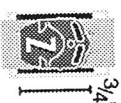
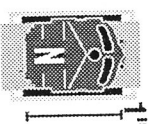
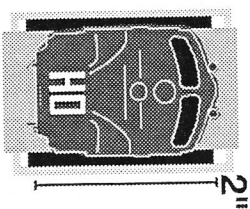
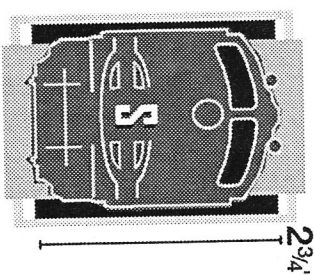
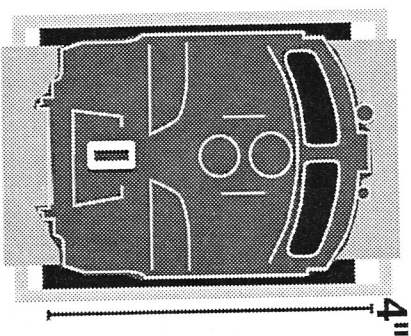
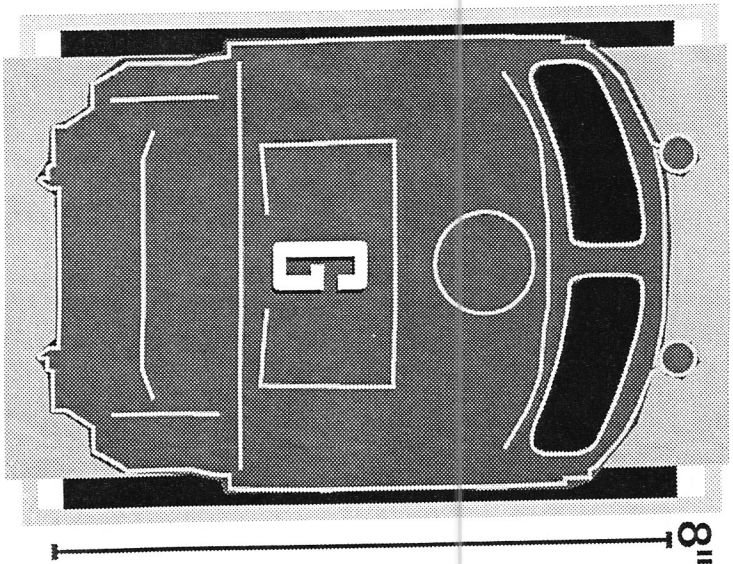




Understanding Common Model Railroad Scales

Model railroads come in many different sizes from large to small. Each size (or scale) has its own designation. Use this handy reference to compare the six common scales.



G Scale

Proportion: 1:22.5

Approx. Size: 8" x 5"

Big models, sometimes called "Large Scale" trains. Sizes range from 1/22.5 to 1/25 and also includes #1 gauge (1/32 Scale) equipment. The largest electrically powered models, starter sets set up in small areas. Some brands can be used outdoors, in garden layouts. The large size of G-scale trains allows for rugged handling by younger children. Many models have working parts that enhance play value.

O Scale

Proportion: 1:48

Approx. Size: 4" x 2.5"

(also On30, 027) O Scale trains also include "On30" sets, which are O Scale models that run on a narrower track -- just 30 scale inches wide. They're ideal for use with Christmas Villages, "027" gauge sets will take tighter curves -- which makes these O Scale sets a good choice when space for bigger trains is limited. (The number 27 refers to the 27" diameter of a full circle of track.) If you grew up with Lionel trains, you'll remember that they were O Scale models. Ruggedly built, they're a good choice for youngsters or permanent layouts. Many sets feature animated accessories.

S Scale

Proportion: 1:64

Approx. Size: 2.75" x 2"

S Scale trains appeared in the 1950s (American Flyer was one of several popular brands) as houses grew smaller. Its chief advantage was size, larger than HO for more detail and improved reliability, but smaller than O Scale so less room was needed for a layout. Today, the selection of kits and assembled items is small, but this has made S Scale popular with modelers who enjoy the challenges of scratchbuilding and kitbashing.

HO Scale

Proportion: 1:87

Approx. Size: 2" x 1.5"

"HO" means "half - o," models are half the size of O Scale. HO is the most popular scale with the greatest selection of sets and accessories, as it allows lots of railroad action in a small area. Children may need adult help to set up or take down the set.

N Scale

Proportion: 1:160

Approx. Size: 1" x .625"

This scale is an ideal choice for apartments or anyone with limited space. N-scale trains are easy to store when not in use and are ruggedly built for trouble-free operation. The small size is fine for teenagers and adults; younger children will need an adult to help to set up or take down a set.

Z Scale

Proportion: 1:220

Approx. Size: .75" x .5"

Z scale was developed in by Märklin in the early 1970s, and is the smallest of all the working models -- so tiny that a little layout will even fit in a briefcase. Most Z trains and equipment are based on European railways.

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