELP TO FAMILIARIZE YOU WITH BASIC INFORMATION THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW IF YOU'RE JUST STARTING OUT WITH MODEL TRAINS OR ARE CONSIDERING THIS AS A HOBBY AND IS DEDICATED TO BEGINNERS AND NEWCOMERS ALIKE.**

**TRAIN MODELING IS OFTEN TIMES SAID TO BE "THE WORLD'S GREATEST HOBBY" AND FOR GOOD REASON. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT MAKE THIS HOBBY SO SPECIAL TO SO MANY PEOPLE WORLD WIDE.**

**THE THING THAT REALLY SETS TRAIN MODELING APART FROM OTHER HOBBIES IS THE FACT THAT IT IS EXTREMELY EASY TO GET INTO FOR PEOPLE OF ANY AGE, GENDER, OR SKILL LEVEL. ADDITIONALLY, IT ALSO ALLOWS YOU TO CHALLENGE YOUR CREATIVITY AND BUILD WONDROUS WORKS OF CRAFTSMANSHIP AND ENGINEERING THAT YOU CAN BE PROUD OF AND SHOW OFF TO OTHERS.**

**HERE ARE SOME OF THE BEST THINGS ABOUT TRAIN MODELING:**

- **GETTING STARTED IS SUPER-EASY**
- **ENJOY UNLIMITED FREEDOM TO BUILD WHAT YOU WANT, HOW YOU WANT**
- **YOU HAVE EASY ACCESS TO PARTS, TOOLS AND SUPPLIES THROUGH THE INTERNET AND HOBBY SHOPS**
- **YOU CAN CHALLENGE YOUR SKILL AND CREATIVITY WITH ADVANCED PROJECTS**
- **IT'S EASY TO IMPRESS YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY WITH YOUR CRAFTSMANSHIP**
- **YOU DON'T HAVE TO HAVE TALENT TO CREATE AMAZING MODEL TRAIN SETS**
- **THE ONLINE TRAIN MODELING COMMUNITY IS FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING**

**ANOTHER THING THAT SOME PEOPLE TEND TO OVERLOOK IS THAT TRAIN MODELING IS AN ART FORM. UNLIKE OTHER ART FORMS, SUCH AS PAINTING OR PLAYING A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT, TRAIN MODELING REQUIRES NO TALENT TO GET STARTED AND BECOMING SKILLED IS INCREDIBLY EASY. YOU'RE FREE TO WORK AT YOUR OWN PACE AND PROGRESS TO MORE ADVANCED SETS AND TECHNIQUES AS YOU SEE FIT. EVEN BEGINNERS CAN MAKE SOME REALLY AMAZING CREATIONS!**

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW A BIT ABOUT WHY TRAIN MODELING IS KNOWN AS "THE WORLD'S GREATEST HOBBY" LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT HOW TO GET STARTED!**

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## Chapter 1: Getting Started

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT TRAIN MODELING DOESN'T START WITH PURCHASING A MODEL TRAIN SET AT ALL. THE FIRST THING YOU HAVE TO DO IS CREATE AN AREA UPON WHICH TO PLACE THE TRACK, CREATE THE SCENERY, AND ADD OTHER MODELS SUCH AS BUILDINGS AND CARS. KEEP IN MIND THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO CREATE A COMPLETE ENVIRONMENT SUCH AS THIS IF YOU'RE JUST STARTING OUT, YOU CAN SIMPLY SET UP THE MODEL TRAIN SET ITSELF IF YOU PREFER.**

### *Creating Your Work Bench*

**REGARDLESS OF HOW COMPLEX YOU WANT YOUR FIRST PROJECT TO BE, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SET IT ON AS PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED. THIS CAN BE A TABLE YOU CRAFT YOURSELF, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS A "WORK BENCH" AMONG TRAIN MODELERS. ALTERNATELY, YOU COULD SIMPLY PURCHASE A TABLE TO USE. THIS CAN BE CHEAPER WITH SMALLER TABLES BUT BUILDING THE WORK BENCH YOURSELF MAYBE MORE COST EFFECTIVE WITH LARGER TABLES.**

**IT SHOULD ALSO BE MENTIONED THAT BUILDING YOUR OWN WORK BENCH TENDS TO GIVE YOU MORE OPTIONS WHEN IT COMES TO ADDING SCENERY. A WORK BENCH CONSTRUCTED OUT OF PLYWOOD WITH A FOAM BASE ALLOWS YOU TO MORE EASILY ADD SCENERY SUCH AS BUILDINGS OR CREATE UNIQUE FEATURES SUCH AS LAKES. IF THIS SOUNDS A BIT TO AMBITIOUS FOR YOU AS A BEGINNER DON'T BE AFRAID TO KEEP THINGS SIMPLE.**

**ONE THING TO REMEMBER IS THAT HOW BIG OR HOW SMALL YOUR WORK BENCH IS WILL DICTATE HOW BIG YOUR MODEL TRAIN SET CAN BE, AS WELL AS THE SURROUNDING SCENERY. IT IS BEST TO HAVE AN IDEA OF HOW LARGE YOU WANT THE COMPLETED WORK TO BE BEFORE YOU CREATE YOUR WORK BENCH OR PURCHASE A TABLE.**

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## *Choosing A Model Train Set*

WHEN PEOPLE FIRST GET INTO TRAIN MODELING THEY TEND TO PURCHASE A STARTER TRAIN SET. THIS TENDS TO HAVE IT'S ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES. THE GOOD THING IS THAT A STARTER SET IS VERY EASY TO SET UP AND COMES WITH A TRACK PLAN. THIS WILL ENSURE THAT IT FUNCTIONS PROPERLY AND THAT THERE ARE NO PROBLEMS SUCH AS NOT HAVING ENOUGH POWER OR THE TRAIN DERAILING DUE TO A BOTCHED TRACK LAYOUT.

THE DOWNSIDE TO THIS IS THAT THESE STARTER SETS OFFER VERY LITTLE ROOM FOR EXPANSION. THIS IS DUE TO SEVERAL FACTORS INCLUDING THE ELECTRICAL CAPACITY OF THE TRANSFORMER THE TRACK CAME WITH. WHILE ADDING NEW SECTIONS OF TRACK TO YOUR STARTER SET IS POSSIBLE THERE JUST MAY NOT BE ENOUGH POWER TO KEEP THE TRAIN GOING.

ALTERNATELY, YOU CAN BUILD A TRAIN SET FROM SCRATCH WHICH OFFERS UNLIMITED EXPANSION POTENTIAL. THIS IS GREAT FOR THOSE OF AN INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED LEVEL BUT MAY BE A DAUNTING TASK FOR BEGINNERS. YOU WILL NEED TO PURCHASE TRACK, RAILROAD CARS, AND ELECTRONICS SEPARATELY AND ASSEMBLE THE LAYOUT YOURSELF. THIS CAN LEAD TO SOME AMAZING CREATIONS FOR THOSE WITH THE PATIENCE AND DISCIPLINE TO STICK WITH IT FOR THE LONG-TERM.

THE DRAWBACK TO STARTING FROM SCRATCH IS THAT IT DOES TAKE MORE WORK, MORE PLANNING, AND MORE PATIENCE. IF YOU START FROM SCRATCH YOU'RE DEFINITELY NOT GOING TO HAVE A FUNCTIONING RAILROAD UP AND RUNNING OVERNIGHT.

OVERALL BEGINNERS MAY WANT TO START WITH AN ATTRACTIVE STARTER SET. WHILE THESE SETS TEND TO BE MORE SIMPLISTIC THEY ARE ALSO EASIER TO ASSEMBLE AND OFFER A GREAT INTRODUCTION TO THE HOBBY OF TRAIN MODELING. JUST MAKE SURE YOU DO YOUR RESEARCH BEFORE MAKING A PURCHASE AND REALIZE THAT THERE ARE LIMITATIONS AS TO HOW MUCH YOU CAN EXPAND A STARTER SET WITHOUT CREATING A JUMBLED NON-FUNCTIONING MESS IN MOST CASES.

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## Chapter 2: Weathering

WHILE HAVING A MODEL TRAIN DISPLAY SET UP THAT LOOKS PERFECT IN EVERY WAY MAY BE AN IMPRESSIVE SIGHT, IT ISN'T ALL THAT REALISTIC. IN REAL LIFE MOST TRAINS DON'T APPEAR AS IF THEY'RE BRAND NEW, THEY'RE WEATHERED AND WORN FROM YEARS OF USE AND BRAVING THE ELEMENTS. THIS ALSO APPLIES TO YOUR SCENERY AS WELL. PERFECTLY CHISELED MOUNTAINS, BUILDINGS THAT LOOK AS IF THEY WERE BUILT YESTERDAY, AND CARS THAT LOOK AS IF THEY'VE JUST ROLLED OFF OF THE ASSEMBLY LINE CAN CREATE AN ALMOST SURREAL LOOK AND FEEL.

WEATHERING IS THE ART OF TAKING YOUR MODEL TRAINS, AND THE ENTIRE DISPLAY IN MANY CASES, AND MAKING THEM LOOK MORE NATURAL AND REALISTIC. THIS MAY SOUND LIKE A SIMPLE TASK BUT IT DOES TAKE A BIT OF PRACTICE AND KNOW-HOW TO ACCOMPLISH. TRYING TO WEATHER YOUR TRAIN DISPLAY WHILE HAVING NO CLUE WHAT YOU'RE DOING CAN BE DISASTROUS.

### *Be Patient*

WHEN IT COMES TO WEATHERING THE NUMBER ONE RULE IS TO HAVE PATIENCE. AS YOU'RE WEATHERING YOUR MODEL TRAINS AND OTHER PARTS OF THE DISPLAY THEY'RE GOING TO LOOK REALLY UGLY UNTIL THE PROCESS IS COMPLETE. THIS CAN CAUSE FRUSTRATION IN BEGINNERS WHO MAY ASSUME THAT THEY'VE JUST RUINED THEIR MODEL.

DON'T GET FRUSTRATED AND GIVE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WEATHERING PROCESS OR YOU WILL BE LEFT WITH AN UGLY MESS. JUST REMEMBER, THE FINISHED PRODUCT WILL LOOK FINE IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND STICK WITH IT. WEATHERING IS ONE OF THOSE TASKS THAT YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO DO ONLY HALFWAY.

### *Different Techniques for Different Materials*

ANOTHER THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT WHEN WEATHERING MODEL TRAINS AND BOX CARS THE NATURE OF THE MODEL ITSELF WILL HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE WEATHERING PROCESS AND THE TECHNIQUES YOU USE. FOR EXAMPLE, IF

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YOUR HAVE A BOX CAR IS MADE OF PLASTIC THAT IS PER-COLORED AND NOT PAINTED YOU'RE GOING TO NEED TO PAIN THE INSIDE OF THE CAR AS WELL TO PREVENT LIGHT FROM SEEPING IN THROUGH THE THIN PLASTIC AND CREATING A "GLOW" EFFECT.

IF THE MODE TRAIN YOU'VE PURCHASED IS ONE OF THE MORE EXPENSIVE TYPES IT WILL PROBABLY COME PAINTED AND LOOK ALL NICE AND SHINY. WHILE THIS DOES LOOK NEAT, IT ISN'T REALISTIC AND YOU MAY WANT TO ELIMINATE THE SHINE. THE BEST WAY TO REMOVE THE "NEW TRAIN SHINE" IS TO APPLY A DULL CLEANER COAT TO THE MODEL.

### *Buildings and Other Objects*

IT WOULD LOOK PRETTY SILLY TO HAVE A WEATHERED TRAIN GOING AROUND THE TRACK IN A PRISTINE, UTOPIAN LOOKING CITY. IF YOU'RE GOING TO WEATHER YOUR TRAIN, YOU'RE GOING TO WANT TO DO THE SAME FOR THE REST OF YOUR DISPLAY. THIS ALSO INCLUDES SCENERY SUCH AS MOUNTAINS, TREES, AND OTHER NATURAL OBJECTS AS WELL.

WEATHERING BUILDINGS AND CARS CAN TAKE A BIT OF WORK BUT ISN'T TOO HARD. THERE ARE TECHNIQUES TO MAKE BUILDINGS APPEAR WEATHERED THAT INVOLVE USING TWO SEPARATE COATS OF PAINT WHICH WORK INCREDIBLY WELL. ALSO, RUST CAN BE APPLIED TO "METAL" OBJECTS EITHER USING A RUST COLORED PAINT OR ACTUAL REAL RUST WHICH CAN BE OBTAINED FROM ALLOWING STEEL WOOL TO SIT IN HOUSEHOLD VINEGAR FOR ABOUT A WEEK.

### *Start With Cleaning*

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED ON YOUR WEATHERING, MAKE SURE YOU THOROUGHLY CLEAN THE OBJECT YOU'RE GOING TO WEATHER FIRST. DUST, FINGERPRINTS, GREASE AND OTHER SUBSTANCES CAN INTERFERE WITH THE WEATHERING PROCESS. THIS IS BECAUSE WEATHERING TECHNIQUES REQUIRE VERY PRECISE APPLICATIONS OF PAINT AND SOMETIMES OTHER CHEMICALS, AND UNWANTED SUBSTANCES CAN CAUSE NEGATIVE EFFECTS.

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## Chapter 3: Common Beginner Mistakes

WHILE THE HOBBY OF TRAIN MODELING IS EASY TO GET INTO, THERE ARE COMMON MISTAKES THAT MOST BEGINNERS MAKE THAT END UP COSTING THEM A LOT OF TIME AND MONEY. THIS CAN BE VERY FRUSTRATING AND MAY EVEN CAUSE SOME BUDDING MODEL TRAIN ENTHUSIASTS TO GIVE UP AND QUIT. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THESE COMMON MISTAKES ARE EASILY AVOIDABLE.

### *Size Matters*

ONE THING BEGINNERS FAIL TO REALIZE MANY TIMES IS THE CONCEPT OF SCALE. SCALE REFERS TO THE SIZE COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MODEL SET AND THE REAL LIFE TRAIN IT IS BASED OFF OF. WHILE THIS IS EASY TO GET, AND NOT EVEN THAT NECESSARY TO UNDERSTAND WHEN IT COMES TO JUST THE MODEL TRAIN ITSELF, SCALE IS VERY IMPORTANT WHEN CREATING THE SCENERY OF THE DISPLAY.

ONE GOOD EXAMPLE OF PROBLEMS WITH SCALE IS CREATING BUILDINGS OR TREES THAT ARE TOO SMALL. BEGINNERS TEND TO MISJUDGE THE SCALE OF THE BUILDINGS AND TREES IN RELATION TO ONE ANOTHER AS WELL AS IN RELATION TO THE TRAIN ITSELF. THIS CAN LEAD TO A DISPLAY LOOKING LIKE SOME SORT OF BIZARRE FAIRYTALE WORLD WITH WARPED PROPORTIONS.

OVERCOMING THIS PROBLEM IS AS EASY AS UNDERSTANDING THE SCALE OF YOUR TRAIN ITSELF. IF YOUR TRAIN IS 1:160 (160 TIMES SMALLER THAN A REAL TRAIN) THEN YOU NEED TO MAKE THE BUILDINGS, TREES, PEOPLE, CARS, AND EVERYTHING ELSE 1:160 AS WELL. THIS IS AS EASY AS GETTING MEASUREMENTS FOR THE TYPES OF SCENERY YOU WANT AND DIVIDING BY 160.

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## *Being too Ambitious too Soon*

HAVING HIGH HOPE AND ASPIRATIONS AS A TRAIN MODELER IS GREAT AND HIGHLY ENCOURAGED. HOWEVER, IF YOUR AMBITION EXCEEDS YOUR SKILL LEVEL YOU MAY RUN INTO SOME PROBLEMS.

ONE OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS THAT MANY BEGINNERS FACE IS TRYING TOO MUCH TOO SOON. THEY BUILD A MASSIVE WORK BENCH AND HAVE PLANS TO BUILD A GLORIOUS MODEL TRAIN DISPLAY SIMILAR TO ONE THEY SAW IN A MAGAZINE OR MUSEUM. THE THING THEY'RE FORGETTING IS THAT HUGE DISPLAYS LIKE THAT CAN TAKE MONTHS OR EVEN YEARS TO COMPLETE.

THIS BECOMES PROBLEMATIC DUE TO THE FACT THAT MOST BEGINNERS WANT TO SEE RESULTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND HAVEN'T DEVELOPED THE SENSE OF PATIENCE THAT IS NECESSARY TO BUILD A MODEL TRAIN DISPLAY THAT'S LARGE AND COMPLEX. UNDERSTANDABLY, THIS CAN LEAD TO FRUSTRATION AND DISINTEREST AS THE HUGE WORK BENCH CONSTANTLY LOOKS INCOMPLETE.

THE PROBLEM OF BEING OVERLY AMBITIOUS IS BEST HANDLED BY STARTING SMALL. WHEN YOU'RE JUST STARTING OUT DON'T TRY AND BUILD THE GREATEST TRAIN DISPLAY IN THE WORLD JUST YET. START BY CREATING A SMALL DISPLAY THAT IS SIMPLISTIC YET HIGHLY DETAILED AND YOU'LL HAVE SOMETHING YOU CAN BE PROUD OF IN NO TIME!

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## **Chapter 4: Saving Money**

**TRAIN MODELING ISN'T EXACTLY THE CHEAPEST HOBBY AROUND BUT YOU CAN SAVE A TON OF MONEY IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING. IN ADDITION TO AVOIDING COMMON BEGINNER MISTAKES THAT DRAIN YOUR BANK ACCOUNT THERE ARE OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER AS WELL. IF YOU PLAY IT SMART YOU CAN DRASTICALLY CUT DOWN ON THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU WOULD OTHERWISE END UP SPENDING ON THIS EXCITING HOBBY.**

### ***Planning Your Budget***

**IF YOU'RE GOING TO BECOME A TRAIN MODELER YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET USED TO OPERATING ON A BUDGET IF YOU'RE NOT RICH. THIS CAN BE HARDER THAN YOU'D IMAGINE IF YOU ARE AN IMPULSE BUYER, ESPECIALLY SINCE GREAT DEALS ON MODEL TRAINS AND ACCESSORIES CAN BE FOUND WITH EASE IF YOU KNOW WHERE TO LOOK. BUILDING A MODEL TRAIN SET REQUIRED PATIENCE AND DISCIPLINE; ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO HOW MUCH YOU'RE SPENDING.**

**EACH MONTH YOU SHOULD ALLOT A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MONEY TO SPEND ON YOUR HOBBY. NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, EVEN IF YOU FIND A "ONCE IN A LIFETIME DEAL" DON'T GO OVER YOUR BUDGET. INCREDIBLE DEALS COME AND GO ALL THE TIME, YOU'LL FIND ANOTHER DOWN THE ROAD WHEN YOU CAN AFFORD IT. FOR THE TIME BEING, JUST STICK TO YOUR BUDGET BECAUSE ONCE YOU BREAK YOUR BUDGET YOU'LL BE TEMPTED TO DO SO AGAIN AND AGAIN.**

### ***Selling What You Don't Need***

**IF YOU'RE JUST STARTING OUT AND CREATE AN SIMPLE TRAIN DISPLAY AND FIND THAT YOU WISH TO UPGRADE IT TO SOMETHING A BIT MORE FANCY DON'T FORGET THAT YOUR CAN SELL PARTS THAT YOU NO LONGER NEED. THE PARTS THAT YOU NO LONGER NEED MAY HAVE NO USE TO YOU BUT THEY MIGHT BE EXACTLY WHAT ANOTHER TRAIN MODELER IS LOOKING FOR.**

**THERE ARE PLENTY OF SITES ONLINE WHERE TRAIN MODELING ENTHUSIASTS MEET TO TRADE AND SELL PARTS AND RESOURCES WITH ONE ANOTHER. THESE PLACES OFFER A FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE WHERE YOU CAN SEARCH FOR PARTS YOU NEED, GET TIPS ON VARIOUS MODELING TECHNIQUES, AND GENERALLY SHARE THE EXPERIENCE OF TRAIN MODELING WITH OTHERS. THIS ALLOWS YOU TO GET RID OF UNWANTED PARTS AND PIECES AND ACQUIRE THE ONES YOU NEED, OFTEN TIMES AT A BARGAIN PRICE.**

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YOU CAN ALSO UNLOAD UNWANTED PARTS ON AUCTION SITES SUCH AS EBAY AS WELL AS FIND MANY GREAT UPGRADES AND ACCESSORIES AT ULTRA-LOW PRICES. IN SOME CASES YOU CAN EVEN FIND ENTIRE TRAIN DISPLAYS WHICH YOU CAN BREAKDOWN AND USE TO RAPIDLY BUILD UP YOUR OWN DISPLAY.

JUST REMEMBER THAT WHEN A PART OF YOUR TRAIN DISPLAY BECOMES OBSOLETE THERE IS PROBABLY SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO COULD USE IT AND WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY OR TRADE FOR IT.

### *Doing Your Research*

GETTING INTO TRAIN MODELING DOES NOT START WITH PURCHASING A STARTER TRAIN SET, OR EVEN WITH BUILDING OR PURCHASING A WORK BENCH: TRAIN MODELING SHOULD ALWAYS START WITH RESEARCH. THE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT AS A BEGINNER YOU MAY THINK YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT BUT, DUE TO LIMITED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE, YOU MAY REALIZE LATER ON THAT THE MODEL TRAIN SET YOU PURCHASES ISN'T THE ONE YOU REALLY WANT. THIS HOBBY REWARDS CAREFUL PLANNING MORE SO THAN IMPULSIVE CREATION AND EXPANSION, AT LEAST FINANCIALLY SPEAKING ANYWAY.

THERE ARE MANY, MANY DIFFERENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO YOU WHEN YOU FIRST GET STARTED WITH MODEL TRAINS. IN FACT, IT CAN BE POSSIBLE TO SUFFER FROM "INFORMATION OVERLOAD" WHILE YOU RESEARCH WHAT KIND OF SET YOU WANT AND WHAT KIND OF DISPLAY YOU WOULD LIKE TO BUILD. STAY FOCUSED AND CONCENTRATE ON DEVELOPING A CLEAR IDEA OF EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT TO CREATE SO THAT YOU DON'T END UP HAVING TO SPEND MONEY TO REPLACE ITEMS THAT YOU BOUGHT HASTILY.

BE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AS YOU DO YOUR RESEARCH. JUST BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU MAY WANT TO GET A CERTAIN TYPE OF TRAIN DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU MAY NOT SEE ANOTHER THAT YOU LIKE BETTER. THE MORE OPTIONS YOU EXPOSE YOURSELF TO THE BETTER IDEA YOU'LL HAVE OF WHAT YOU REALLY WANT. FOR EXAMPLE, IT WOULD DO NO GOOD TO BUY A STEAM TRAIN SET ONLY TO DISCOVER LATER THAT YOU REALLY WANT DIESEL.

CHAPTER 6 WILL ACTUALLY GIVE YOU A HUGE LIST OF MODEL TRAIN MANUFACTURERS SO THAT YOU CAN TAKE A LOOK AROUND. THIS WILL HELP YOU TO GET AN IDEA OF WHAT KIND OF TRAIN SET YOU WANT AND WHAT TYPE OF DISPLAY YOU'D LIKE TO BUILD.

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## *Be Careful Who You Trust*

**WHEN PURCHASING MODEL TRAINS AND ACCESSORIES YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL WHO YOU BUY FROM AND WHO YOU TRUST WHEN IT COMES TO BUYING ADVICE. WHILE THERE ARE VERY FEW PEOPLE WHO WOULD INTENTIONALLY MISLEAD YOU, THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT MODEL TRAINS THAT SELL PARTS AND ACCESSORIES.**

**THIS INCLUDES STORE CLERKS AT HOBBY SHOPS WHO MAY NOT HAVE A STRONG GRASP ON THE ART OF TRAIN MODELING. IF THEY DON'T HAVE A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THE HOBBY, THEN CHANCES ARE THEY AREN'T IN ANY POSITION TO ADVISE YOU ON WHAT YOU BUY FOR YOUR DISPLAY.**

**YOU ALSO NEED TO BE CAREFUL WHEN BUYING MODEL TRAIN PARTS AND ACCESSORIES OFF OF SITES LIKE EBAY. IN SOME CASES THE SELLER MAY BE A FELLOW TRAIN MODELER WHO UNDERSTANDS THE HOBBY WHILE IN OTHER CASES IT MAY BE A RELATIVE OF A DECEASED TRAIN MODELER SELLING OFF PARTS, A MOTHER SELLING HER SON'S SET AFTER HE LEFT FOR COLLEGE, OR SOMETHING OF THAT NATURE.**

**AUCTIONS FOR MODEL TRAIN PARTS AND ACCESSORIES BEING SOLD BY PEOPLE WITH NO UNDERSTANDING OF THE HOBBY CAN OFTEN TIMES BE IDENTIFIED BY VAGUE WORDING OR A "YOU GET WHAT YOU SEE" TYPE OF LISTING WITH A PICTURE. IF SOMEONE REFERS TO THE MODEL TRAIN AS "SMALL" INSTEAD OF LISTING ITS ACTUAL SCALE, CHANCES ARE THEY DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE HOBBY.**

**THE PROBLEM HERE LIES IN THE FACT THAT EVEN IF THERE ARE PICTURES IT CAN BE VERY HARD TO TELL WHAT YOU'RE GETTING, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO SCALE. IF YOU COME ACROSS AN AUCTION LIKE THIS THAT YOU'RE INTERESTED IN, MESSAGE THE SELLER AND ASK FOR SPECIFIC INFO REGARDING WHAT IT IS HE/SHE IS SELLING. THIS WILL HELP TO ENSURE THAT YOU DON'T MAKE A HUGE PURCHASING MISTAKE AND WASTE A LOT OF MONEY.**

**IN A WORST CASE SCENARIO, IF YOU BUY SOMETHING THAT TURNS OUT TO BE NOT WHAT YOU EXPECTED, YOU CAN ALWAYS RE-LIST FOR SALE. YOU CAN ALSO TRY AND SELL IT ON A MODEL TRAIN ENTHUSIASTS SITE AS WELL. WHO KNOWS, YOU MAY EVEN TURN A PROFIT!**

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## **Chapter 5: Train Modeling Terms for Beginners**

**ONE THING THAT TENDS TO CONFUSE PEOPLE WHO ARE JUST GETTING INTO THE EXCITING WORLD OF TRAIN MODELING IS THE VARIOUS TERMS AND PHRASES USED AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN APART OF THE HOBBY FOR SOME TIME. FOR EXAMPLE, MANY BEGINNERS DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT A "WORK BENCH" IS ACTUALLY THE PLATFORM THE TRAIN DISPLAY IS SET ON, NOT A SEPARATE WORK AREA.**

**IN OTHER CASES, THERE ARE ALSO DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN TERMS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES SINCE TRAIN MODELING IS "THE WORLD'S GREATEST HOBBY" AFTER ALL. AN EXAMPLE OF THIS WOULD BE THE FACT THAT IN THE UK THE HOBBY IS REFERRED TO AS "RAILROAD MODELING" INSTEAD OF TRAIN MODELING AS IT IS IN THE US. THIS CAN ALSO CAUSE A BIT OF CONFUSION.**

**HERE ARE SOME OF THE COMMON TERMS AND PHRASES THAT YOU SHOULD FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH. APART OF BECOMING A VETERAN TRAIN MODELER IS LEARNING THE LANGUAGE AFTER ALL.**

### ***List of Terms***

#### **ACCESSORY DIGITAL DECODER:**

**THIS IS A DEVICE WHICH POWERS AND CONTROLS NON-TRAIN MOVING PARTS ON THE DISPLAY. THIS INCLUDES OBJECTS SUCH AS BRIDGES, CRANES, AND TURNTABLES.**

#### **BENCHWORK:**

**ALSO KNOWN AS A WORK BENCH. THIS IS THE FOUNDATION THAT THE DISPLAY SITS ON TOP OF.**

#### **CAB:**

**A DEVICE THAT CONTROLS THE LOCOMOTIVE, TRACK SWITCHES, AND LAYOUT ACCESSORIES.**

#### **DRIVERS:**

**THESE ARE THE LARGE WHEELS ON A STEAM LOCOMOTIVE CONNECTED BY SIDE RODS.**

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#### **FLEXTRACK:**

**ALSO KNOWN AS “FLEXI-TRACK.” THIS IS A TYPE OF TRACK ABLE TO BEND AS NEEDED. IT IS TYPICALLY USED WHEN BUILDING A TRAIN DISPLAY FROM SCRATCH AS OPPOSED TO STARTER SETS WHICH COME WITH A SET TRACK LAYOUT.**

#### **GAUGE:**

**THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE INSIDE EDGES OF THE RAILS. DON'T CONFUSE THIS WITH SCALE, MANY BEGINNERS DO.**

#### **HARD SHELL:**

**THIS IS A SCENERY BASE THAT IS CREATED BY USING PAPER TOWELS AND PLASTER. THEY ARE THEN PLACED ON TOP OF A BASE SUCH AS CARDBOARD.**

#### **LOADING GAUGE:**

**THE SPACE NEEDED TO THE SIDES AND ABOVE THE TRACK TO ENSURE THAT YOUR TRAIN DOESN'T HIT ANYTHING AND CAN MOVE MORE FREELY.**

#### **LDE:**

**LAYOUT DESIGN ELEMENT**

#### **MAIN LINE:**

**THE MAIN SECTION OF THE RAILROAD TRACK THAT CONNECTS ALL THE IMPORTANT DESTINATIONS ON YOUR DISPLAY.**

#### **PASSING SIDING:**

**A SECTION OF TRACK THAT RUNS PARALLEL TO THE MAIN LINE AND ALLOWS TWO TRAINS TO PASS ONE ANOTHER.**

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**RAIL JOINER:**

**A SMALL METAL CLIP THAT ALLOWS TWO SECTIONS OF TRACK TO BE CONNECTED.**

**REEFER:**

**REFRIGERATION CAR.**

**ROLLING STOCK:**

**PASSENGER AND FREIGHT CARS.**

**SCALE:**

**PROPORTION OF A MODEL TO THE REAL LIFE EQUIVALENT. DON'T CONFUSE THIS WITH GAUGE.**

**TENDER:**

**THE CAR THAT COMES DIRECTLY AFTER THE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE THAT CARRIES THE COAL FOR THE FIREBOX AND THE WATER FOR THE BOILER.**

**TRANSFORMER:**

**A DEVICE THAT CONVERTS A HIGHER ELECTRICAL VOLTAGE TO A LOWER VOLTAGE. HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON HOW MUCH POWER CAN BE ALLOTTED TO YOUR TRAIN SET.**

**TRUCK:**

**THE FRAME ASSEMBLY THAT'S UNDER EACH END OF A CARRIAGE OR DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE THAT HOLDS THE WHEELS.**

**WHEEL SET:**

**THE WHEEL AND AXLE ASSEMBLY THAT FITS INTO THE TRUCK OF THE CARRIAGE.**

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## Chapter 6: Model Train Manufacturers

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WAYS YOU CAN SAVE MONEY WITH MODEL TRAINS IS TO KNOW WHAT YOU WANT BEFORE YOU BUY. THIS BEING THE CASE, IT NATURALLY MAKES SENSE TO TAKE A LOOK AT AS MANY DIFFERENT STYLES OF MODEL TRAINS AND MODEL TRAIN SETS BEFORE MAKING A PURCHASE. HERE IS LIST OF MODEL TRAIN MANUFACTURES SO THAT YOU CAN TAKE A LOOK AROUND AND GET AN IDEA OF WHAT YOU WANT.

[Airfix](#)

[Athearn](#)

[Atlas Model Railroad](#)

[Bachmann Industries](#)

[Bemo](#)

[Bowser Manufacturing](#)

[Broadway Limited Imports \(BLI\)](#)

[Dapol](#)

[Faller](#)

[Fleischmann](#)

[Fulgurex](#)

[G .& R. Wrenn Ltd](#)

[Great West Models](#)

[HAG](#)

[Heljan](#)

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