

1 Work and play

Like a real railroad, this plan has spurs designed to service a working industry. In this case, trains haul logs from the forest to the sawmill and then to points down the line. I recommend reading *Lionel Accessories at Work on Toy Train Layouts* (Kalmbach Publishing Co., 800-533-6644), which offers good ideas about other suitable industries and accessories

2 All within easy reach

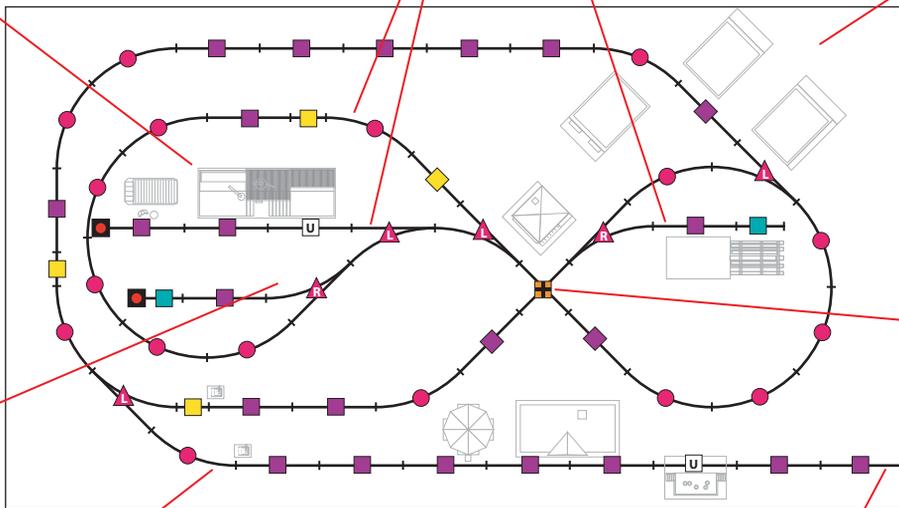
On a small layout like this one, it's fairly easy to keep everything on the layout within arm's reach – no more than 3 feet from the edge of the table. On larger track plans, it's often tempting to bend this rule, but it's never worth the agony in the long run

3 Spur or siding long enough to hold a train

A plan with a lengthy spur makes it quick and easy to vary the trains you operate on the layout. The passenger/freight depot, water tower, and track signal each provide reason for any type of train (steam or diesel, passenger or freight) to pause here

4 Non-stop action

The continuous loop of track keeps trains going around and about, but this plan also features a few point-to-point routes that keep a train bouncing back and forth. Trolley and subway lines can also provide a similar type of point-to-point operation



5 Route extends to layout edge ... and beyond

The route here runs right to the edge of the layout. This helps create the illusion that your railroad connects to towns and industries farther down the line. Additionally, you can easily turn this illusion into a physical connection to another layout section

6 Green piece

This plan could fit in a 4 x 8-foot area. However, expanding to a 5 x 9-foot space provides room to add terrain, scenery, and structures. Sometimes situating the track plan at an angle will create even more room and interest

7 Mystery and intrigue

A plan that adds some degree of unpredictability or hidden peril is bound to entertain. This plan includes a 90-degree crossing and reverse loops. Adding a tunnel, an operating bridge ("Bridge out," CTT July 2005), or tricky track-switch wiring ("The quick switcharoo," CTT October 2005) will also keep you on your toes