

## Fred Plymale Clinic Handout 1/5/2014

### Roads

Roads like railroads follow the water level routes of rivers which are seldom straight. Most roads have a slight crown in the middle with a ditch on one or both sides. The types of roads are, concrete, dirt and blacktop.

Concrete and blacktop are usually major roads and for HO modeling a 16' road would be 2 1/4". Most of us cheat and 2" works fine. Remember you eye sees what your mind expects to see! Both can be modeled with molding plaster but it requires practice and skill before building a road on the layout. To build curved roads you need sticky tape sold to make curved mold. After in place pour the thinned plaster into the road mould. Let it dry over night, scribe in the road expansion sections, and paint concrete or blacktop. I use 6" for expansion sections. Blacktop seldom remains black so both types need weathering. A light India ink solution works for concrete and a light gray powder for blacktop. Done properly your roads will look great but there's an easier way to do the same thing faster and cheaper.

Dirt roads are easy to build with the right material. They are not major roads and can be as small as 8' wide. Many will have a patch of grass or weeds in the middle between tire tracks. The right material is dirt as fine as powder. Sift the fine dirt in your road area, spray with wet water and add diluted white glue. Leave overnight to dry. It may crack and look dark so sift more dry dirt on the road and rub it into the surface with your fingers. With a little practice it will look great.

Hobby Lobby sells a sheet of 1/16 "CHIPBOARD" and for \$3.99 you get a sheet 2' 8" X 3' 4" which will build many roads. You can also buy the 1/8' size for \$8.99 which I use for sidewalks instead of scribed styrene.

### SIDEWALKS AND STREETS

On my old layout I used styrene scribed for sidewalks. You can use painted 1/8" CHIPBOARD and get acceptable results by drawing in the 5' sidewalk section with a pencil. It's faster and cheaper! Your sidewalks can be as detailed as you want to make them. Cracks, trash, people, fireplugs and dogs all add to realism.