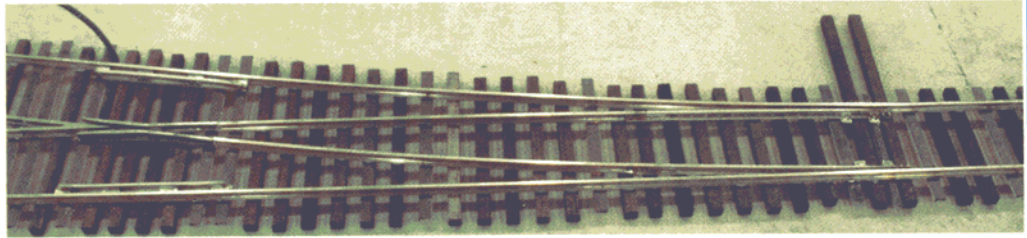


Review: Ready-to-lay #6 and #8 turnouts;
MSRP: \$84/\$86 + s/h
OScaleTurnouts.com, PO Box 818,
Hamburg MI 48139
810-231-4461 •
www.oscaleturnouts.com



Reviewed by Joe Giannovario

The Prototype

The device that allows a train to move from one track to another is properly called a turnout. A turnout is composed of two major assemblies: the switch and the frog. According to the 1945 *Railway Engineering And Maintenance Cyclo-pedia*, the switch is composed of moveable points, one or more rods to hold the points, and gage and switch plates to support the switch rails at the proper elevation with reference to the stock rails. From the same reference, the frog is a device to enable the wheels running on one track to cross the rail of a diverging track. The *RE&M Cyclo-pedia* has drawings of switches and frogs, but every railroad develops its own standards for turnouts that it publishes under its own maintenance standards.

Turnouts are designated by their frog number which is a measure of the angle of the diverging track. The lower the frog number, the greater the divergence. Generally, the smallest frog number used on a prototype, standard gauge, Class 1 railroad would be a number eight. This would be used in yards where the length of the turnout is kept to a minimum and track speeds are slow. My N&W standards book shows a #8 turnout uses 16'6" points, as does a #10. When you get up to a #12 turnout, the points go to 22' in length, and turnouts from 15 and up use 30' points. I have a Virginian reference that lists a #6 turnout for yards and that also uses 16'6" points

The Model

OScaleTurnouts.com delivered two #6 turnouts for this review. The turnouts are complete and ready-to-lay in place on your layout. The rail is nickel-silver Code 148 from Right-'O-Way, as are the points, frog, and guard rails (from masters created by John Pautz). The points are soldered, not hinged, and the frog is completely isolated by insulators with a wire soldered to the bottom. The points are electrically connected to the stock rails even though they are also soldered to a PC board throw bar. The throw bar is neutral because of slots cut in the conductor surface. The wing rails coming off the frog are also live corresponding to the proper

stock rail polarity. The entire turnout is DCC-friendly. The turnout is held in gauge by eleven PC board ties. The rest of the wood ties are glued to the base of the rail. There are no tie plates on the wooden ties.

Compatibility

I measured every aspect of the turnout with an NMRA Mark IV track gage and it passed every test. I then rolled a set of Athearn trucks with Intermountain wheelsets through the turnout from all directions with no derailments. I then ran a 4-6-0 through the turnout again in all directions and it operated flawlessly.

Additional Details

These turnouts are an excellent starting point for creating a truly prototypical turnout. At the point end I add ROW rail braces, some slide plates and made gauge plates from styrene stock as I described in the *Detailing Commercial Track* article.

I suggested tie plates by running a slash of Floquil Rust along the base of the rail where it meets the ties. If you must have tie plates, the wood ties are easily popped off the rail base so you can slide the tie plates under the rail. When you are done you will have a gorgeous prototypical turnout with much less effort than if you built it yourself. Visit the *OST Modelers Network* to see photos of the detailed turnout in place on the railroad.

These turnouts are available three ways: a base unit (PC), ready-to-lay (RL) and base unit with a super detail kit (SD). The base unit is a turnout on PC ties ready to be installed on the ties of your choice and be as detailed as you like. A base #6 is \$68, and a base #8 is \$70. The RL turnout is what I have shown here. The #6 is \$84 and the #8 is \$86. The super detail kit includes a base turnout, unpainted ties pre-cut to length, tie plates, guard rail clamps, rail braces and plastic rail joiners. A #6 SD is \$94 and a #8 is \$96. These prices do not include shipping charges to your location.

Coming in the first quarter of 2013 will be #10 Code 148 turnouts and by the 3rd quarter, Code 125 turnouts.

