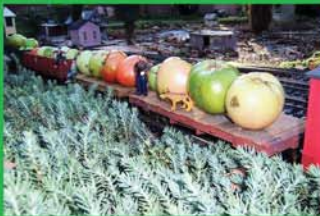


Garden Trains

From A to Z

F is for Flat Cars



Better Information - Better Railroad
LSOL.com - The Leader in Online Information



Garden Trains - A to Z

What you will find in this document.

Discussion groups are a great way to share information. One thing that is unique to LSOL.com is our Tuesday Topic. Each week, for almost six years, we have discussed a specific group topic. It could be about bridges, or maybe you like steam vs. diesel engines. Many times it is about how people solved a problem, or what they think about a current issue or product. My favorite was several years ago. "If your railroad was a candy bar, what would it be." (Good and Plenty, Milk Dud, etc.) We have fun at LSOL.com as well as help each other with serious issues on our railroads.

Now with almost 300 different weekly discussions online we wanted to make it easier for you to use this vast knowledge base of topics. We are taking the time to edit the best answers on a specific Tuesday topic into PDF documents. We have also added photos as available so you can see just what was being talked about from each of the users.

This paper is different than one written by just one author on a topic. You are getting dozens and dozens of years of combined experience from some of the smartest people running Large Scale Trains today. Save this document and start building your own personal reference library on your computer today.

What is LSOL.com? (Large Scale Online)

Large Scale Online has been providing information for Large Scale Garden Train enthusiasts for almost 15 years. We are the oldest, largest, and most professional web site on the Internet that is exclusive to Large Scale Garden Trains.

LSOL.com provides information in many different ways. We have online articles, videos for you to watch and photos for you to see how it is done. We also have organized and secure online discussion groups. We are the only site that requires people to use their real name. No hiding behind your keyboard making anonymous posts. Join Us.

This document is intended for members of LSOL.com. If you have received this document and are not a member of LSOL.com we ask that you please delete it, or come to our site and use the code [AtoZ](#) to join and get a discount on your membership subscription. You will be able to access even more information like this.

Flat Cars

What do you put on your flat cars?

I don't know about you but I get tired of my flat cars running empty. I have 20' flat cars, and 40' flat cars and some Bulkhead Flats too. I am always looking for something interesting to put on them. I have tried cars, trucks, forklifts and the like. What do you put on your flat cars? What are some simple and inexpensive ideas to create some interesting loads for our flats cars. Here are a view samples I found in the LSOL.com Gallery.



Jerome Kay – USA

How about something patriotic?



Jon D. Miller - "turkey legs to pipe loads"



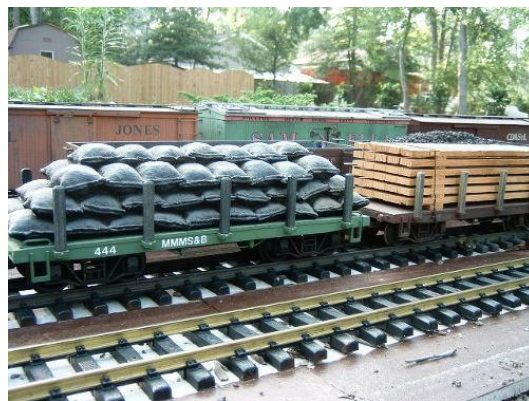
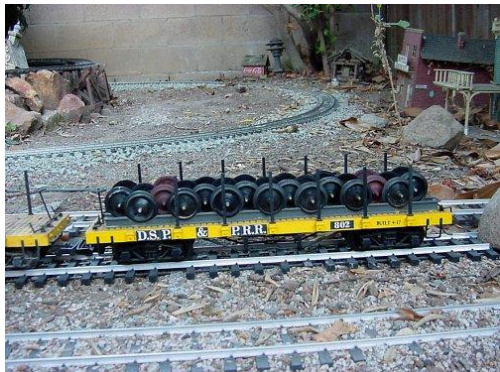
The CD&StL makes extensive use of flat cars to move all types of items. Just a small representation of what we transport on flat cars. Everything from turkey legs to pipe loads and just about anything else that will fit on a flat car.



Glenn Habrial - "P-51 including the pilot"



I have 2 flatcars that came with loads. One has WWII tanks but the scale of the tanks is about 1/35th, And the other is a P-51 including the pilot. Both are from USA Trains. Since Patton had a "fake" army along the coast of Britain before D-day I assume the tanks are from that army.



Richard Friedman - "an old sprinkler valve"

I have about four or five, (my roster's not handy) flatcars.



One has a captive load of plastic wheels and axles, the others vary depending on my mood and what needs to get around the railroad. One is holding an old sprinkler valve now, one has hauled portable (to me at least) buildings. Because the load is exposed, people notice them.

Wesley Drummond - "CAT's"

My flats are primarily a "CAT" train.



James O'Connor – “Gilsonite”

We haul a lot of Gilsonite on flats and a few lumber loads. Took an old paper shredder apart the other day and it had some really neat gears that will make a great industrial load.



Stephen Auslender - “How about a travelling flea market?”

The possibilities for loads on flatcars are endless. Anything that will fit on a flat car can be used as a load. What is used as a load will tell you a bit about the guy or gal who runs the trains. Some people think conventionally and will place realistic loads. Crates are easy to make up and use as a load. Tubes look like pipes and can be used. The material we use on the RR itself can be used, like piles of ties, track rails, etc. Like a bit of mystery? Put a few things on the flat car and drape an old handkerchief over it all. Then tie it down with cord and you have a mystery load.

If a person has a whimsical bent you can see all sorts of strange things on the flat cars and in gondolas. One can even have a “comfort car” and put a few porta-pottys on it, perhaps with a few chairs and magazines as a waiting room. Tie down an old steam fire engine and you have a fire car. Just about anything you see on the street or in stores can be made to mount on a flat car.

How about a travelling flea market? How about that oompah pah band you got the other year and haven't made a place for it yet. A bunch of chairs or benches and your band can accompany the train. Attach a flat car behind a beer reefer and you can have a travelling beer garden. The military inclined can have train loads of munitions, tanks, artillery, etc.

Make a load of that model airplane, with the wings separate and proper bracing and tarps over the cockpit and engine. Got a lot of interesting human figures? How about a politician making a speech to the faithful? There is no limit as to what one can put on a flat car or gondola if you use your imagination. Straight or whimsical, you cannot make a mistake. It all fits.

Mike Evans – “...the idea of more whimsical loads is intriguing.”

Challenging loads include better looking logs, rough or finished lumber, tractors and farm equipment, logging equipment, car and locomotive parts, etc. I admit to only thinking sometimes of conventional items but the idea of more whimsical loads is intriguing. Looking forward to seeing some great examples...

Ron Hill - “They have to be empty sometime.”

One of my favorite types of freight cars is working cars: pulpwood, bulkhead and flat cars. Empty flat cars like loaded flat cars are a normal sight on railroads. They have to be empty sometime. So I run empty and loaded on my trains. I was purchasing LGB 50' modern flats for a work train until LGB went under. The two pack was a good buy. Now there is no manufacture for 50' modern flats.

Paul Roberts – “Flats are great way to draw attention.....”

I use mostly “time” pics to set the date. Most have war loads on them seeing as the layout is in 1943 so military vehicles are the norm. I also have a 1940's caterpillar tractor sitting in a siding. Flats are great way to draw attention to freight as it rolls by.

Kenneth Allen – “flats with loads looks good in a train.”

I have pipe loads, tanks, sawed lumber, logs, construction equipment, pallets and anything else that looks like a good load for the flats. The flats with loads look good in a train.

Todd Brody – “One-inch PVC looks about the best”

Probably the easiest load to make is lengths of PVC pipe stacked “pyramid” style. One-inch PVC looks about the best and three pieces across the bottom (six pieces in the load) is about a perfect fit.

We have found that you can use zip lock cable ties to make very realistic “straps” to hold the load. It takes two cable ties to make one strap. Take a tie and snip off the very end with the “loop.” Run the other tie from the bottom of the car up through a stake pocket, over the load, and into the stake pocket on the other side. Use the snipped loop to “capture” the tie, secure it tight and cut off the excess tie. This way there is nothing under the car to foul the trucks.

MEMBERS ONLINE STORIES ON ROLLING STOCK

Here is a small sample of the articles that are online for members of LSOL.com

[Let's fill those hopper's... so to speak.](#)

No. I'm not speaking of the "library" hopper! I'm talking hopper cars, gondolas, ore cars, tenders and the like. Many of these cars arrive empty and appear to be begging to be filled with revenue generating cargo.

[Bachmann Trains Side Door Gondola with VIDEO](#)

Bachmann Industries has added a sixth car to its expanding fleet of highly detailed Spectrum 1:20.3 freight equipment. This latest offering is an American Car and Foundry (ACF) side door, low side gondola.

[The Movie:](#)

[Outside/In! Bachmann 1:20.3 Long Caboose](#)

Last week you got to read and see photos of the latest 1:20.3 scale offering from Bachmann Trains. Now come watch the video. Get a wide screen, High Def look at the caboose that has everyone talking.

[Outside/In! Bachmann 1:20.3 Long Caboose](#)

After much anticipation Bachmann Industries is delivering their latest 1:20.3 scale offering. In this case it's a long caboose based on those used by the Denver & Rio Grande Western and Rio Grande Southern narrow gauge railroads. This new caboose is the perfect companion for their K-27 Mikado locomotive.

[VIDEO: USA 4 Bay Center Flow Hopper Cars in Action](#)

Come see the USA Trains 4 Bay Center Flow Hopper Cars. These would make a great addition to your mainline railroad. These units are about 2 feet long and weight over 4 pounds. Very Detailed!

[VIDEO: Bachmann Rolling Stock Kits](#)

Come watch this HighDef wide-screen video and learn what the Bachmann Rolling Stock Kits are all about. At a time when we want to make every penny count you just might find out these easy to build kits could be the ticket to custom rolling stock on your railroad.

[Improving Aristo Freight Car Trucks](#)

One of my early experiments involved making the Bettendorf trucks under the Aristo line of freight cars look more realistic and I thought some of you might enjoy learning about what I did.

[Learn How to Make a Pickle Car](#)

No, I have yet to see this type of car except for a set of side and end plans, so I'm putting this down as a "How to do it", scratch built/freelance project. Apparently in the early years of the twentieth century, before transport by truck became a more convenient method of transport, this type of car was a means to get a specific product from a processing plant to a packaging facility.