You’ve made the decision that model railroading would make an ideal hobby. Now what? To help you take the next step we’ve compiled this list of resources. It’s by no means all-inclusive but will provide a good starting point. You’ll find information on train shows, publications, videos, and websites with the appropriate contact information.

**Hobby shops**
To find a shop in your area, check your Yellow Pages or the hobby shop directories at the back of most model railroad magazines. To locate a shop that offers workshops for beginners, go to www.GreatestHobby.com.

**Train shows**
Hundreds of local shows are held throughout the year all across the country. Go to www.GreatestHobby.com to link to a free events database. In addition, numerous large shows are held throughout the country. Contact sponsors directly for show times and locations.

**Great Train Expo**, P.O. Box 725, Oswego, IL 60543, 630-2608-4988, gtexpo.com

**National Train Show** (an annual show sponsored by the National Model Railroad Association), 4121 Cromwell Rd., Chattanooga, TN 37421, nmra.org

**World’s Greatest Hobby on Tour**, P.O. Box 11, Elmhurst, IL 60126, 630-279-5094, www.wghshow.com

**Greenberg Train Shows**, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126, 630-279-4087, greenbergshows.com

**Scale model railroading**

**Publications**

- **Model Railroad**, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha, WI 53187-1612, 800-533-6644, ModelRailroader.com

- **Canadian Railway Modeller**, Box 35087, 963 Henderson Hwy., RPO Henderson, Winnipeg, MB Canada R2K 4J9, 201-668-0168, ccdnrwymod.com

- **Model Railroad News**, P.O. Box 9580, Kansas City, MO 64133, 877-878-2467, modelrailroadnews.com

- **N Scale**, 5811 75th Ave NE, Marysville, WA 98270, 360-658-2458, nscalemagazine.com

- **N Scale Railroad**, P.O. Box 77296, Seattle, WA 98177-0296, 206-364-1295, nscalerailroadn.com

- **Narrow Gauge & Short Line Gazette**, P.O. Box 77298, Seattle, WA 98177-0296, 800-545-4102, ngslgazette.com

- **O Scale Trains**, P.O. Box 289, Exton, PA 19341-0289, oscalemag.com


- **Ztrack Magazine Ltd.**, 6142 Northcliff Blvd., Dublin OH 43016, 614-764-1703, ztrack.com

**Books**

- **Introduction to Model Railroading**, by Jeff Wilson, Kalmbach Publishing Co., 800-533-6644, KalmbachStore.com


- **Starter Track Plans for Model Railroaders**, Kalmbach Publishing Co., 800-533-6644, KalmbachStore.com

**Videos**

- **Building Your First Model Railroad**, order by calling 800-533-6644 or visiting www.GreatestHobby.com

---

**SCALE MODELING TERMS**

- **Benchwork**: A sturdy, level frame which is the foundation of a model railroad layout. Wood is the most popular material for benchwork.

- **Freelance**: Modeling that doesn’t closely follow an actual railroad.

- **Kitbashing**: Taking one or more model railroad kits and changing the construction process or combining parts from different kits to create a unique model.

- **Motive Power**: Another word for locomotives, the pieces of rolling stock that do the work of moving trains down the road.

- **Narrow Gauge**: Rails spaced closer together than the standard gauge of 4’ 8½”. Three-foot was the most common narrow gauge in the U.S.

- **Operation**: Running trains on a layout in a way that simulates real railroad activity.

- **Power Pack**: Electrical device used to supply current to a model train and control its speed and direction.

- **Rolling Stock**: Any piece of railroad equipment that rides on the rails.

- **Scratchbuilding**: Making a model from raw materials and parts, not using kits.

- **Sectional Track**: Prefabricated interlocking track sections that can be easily assembled and disassembled.

- **Weathering**: Making new models look more realistic by simulating age and exposure to the elements.
Battery power: Onboard batteries that provide power to a locomotive that’s controlled by radio.

Flextrack: Longer sections of track that are flexible enough to bend to any desired curvature.

Gauge 1: 45 mm (just over 1 3/4”) between the rails. Although a garden railroad can be built to run on any gauge of track, gauge 1 is most commonly used.

Groundcovers: Low-growing plants that spread to cover the ground, useful for filling in areas and preventing weeds and erosion.

Large scale: A generic term that includes all trains running on gauge 1 track.

Live steam: Miniature locomotives that run on steam, just like real locomotives. They have fire in their fireboxes and boil water in their boilers.

Railway garden: Garden planted with dwarf and miniature plants to be in scale with the trains.

Roadbed: The material that supports the track and provides drainage. In garden railways, this is most often ballast (crushed rock and rock dust).

Sectional track: Commercially made track that comes in predetermined straight lengths and curved sections with a set radius.

Water feature: A pond, river, or waterfall on your railway, often incorporating fish and water plants.
Club and associations

Lionel Collectors Club of America. Business Office, P.O. Box 529, Peru, IL 61354, lionelcollectors.org

Lionel Operating Train Society, 6376 W. Fork Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45247, lots-trains.org

Toy Train Collectors Society, Louis A. Bohn, 109 Howedale Dr., Rochester, NY 14616. ttcsftd.org

Toy Train Operating Society, P.O. Box 6710, Fullerton, CA 92834, 714-449-9391, ttos.org

Train Collectors Association, P.O. Box 248, 300 Paradise Lane, Strasburg, PA 17579, 717-687-8623, traincollectors.org

Manufacturer sponsors


Caboose Industries 8511 W. Mound Rd. Lena, IL 61048-9697 815-369-5195 www.cabooseind.com

Digitrax Inc. 2443 Transmitter Rd. Panama City, FL 32404-3157 770-441-7992 www.digitrax.com

Videos

I Love Toy Trains series, TM Books & Video, Box 279, New Buffalo, MI 49117, 800-892-2822, tmbv.com

Great Layout Adventures series, O Gauge Railroading, 33 Sheridan Rd., Poland, OH 44514, 330-757-3020, ogaugerr.com

OTHER RESOURCES

www.GreatestHobby.com
This site has everything you need to get started in model trains: locate hobby shops and clubs in your area, find answers to frequently asked questions, and much more.

trains.com
Provides up-to-the-minute information about all scales and types of trains. You’ll find the latest news releases, train shows, new model railroad products, and reader forums. You can also sign up to receive free e-mail newsletters related to the scale(s) you’re interested in.

hobbyretailer.com
Your best resource to locating a hobby shop anywhere in North America. Simply type in a city or state and hit “return” to find shops in your area.

Tracks Ahead program on PBS www.mptv.org
This half-hour show features collections, layouts, and garden railroads in all scales.

Kalmbach Publishing Co. 21027 Crossroads Circle P.O. Box 1612 Waukesha, WI 53187-1612 262-796-8776 www.kalmbach.com

Kato USA 100 Remington Rd. Schaumburg, IL 60173 847-781-9500 www.katousa.com

Wm. K. Walthers, Inc. P.O. Box 3039 Milwaukee, WI 53201-3039 414-527-0770 www.walthers.com

TOY TRAIN TERMS

Collector: Toy train enthusiast who acquires vintage or contemporary models to display or study.

Modern-era: Descriptive term for toy trains manufactured since 1970.

Operator: Toy train enthusiast who acquires vintage or contemporary models to repair, restore, or run on track.

Postwar: Descriptive term for toy trains manufactured between 1945 and 1969.

Prewar: Descriptive term for toy trains made in 1942 or earlier in the 20th century.

Reproduction: Toy train patterned after an antique that is long out of production.

Restoration: Toy train returned to its original operating condition and appearance by repair and repainting.
Southern Ry. RS-1 no. 405 pulls a string of empty hoppers destined for Tennessee Consolidated Coal Co. on Bob Lawson’s HO scale layout.

A photo like this of Ken Kelley’s standard-gauge layout is like a time machine. No matter how old you are or where you’re living, one glance at this terrific picture and you feel as though you have gone back to the early 1930s and are standing in front of a department-store window.