

CORK ROADBED – USING THE LATEST PRODUCTS

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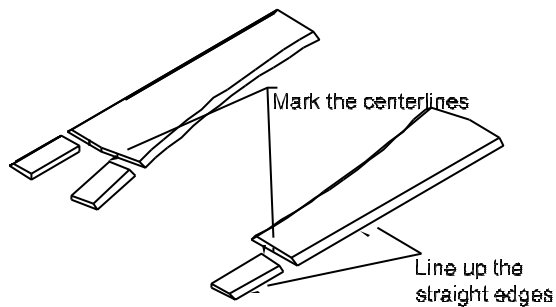
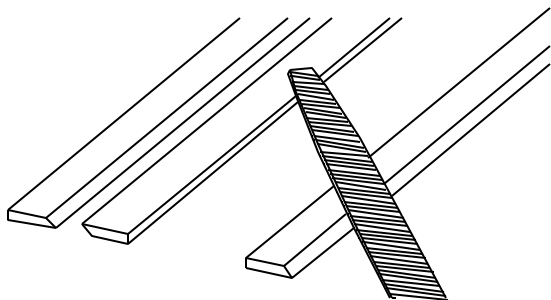
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ABSTRACT

New cork roadbed components have come on the market in recent years. Examples are turnout pads, wye pads, sheet stock, strip stock, and the new Siding Strip. This clinic presents the latest tools and techniques for using these components. Learn to build the classic track patterns that occur on most layouts: spur, siding, track ladder, wye switch, crossing and crossover. Methods of giving the cork a prototypical appearance are also presented.

INTRODUCTION

The roadbed and turnouts must first be prepared for installation. Tear the roadbed strips in half and sand or file off the remnants of the tear. (See Figure 1)



2 - Mark the roadbed centerlines on the turnout pads.

1 - Separate the cork roadbed strips and file or sand the rough edges.

Use a piece of roadbed as a guide to mark the track centerlines on the turnouts. (See Figure 2)

You can eliminate or reduce the need for ballast by applying a tinting wash to the cork. A solution of 7 parts water to 1 part flat white latex wall paint yields a light gray color of ballast. After the cork and track are laid, a light application of ballast will cover the joints in the cork.

There are **Seven Simple Rules** to keep in mind while laying cork roadbed. Perform these operations in sequence:

Rule #1. The **TRACK RULES**. Draw out the track plan exactly along the path the track will take. Do not try to lay down the cork, then force the track to follow it.

Rule #2. Trim the turnout pad square to the straight side (and remark it if needed).

a. If you are abutting the turnout pad to roadbed strips, **DO NOT** trim the turnout pad.

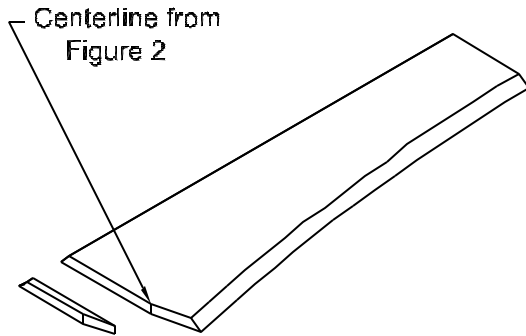
b. If you are abutting the pad to a sheet or wide strip of cork, **DO** trim the pad. (See Figure 3)

Rule #3. Install the turnout pads before anything else. (See Figure 4)

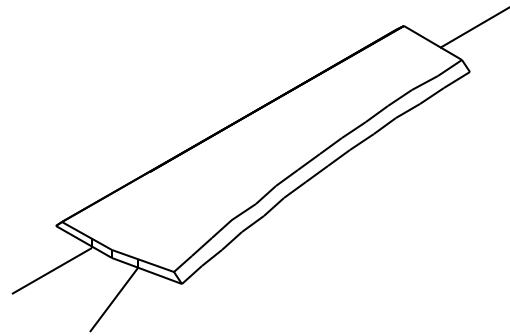
Rule #4. Trim the ends of the roadbed strips parallel to the end of the turnout pad. (See Figure 5)

a. If you are abutting the pad to two separate, diverging tracks, trim the track roadbed pieces now.

b. If you are abutting to a sheet or strip, wait until later to trim the roadbed.



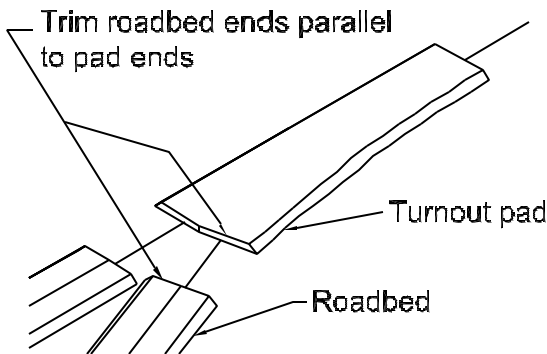
3 - Trim turnout pad when abutting to a sheet or strip. Rule #2b.



4 - Use marks from Figure 2 to line up turnout pad with track centerline.

Rule #5. Install the wide sheets or strips before the roadbed. The wide sheets are much easier to keep straight along the edge.

Rule #6. Install the easiest pieces first. Just keep doing that.



5 - Trim the end of the roadbed to be parallel to the end of the turnout pad. (Rule #4)

Rule #7. When the roadbed overlaps - split the difference. Use a straight edge to line up where the overlap begins and ends. Then slice through both pieces at the same time. Remove the debris and attach the cork to the sub-roadbed.

TOOLS TO USE

Use the following tools to install cork roadbed:

- Utility knife with sharp blade
- Coarse sanding pad, stick, or file
- Felt tip marker
- Right angle square
- Steel straight edge
- Track nails
- Hammer

ATTACHING THE ROADBED TO THE SUB-ROADBED

There are a number of ways to attach the roadbed to the sub-roadbed (plywood). Contact cement has been popular for years.

The author has recently experimented with medium viscosity CA glue. It works quite well - but you have to be careful not to let the glue dry in uneven bumps. The best way to use CA glue is to apply accelerator to the sub-roadbed and place drops of glue on the roadbed. Lay the roadbed at a brisk pace and keep it flat while it cures (about 5 seconds).

Nails and brads are excellent because you can put down many close together, and they are easily removed so the cork can be reused. In the author's clinic, an ET 100 Arrow Electric Nailer with 5/8" brads is used to lay a lot of cork quickly.

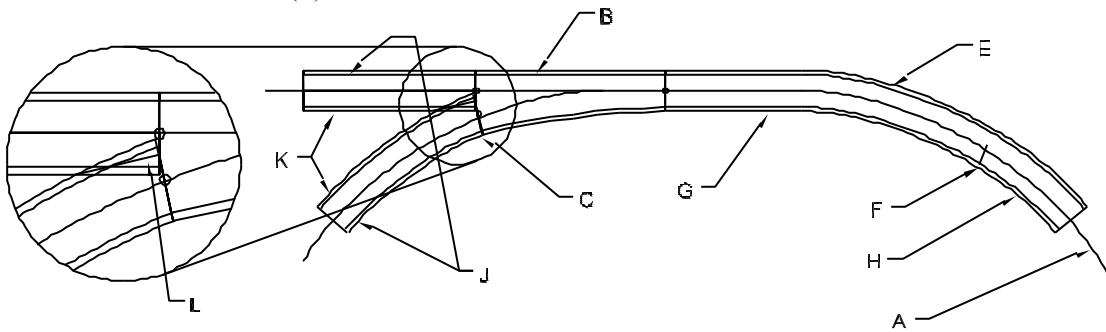
INSTALLING A SPUR, OR TURNOUT (Refer to Figure 6)

Remember Rule #1 - always start with an accurately drawn track plan (A).

Rule #2a. The turnout pad does not need to be trimmed, so install it now (B).

Rule #4a: Trim the ends of the cork roadbed where it abuts the turnout pad (C).

Install the outside of the curve (E).



6 - Laying cork on a curve with a splice and installing a turnout.

Install a piece of the inside of the curve (G).

Install the rest of the inside curve (H). Overlap the end of the first piece (G).

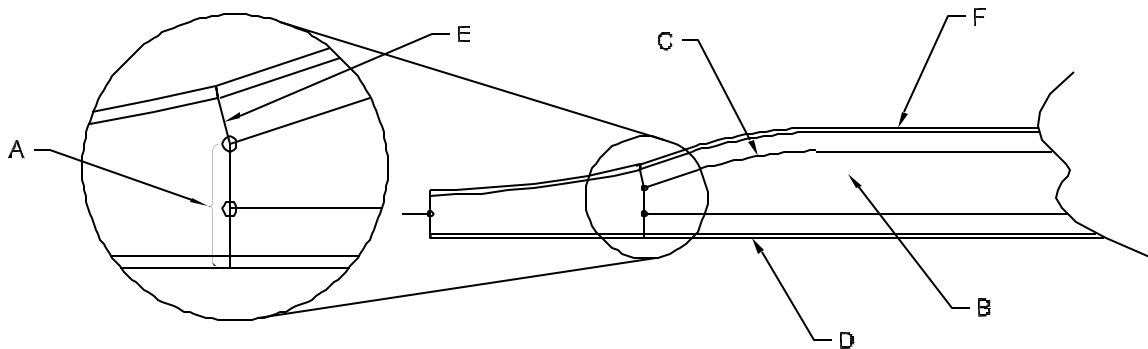
Slice through both pieces of cork at F to form a splice.

Install the outsides of the diverging cork roadbed (J).

Install the insides of the diverging cork roadbed (K). Let them overlap.

Remember Rule #7 - split the difference by slicing through both pieces of cork at L.

INSTALLING A SIDING OR RUNAROUND (Refer to Figure 7)



7 - Using the Siding Strip to build a siding or runaround.

Rule #2b - Since you are abutting a cork sheet, trim the end of the turnout pad at A.

Trim length of 3" Siding Strip to fit (B). Remember to mark it on the bottom side.

Use a piece of roadbed D to align it.

Sand the radius C. Sand the bottom side more than the top side.

Install the siding strip B.

Rule #4b - Trim the ends of roadbed pieces D and F. D is square, but F is cut at an angle (E).

Install the roadbed pieces D and F.

Repeat at the other end (not shown) and splice in the middle.

Note that the Siding Strip can be 3" wide to accommodate a signal or switch machine between the tracks. Or it can be torn apart and sanded to a 2" width to conserve space.

INSTALLING A FOUR TRACK LADDER (Refer to Figure 8)

Rule #2b - Since you are abutting a cork sheet, trim the end of the turnout pad at **A**.
Trim length of 11-7/8" cork sheet to fit (**B**). Remember to mark it on the bottom side.

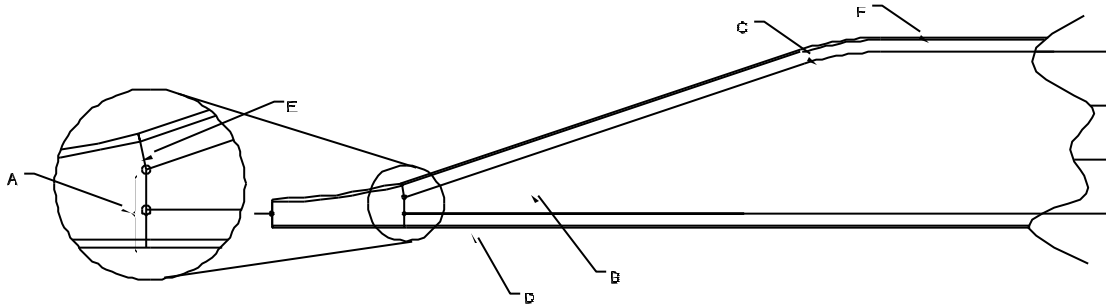
Use a piece of roadbed **D** to align it.

Sand the radius **C**. Sand the bottom side more than the top side.

Install the siding strip **B**.

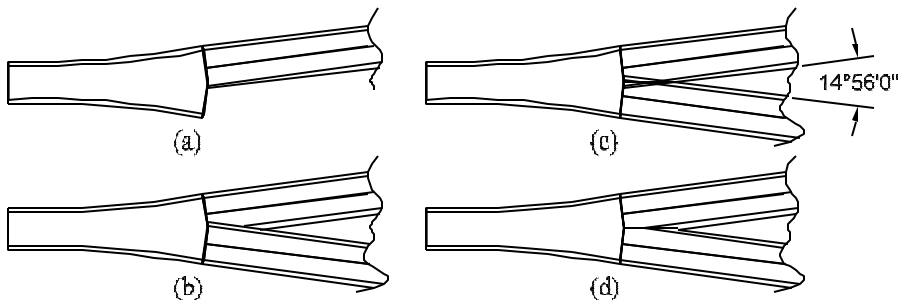
Rule #4b - Trim the ends of roadbed pieces **D** and **F**. **D** is square, but **F** is cut at an angle (**E**).

Install the roadbed pieces **D** and **F**.



8 - Using the 11-7/8" sheet to build a track ladder.

INSTALLING A WYE SWITCH (Refer to Figure 9)



9 - Installing the cork for a wye switch.

Install the wye switch pad by lining up the lines on the pad with the track lines.

Square off the ends of the cork roadbed. (Rule #4a) The diverging ends of the wye are cut to the correct angle.

Install one of the roadbeds for a diverging track. (See Figure 9a)

Install the other roadbed for the other diverging track. Let it overlap the first roadbed. (See Figure 9b)

Simultaneously slice through both pieces of cork roadbed where they overlap. (See Figures 9c and 9d)

INSTALLING A 30E CROSSING (Refer to Figure 10)

Install one piece of cork roadbed along one of the continuous tracks. (See Figure 10a)

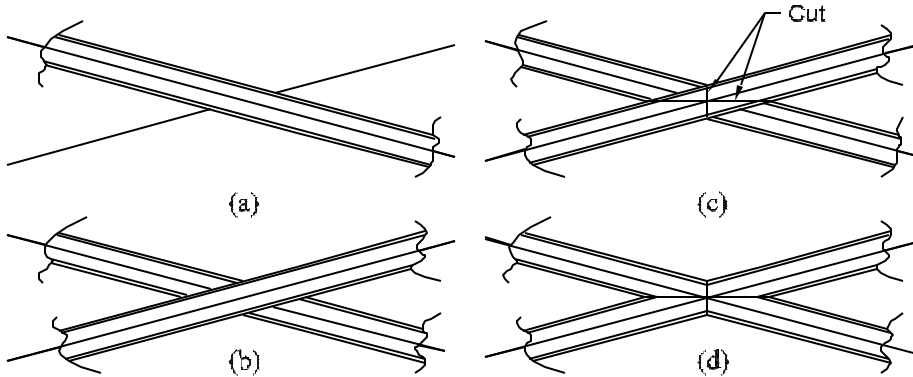
Install the second piece of cork roadbed along the other continuous track. Overlap the first piece of roadbed where the crossing will be located. (See Figure 10b)

Slice vertically and horizontally through both layers of cork and remove the debris. (See Figure 10c)

Attach the mitered cork pieces to the sub-roadbed. (See Figure 10d)

INSTALLING MORE COMPLEX PATTERNS

Just about any track pattern can be built in cork by following the rules and guidelines presented here. The cork can easily be laid for the complex "Crossover on a Curve" pattern shown



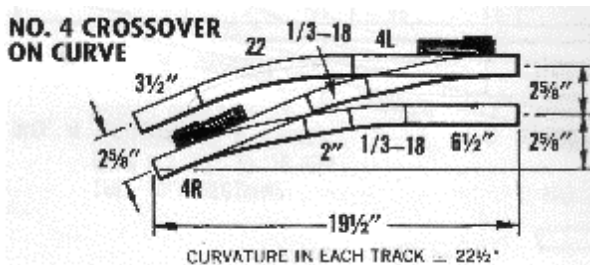
in Figure 11.

10 - Installing cork for a crossing.

CONCLUSION

Before installing the cork roadbed, take the time to prepare the materials to make them easier to work with and look more prototypical. Clean up the rough edges, tint the cork to the shade of ballast you want, and mark the track centerlines on the turnout pads.

There are some new products on the market that make it easy to use cork roadbed. Turnout pads and wye pads solve the problem of merging two diverging tracks. The Siding Strip makes it easy to build a siding or runaround. Sheet cork makes it easy to cover large areas like a yard.



Remember to follow the **Seven Simple Rules** while installing the cork roadbed. They will make the job a lot easier.

11 - Crossover on a curve, from HO Layouts for Every Space, Level 2, Book #11, Atlas Model Railroad Co., Inc.