

Building a T Trak Alignment Tool

A very simple T-Trak alignment tool can be made with a few readily handy parts.

Tool Assembly

List of materials

- Kato Double Tie Straight 20-042 for Tool Unitrack unit (for two sides)
- .04" Styrene Sheet (Scrap Piece) provides the temporary 1mm shim.
- .08" Styrene Sheet (Scrap Piece) provides a base to be glued to the bottom of the Kato Double Tie track
- CA Glue
- #0x3/8" Phillips Head screws

Ever have the problem of getting Kato Unitrack set up accurately so it affixes to the T-TRAK module with an equal amount of overhang and with the track ends flush and square to the module base?

If so, invest a few minutes and build a pair of Unitrack alignment jigs. Start with two Kato Unitrack 62mm Double Concrete Tie straights (Kato PN 20-042), some .08" styrene, a bit of 1mm styrene, and a few mini screws. Within a few minutes, you will have great tool for uniformly aligning Kato Unitrack to the module base.



Photo 1 shows a piece of the double concrete Unitrack *with unijoiners removed* and the bolsters being bored out. A 1mm (.04") styrene shim has been temporarily "glued" to the face of the Unijoiner to establish the correct offset for the styrene strips which will be attached to the underside.

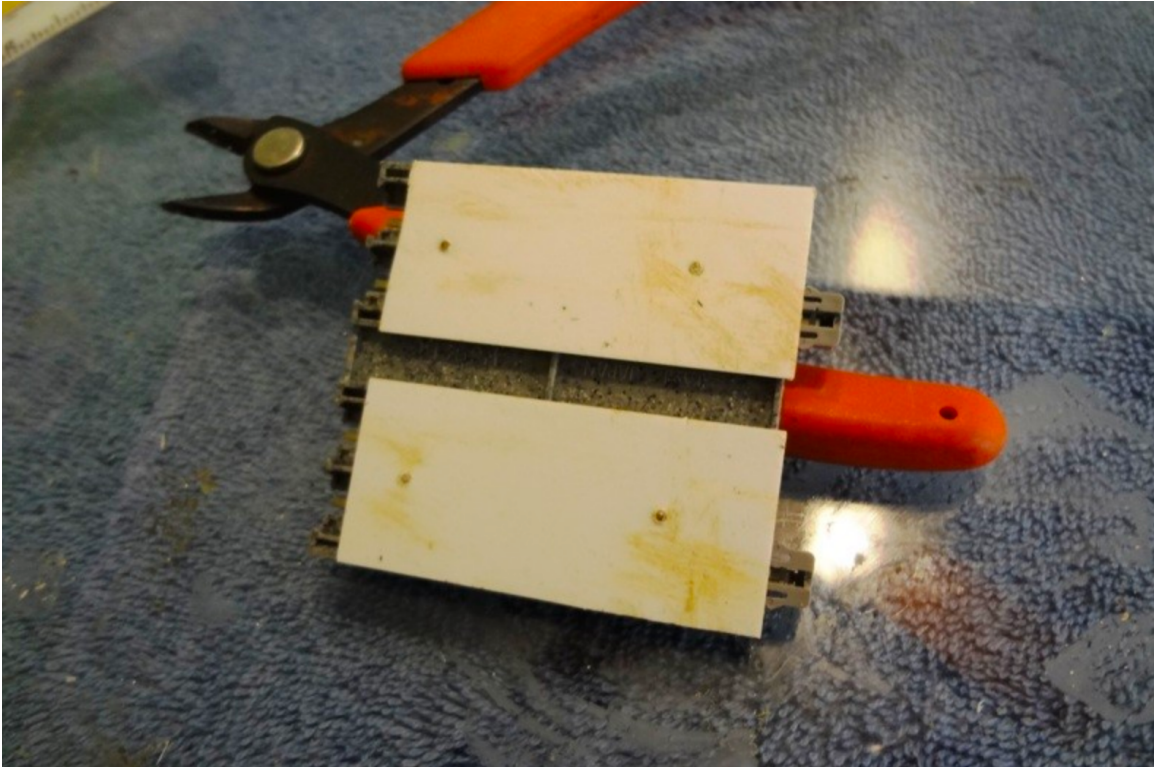


Photo 2 shows the underside of the track. I cut two .08" styrene strips to 25mmX60mm (1"x 2 3/8") and aligned them to be flush with the temporary styrene shim.

Then, I screwed the strips to the track from the top through the bolsters, nipped off the protruding ends, and filed everything smooth. The last step is to remove the temporary styrene shim and *re-insert the unjoiners*. They are only required on the "working end" of the alignment jig. Look closely and you can see how the styrene strips extend 1mm beyond the end of the track base.



In Photo 3, you see one of the completed alignment jigs. I built a second one following the same steps so I could align both ends of the track at the same time. The styrene strips, which extend 1mm beyond the end of the track, are apparent underneath, as are the screws that are holding the strips in place.



Finally, in Photo 4 you can see how the tool adjusts the edge of the track 1mm beyond the edge of the module. This allows the separation between modules to be 2mm, the standard separation.

Special thanks go to Bob Middleton for his innovation and to David Taylor for his ideas. Both are active members of the North Texas T-Trak Modular Railroad Club and contributed significantly to the development of this tool.