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Multi-Deck Benchwork

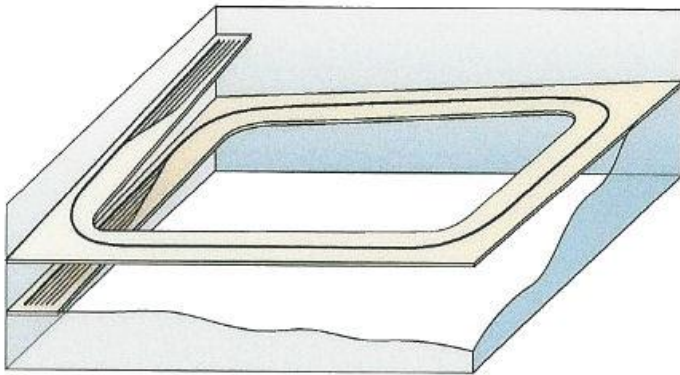
Expand your layout without expanding your basement



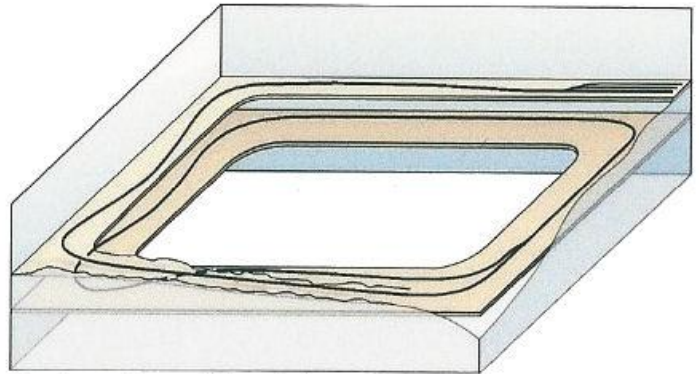
Probably the biggest reason modellers choose multiple-deck layouts is to get more railroading out of given space. Adding a second deck can dramatically increase the layout area, and in the some cases, make it possible to nearly double the length of a main line.

OPTIONS FOR TRANSITIONS BETWEEN DECKS

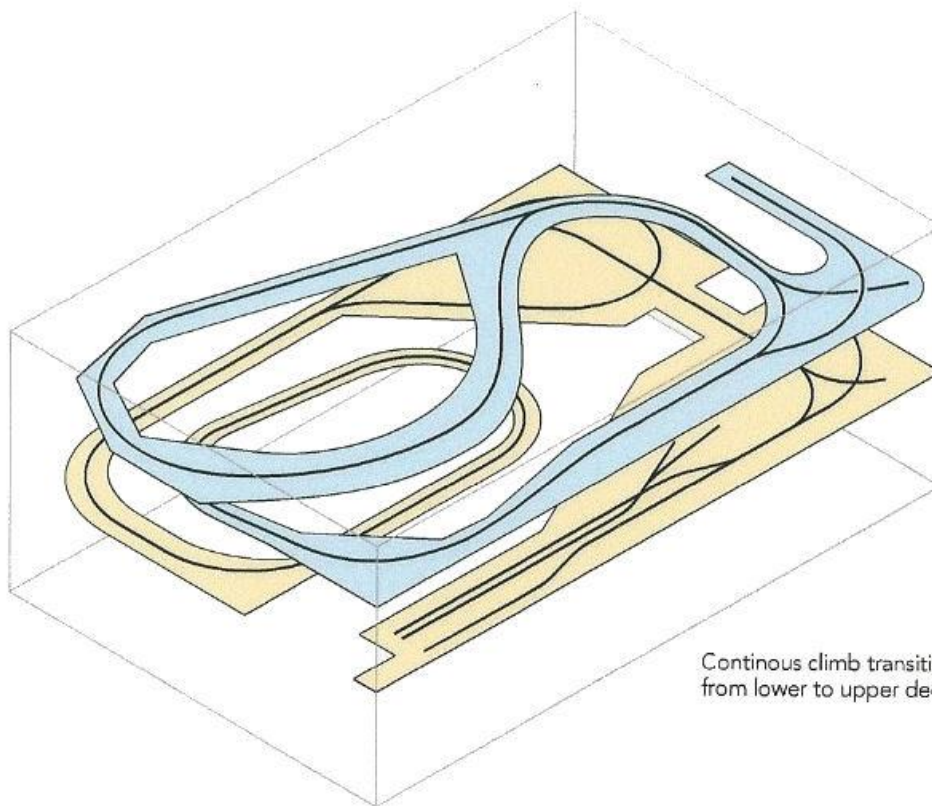
Partially double-decked layouts



Point-to-point around the walls



Continuous loop with branch line on upper level



Continuous climb transition
from lower to upper deck

Although some layouts are completely double-decked and much more common method is to double-deck only part of a railroad. The extra deck (upper or Lower) can be a branch line, staging area, industry, or separate railroad. In the case of staging second deck is often hidden from sight on a lower level.

Before planning an extensive multiple-deck layout, consider the disadvantages to double-deck layouts. The first is increased construction complexity. Viewing angles are also a Concern adding a second level often means that neither level ends up at the optimum viewing height. There's also a limited height to each deck. This isn't much of a problem if you're modeling the prairie, but it can be quite limiting if you're modeling a mountain railroad or a large city with tall buildings.

Some modellers' have even gone to a third deck, but the logistics such as deck heights and access make it a construction and design challenge. It's certainly a possible, but you need to look at the benefits vs the headaches when doing so.

The biggest challenge tends to be getting trains to the second level. One method with a point to point layout is to start it along one wall and then have it gradually climb as it circles the room. The line becomes the upper deck when it completes the circuit. Another way to reach the second level is to climb on scenery until it reaches the height of the upper deck. Helixes where tracks rises on a stacked loop from level to level have long been used to move trains among decks, but they require a tremendous amount of space and can be difficult to build.



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