Grand Central Gems
Wood Trestle Bridge System

To Order: 1-800-234-9995
www.scenicexpress.com
For many years the timber trestle was the symbolic king of American railroad construction. Trestles like these were by far the cheapest and fastest way to cross a valley or other obstacles. In the early days of railroad construction, most trestle designs were proprietary of the specific railroads. As we have discovered through our own research most of the basic engineering elements however remain universal. Our designs closely resemble actual trestles found throughout North America. Many western railroads continued using timber construction well into the 1920’s. Today wooden trestles are found on many narrow-gauge tourist lines. Those that have not been maintained, naturally have decayed and fallen into disrepair.

Trestles were first built of local, untreated timbers which gave a useful life of about seven years. This period of time gave the railroad the opportunity to earn the necessary revenues for a more permanent type trestle. Later, trestles were replaced with creosol treated timbers which increased the life expectancy fourfold. Although high trestles could be at times a bit shaky, they were very safe despite a spidery look. Collapse of timber trestles were quite rare as compared to wooden truss and early steel bridges. Decay and fire were the main concern where timber trestles were employed. Flash flooding, rock slides and snow avalanches were also natural nemesis of many railroads. With current railroad weight capacities, many trestles can no longer be used on normal mainlines.

Timbers trestles are loved by modelers who continue to use them because of the visual impact and the ease of the many ready-assembled components. Our trestles are impressive for their complexity, yet surprisingly simple to build. We hope you have fun and unleash some of your ‘artistic license’ and design something really cool!
Let's start building! Stan Trzoniec gave us this idea, and it may sound a little awkward; but yes, we are going to start building upside down. Begin with the deck(s). Be certain the surface you are working on is smooth, clean and flat. Lay out your decks so they are face down. If you are working with multiple decks butt them together end-to-end. At this point, no fastening is required.

Begin arranging the backheads (one on each end) and the trestle bents. It is important the trestle bents be spaced evenly apart. Arrange bends on deck so that the underside of the deck (facing up) is attached to the top deck support of the bent (upside down). The vertical supports of the bents are pointing up. On average, these are the suggested distances between each bent: N-Scale 1½” apart, HO-Scale 2½” apart and place the O-Scale bents 4½” apart. You may want to mark with a pencil on the deck the placement of each bent before gluing.

Using carpenter’s wood glue, fasten the backheads and bents to the deck stringer on the underside of the deck. At this point, use a small framing square to insure that each bent is perpendicular and at a 90 degree vertical. Let dry thoroughly overnight.

**Attaching bridge trestles to track level.** You need to make a temporary support beam. Using a straight furring strip (approximately 8” longer than the deck - 4” on each end) and several small pieces of cooper electrical wire, temporarily attach the assembled bridge. This will bring the bridge up to the same height as the trackbed. You will remove the furring strip once the ‘sill’ supports are installed.

Wooden ‘sill footer’ support blocks are built up to the trestle bent vertical posts. Place a small dab of glue on the bottom of each vertical post and glue to the wooden support block. Shims may be placed under the vertical posts of the bent for leveling.

We are often asked about curved trestles. We only have 90° curved deck components in O-Scale at this time. For the more emboldened N & HO modeler, you can miter the decks with a fine-toothed saw to achieve the necessary facetted arc. A little knowledge of geometry might be helpful!

**Terrain Contours:** You’ll need to create the mountain ravine contour at the base of your bridge. There are several methods by which to achieve this result. Two such methods, “plaster over wire screen” and “cardboard strip method”, are two methods thoroughly explained and illustrated in Dave Frary’s 3rd Edition of “How To Build Realistic Model Railroad Scenery” (KB12216). The first step in preparing your bridge is to have a design so that you will know exactly which parts of the bridge system to order and how many of each piece you will need. The following instructions and diagrams will aid in helping you through this process.

Once your wood bridge system arrives, lay out, group together and get acquainted with all the different pieces.

You can now start assembling the actual bridge system! We have found that it is actually easier to build the bridge system first. Once your wood bridge truss system is complete, you can then finish and build-up the scenery around your bridge.

Lastly, time to attach the stringers. Apply a small dab of carpenters glue to the outer vertical post of each trestle bent. Making sure to level, gently position the stringer horizontally across the bents. A clothes pin may assist in holding the stringer in place until the glue sets. As an optional alternative, Stan cut his horizontal stringers to create “X-Sway” bracing instead of the horizontal bracing. Either method will work equally as well to make an incredibly strong bridge.

**List of Materials**

- Medium Bents
- Large Bents
- 6-inch Decks
- Horizontal Stringers
- Backheads
- 2
- X-Large Bents
- 8-inch Decks
- 2
- Backheads
Build the Wood Trestle Bridge of your dreams, just like those you've always seen and wished someday to have! All our modular trestle components come fully assembled, stained and pre-weathered. What could get any easier!

Designed and engineered to support today's heavier model trains. Tips and instructions included with each order.

Deck & Stringer Length:
- N - 6”
- HO - 12”
- O - 24”

Width:
- N - ¾”
- HO - 1¾”
- O - 3½”

Small Height:
- N - 1½”
- HO - 3”
- O - 5½”

Medium Height:
- N - 2½”
- HO - 5”
- O - 8½”

Large Height:
- N - 3¾”
- HO - 6¾”
- O - 12”

X-Large Height:
- N - 5¼”
- HO - 8¼”
- O - 15¾”

Backhead Wall:
- N - 2½”
- HO - 4”
- O - 7¼”

Backhead Height:
- N - 1½”
- HO - 3”
- O - 5½”

Set includes:
- 2 Assembled Decks
- 12 Horizontal Stringers

(Stringers can be cut to make Optional X-Sway Braces)

Backhead & Deck Set:
- 2 Assembled Backheads
- 1 Assembled Deck
- 7 Horizontal Stringers

(Stringers can be cut to make Optional X-Sway Braces)
Fully assembled pre-weathered components. Bents are packaged in sets of 5 pieces. Decks & stringers are 6" long.

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<tr>
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<td>N-Scale Small Trestle Bent Set 5-pcs 1½&quot; tall</td>
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<td>GC0080</td>
<td>N-Scale Medium Trestle Bent Set 5-pcs 2½&quot; tall</td>
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<td>N-Scale Large Trestle Bent Set 5-pcs 3¼&quot; tall</td>
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<td>GC0280</td>
<td>N- 6&quot; Preweathered Stringers - 25 pcs.</td>
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Fully assembled pre-weathered components. Bents are packaged in sets of 5 pieces. Decks & stringers are 12" long.

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Fully assembled pre-weathered components. Bents are packaged in sets of 5 pieces. Decks & stringers are 24" long.

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<td>O-Girder Bridge Plate 1-pc 26½&quot; long</td>
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This line just keeps on growing. Finally... by popular demand... a Double Track Trestle Bent System! Two standard trestle decks fit parallel with a 2" track center for HO and a 4" center for O-Scale. Same ready-made’ and pre-weathered’ convenience as the rest of the system. 5 trestle bents come with each set. We recommend only going straight, no curves! Curves are just too difficult to achieve. (unless you’re a civil engineer) Remember to double-up your order of decks and backheads.

Illustrated instructions included.

**N-Scale Trestle Components**

**N-Scale Trestle Starter Kit**

Construct a wooden N-Scale trestle bridge in one complete kit. Makes a 12" long and 5" high bridge. Kit includes these pre-weathered components:

- 4 Small Bents
- 2 Medium Bents
- 2 Large Bents
- 2 X-Large Bents
- 2 6-inch Decks
- 2 Backheads
- 25 Horizontal Stringers

Order #GC0121 $70

**HO-Scale Trestle Components**

**HO-Scale Trestle Starter Kit**

Build a wooden HO-Scale trestle bridge in one complete kit. Makes a 24" long and 10" high bridge. Kit includes these pre-weathered components:

- 4 Small Bents
- 2 Medium Bents
- 2 Large Bents
- 2 X-Large Bents
- 2 12-inch Decks
- 2 Backheads
- 25 Horizontal Stringers

Order #GC0061 $80

**O-Scale Trestle Components**

**O-Scale Trestle Starter Kit**

Build a wooden O-Scale trestle bridge in one complete kit. Makes a 48" long and 17" high bridge. Add an Optional Girder Plate Span for only $20!

Kit includes these pre-weathered components:

- 4 Small Bents
- 2 Medium Bents
- 2 Large Bents
- 2 X-Large Bents
- 2 24-inch Decks
- 2 Backheads
- 25 Horizontal Stringers

Order #GC0181 $90

Illustrated instructions included.
Hot-Riveted O-Scale Girder Plate

NEW this season. Give your O-Scale Trestles an added realistic look. Cast resin girder plate panel. Simply glue against main support stringer under the trestle deck. Measures 26½” x 1¾” (individual panels measure 1” wide) Only ¼” thick. Flexible to 24” radius. Gray primer tone. 45° beveled ends.

RR0010 O-Scale Girder Bridge Plate $20.00 ea. Five or More Girder Plates ONLY $17.00 ea.

90° Curved Trestle Decks

90° Curved Trestle Decks for 3-Rail 0-42” and 0-72” Radius

We’ve done all the calculations. All you need is glue to assemble these simple components together. Sets include a pre-mitered deck and stringers to complete a 90° right angle. Two sets will complete a full 180° turn when placed end-to-end.

90° Curved Trestle Deck Set for 0-42”

Set includes pre-mitered deck components to complete a 90° right angle. (example shown above) 9 trestle bents are required for proper structural support (bents sold separately). Designed for GarGraves 42” radius curves and all 3-rail flex-tracks. Includes deck components and 12 stringer braces.

GC0171 90° Curved Trestle Deck Set for O-42” Radius ..... $60.00

90° Curved Trestle Deck Set for 0-72” Wide Radius

Set includes pre-mitered deck components to complete a 90° right angle. 20 trestle bents are required for proper structural support at 4½” distance (bents sold separately). Designed for GarGraves 72” wide radius curves and all 3-rail flex-tracks. Includes five deck components and 24 stringer braces.

GC0172 90° Curved Trestle Deck for O-72” ... $90.00