

Fairgrounds Layout in a "Tinplater" style

The track plan is just a big oval... But it is Prototypical! "Play" is the keyword for this layout.

The layout is constructed using traditional electrical wiring (both spurs, the inner runaround track, and the Holding Area are isolated electrical blocks). There is also an optional delay circuit which can stop a handcar for a timed period (like the Lionel Automatic Train Control Station), in order to make the layout seem larger (this circuit is normally not recommended for locomotives, as it trips the E-Unit).

This track plan fits on a 4'x8' sheet of plywood, and is intended as a destination for common semi-toy O-27 expedited freight cars. The theme is a Fairgrounds (hence the commonly found oval of track), that will require a rapid delivery of assorted live animals (horses, cattle, sheep, pigs) for judging. Other items will also require delivery, such as manufacturer displays of small private airplanes and watercraft as well as assorted farming equipment (basically anything that can be offloaded from a flatcar). These will normally be unloaded on the inner runaround track (which is also fitted with an action car magnet).

Tinplaters have been blessed (?) with an assortment of oddball cars, such as cars for zoo animals, cars for marine life, and regular rollingstock that has been decorated with advertisements and super heroes. There are also action cars that can launch things such as "satellites" and "turbo missiles". These cars, along with any specialty/antique rollingstock/locomotives (such as firefighting and snow removal equipment) able to negotiate O-36 curves, can be parked in a rotating display on the Exhibit spur. This spur is equipped with two magnets for activating action cars to entertain fairgoers if desired. This spur is also a good place to use one of those fancy, lighted, end of track bumpers (again, all about entertaining).

This is a continuous run track plan, so trains (or single vehicles such as handcars operated by persons costumed as popular characters) can be kept moving on the oval to entertain fair goers. Trains occupying the siding or spur will not interfere. There is a view block upon which is painted a long view of the fairgrounds disappearing into the distance. Behind this view block is a short staging track simulating where the Fairgrounds oval would connect to the rest of the world. The portion of the oval that lies behind this view block can be used as a "holding area" (when power is disconnected) for trains circling the oval, in order to extend their running time. Alternatively applying lower track voltage in just this segment would cause a train to creep through, without triggering the locomotives E-Unit.

If desired, a short fairground passenger train ride can be run in a circle around the fairgrounds. It would load passengers on the passing siding. A tiny locomotive and one passenger car (or even a gondola) would be suitable, such as one of those tinplate underscale old-timey passenger trains from Marx. It is assumed that this train would be serviced in the unseen area elsewhere on the fairground property.

Use your imagination when placing fun scenery in the center of the layout. This is a fair, so just about anything goes in the way of (temporary) structures and exhibits (fiberglass dinosaurs, historic space capsules, food stalls, petting zoos, you name it). Also bear in mind that structures and exhibits don't have to remain the whole time, but could be there for just one day of the fair.

This layout is intended to be **Operated** in a serious manner, like a real fairground would handle their trains. While the scenery could be constructed as a realistic appearing fair simulation (many Fairgrounds contain an oval train track), this layout excels at being built as an ever changing kids fantasy.