| $\underset{\substack{\text { N-scale Moduar Rairoading }}}{\text { KATO }} \quad 33 \mathrm{~mm}$ Straight Track Tips |
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| Tips Techniques |

KATO has recently released their "Short Track Assortment B" which includes 33 mm and 38 mm long single track straight track pieces. T-TRAK standard track spacing, center line to center line, is 33 mm . KATO's curved track products are also provided in 33 mm increasing radii. The curved track availability diagram below is for reference here only.


As can be seen in the diagram above 414 and 447 mm radius single track curved track are not available in the KATO catalogue. If you want a 414 mm radius single track curve, rather than use the superelevated double track $381 / 414 \mathrm{~mm}$ radius curves, adding a 33 mm straight track piece to each end of 90 degrees of 381 mm radius track (shown left) will give you a pseudo 414 mm curve with an actual radius of 381 mm . If, likewise, you want a 447 mm radius corner just add 2 pieces of 33 mm straight track to each end of 90 degrees of 381 mm radius curves to create a pseudo 447 mm radius curve with an actual radius of 381 mm . BUT, since at the 45 degree point of your 90 degree pseudo corners the track separation is greater than 33 mm a real 481 mm radius curve can not be used due to interference with your created pseudo 447 mm replacement curve. Solution: create another 90 degree corner of 381 mm curved track and add 3 pieces of 33 mm straight track at each end to replace the 481 mm radius curves.

OK, apart from that little exercise, why would anybody care about using 33 mm straight track pieces with curved track and/or corners? Believe it or not it is a handy tool for layout creation in T-TRAK or home layouts. In the following I'll try to show some examples. You will need to determine how, where, when and why you would use them. Possibilities are actually endless.


8 Track Yard Corner


My 8 Track Yard Corner: This was a personal requirement that led to this application. I had already developed and built my T-TRAK 8 track yard. A fellow modeler developed a 7 track yard and companion 180 degree 7 track corner. A perfect fit for my yard but one track shy. What to do.

At the time the closest fit to add to the ends of a pair of 90 degree 481 mm curves was KATO's 29 mm straight track piece -4 mm shy but doable with a little finesse. It worked. The subsequent use of the then "NEW" 33 mm piece removed the "fudge factor". Since this was an outside corner the increased track spacing at 45 degrees is not a problem. In effect these were the first "19 inch" corners. FYI: the 447/480 mm curves are the T-TRAK main lines.
(Hmmm . . a passing siding on a 19 inch corner??)

Mid-corner Clearance: This is an extreme example for demonstration (using my 8 track corner again) but it could just as easily be an obstruction between only 2 tracks on a curve.

In this example an overhead bridge requires a support in the middle of a long overhead span over a set of yard tracks. The first 4 tracks are standard KATO 282, 315, 348 and 381 mm radius curves. But then the bridge gets in the way. The trackage needs to go around the bridge support but needs to maintain standard track to track spacing as much as possible. In this case the first 4 corners were duplicated and four 33 mm straights were added to each end.

Again, this was an extreme example and curved track usage and the number of 33 mm straight track pieces required will vary as per the application.

The Train Station: This little trick uses a single 33 mm straight track piece to push the outside curve of a standard corner down separating the other ends of the corner by an additional 33 mm . This allows for the creation of a third track between the main two accessed by a pair of turnouts and a wye turnout at each end. Or, this could separate the main tracks for a wide passenger platform or loading dock or some other purpose. If desired one of these modified corners could be replaced with a straight track section/module with an " S " curve created with a pair of 481 mm radius 15 degree curves to transition between the 33 and 66 mm track spacing.


In this case any length of straight track could be used to create even wider main track spacing but creating the " S " curve to return to the standard 33 mm track spacing may be a challenge.

