

David Churchill

Turntable

Maybe the wrong way round, but I decided to build an O gauge turntable, before I had built a layout. After much research I chose a Kitwood laser cut plywood kit. It was a joy to build, with clear instructions and the parts fitting perfectly. Whilst the kit came with a motor/gearbox I wanted something a bit more powerful and got Brian Clapperton to produce me an ABC turntable drive. The turntable is powered using a Gaugemaster Combi Unit. I will be fitting a dual frog juicer from Digitrains to avoid a short when changing direction on the turntable.

Baseboards

Having been spurred on with my turntable I thought I ought to turn my attention to building a base board in the garage, in three 4ft by 2ft 3-inch sections. Following Dave Coasby's recommendation I chose the Model Railway Solutions base board kit and legs in premium birch plywood with a 9mm top covered with 4mm cork tiles. I have now finished the baseboards which are as solid as a rock. Having bought some Peco track I can now look at planning the layout. One thing I found was that there were some small gaps when the boards were bolted together. To overcome this problem, I fitted 4mm x 30 mm wood strips on either side of the join, which also gave an edge for the tiles. The result was a close-fitting joint. I am working on Jenny, my wife, to let me bring sections in the lounge during the winter months.

Layout buildings

I decided I needed some buildings for the layout and the first two kits were Timber Tracks Tetbury Engine shed with water tower and the Tetbury Goods Shed. I purchased the kits from Ellis Clark – pre-owned, unopened and at reduced prices! (Timber Tracks buildings are normally very expensive). The engine shed is now complete. I decided to fit Slaters 7mm roof tiles instead of the paper ones supplied with the kit and after a few experiments I used a combination of super glue and solvents. I only glued my fingers to the roof once and had a release fluid on hand. The goods shed will be a winter project and other buildings will be added once the layout is finalised. This was my first venture into constructing O gauge buildings, although I used to build radio-controlled model boats in plywood and this experience helped me with project.

Sound decoders

I contacted Andy Harris of DCC Fitting Ltd to fit DCC sound decoders to my GWR 64XX and GWR 15XX. He advertises in the Gazette and has a good reputation. He has installed ESU Loksound decoders and given me a choice of sound profiles. He has done a very neat job and I have found him very helpful. I decided to go down this route as I have never fitted decoders before or have the knowledge to set them up properly. With Andy's work being fully guaranteed it gave me peace of mind.