

Want to add a train to your 2021 Christmas display? If the answer is yes, this is the time for some serious planning as there are many choices you will have to make.

This article will address basic requirements for a new display/layout. First up is the planning stages in terms of the overall size of your display. Determining this is critical to the success of this project. Many will choose to add a simple circle of track under their Christmas Tree and then fill the remaining space with their Villages. This approach is very popular and has worked well for as long as there have been model trains.

Others may choose a table or benchwork for their display. Some may select a floor display. Both choices will work well. Simplicity for these choices is important to the success of integrating a train(s). In most circumstances, a perimeter track plan will use a minimum amount of space giving you the ability to have more buildings and accessories as part of your display.

Christmas Tree Display



Floor display



Tabletop Display



I am a big fan of O-Gauge for many reasons. This gauge has been around for a very long time. The track and equipment are versatile and not fragile. This gauge fits well with D56 Villages. And, there are so many model train equipment options related to the Christmas season, much more so than any other Gauge. I have successfully integrated O-Gauge trains and villages since I was a kid and that was a very long time ago. Back then it was Plasticville that was a forerunner for what we have today.

I recommend two types of O-Gauge track, tubular or Lionel Fastrack. Tubular track has been around for almost 100 years and is very reliable. Most Train hobby shops carry it, or Menards is another good option. If you don't have a Menards near you, then on-line ordering will work. Fastrack is available at Lionel Train shops. Lionel has a neat new option with their Fastrack with sections of track that light in multi-colors when the train passes. Measure the route of where the track will be placed and order track accordingly. Account for curved sections. A local train dealer can assist you in determining the correct amount of track to order.

Tubular Track



Fastrack



You will also need a transformer to control your trains. Some train sets have a transformer included. No worries if the train set you choose does not have a transformer; your local train dealer can help you select the correct model.

Installing the track is very simple. For tubular track, there are three pins that are inserted from one track to another. Fastrack easily snaps together. Connecting the transformer to the track is also very simple. One lead wire connects to the center rail while the other connects to one of the outside rails. You don't need to be an electrician to install the transformer.

Next article we will discuss the selection of the perfect train set for your specific requirements.