

A tale of two sheds



These common structures look great on layouts of any vintage

By Harold W. Russell/Photos by the author

Built in a variety of shapes and sizes, railroad maintenance sheds serve as more than just storage areas for tools, spikes, tie plates, and other track materials. Often used for decades, some of these simple buildings are large enough to house track speeders or even hi-rail vehicles. Other examples, equipped with an office, lockers, and bathroom facilities, offer a home-away-from-home for track crews.

These two sheds, located on the south side of the Burlington Northern (formerly Chicago, Burlington & Quincy RR) tracks in Macomb, Ill., show that a variety of unique right-of-

way structures can be found, often right next door to one another. The sheds look like they're of different vintages. The older, wood-framed building has a tarpaper roof and rests on timber footings. The larger, more modern structure sits on a concrete slab foundation.

The buildings probably serve different purposes. The wooden shed has no visible electrical connection running to it. Two pairs of beams leading to the rails indicate that this structure is a speeder shed.

The more modern shed is set up for track workers. A hi-rail truck might

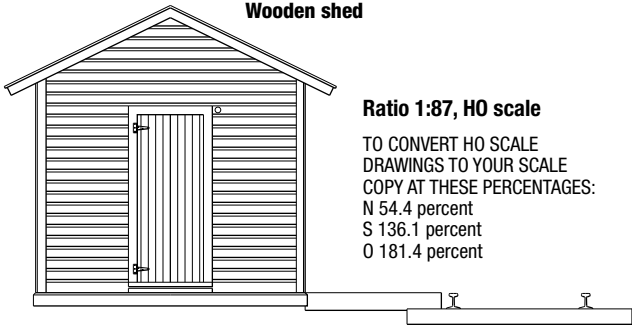
Railroad maintenance sheds appear at regular intervals along most rights-of-way. Although these two examples are right next door to one another, each has a distinct look. Follow the plans for both buildings to add some trackside character to your layout.

stand ready behind the wide front door. There's no stack on the roof, so these track workers probably keep warm with an electric heater rather than oil or gas. There are electric meters and wiring conduits on the shed's west end.

Modeling the sheds

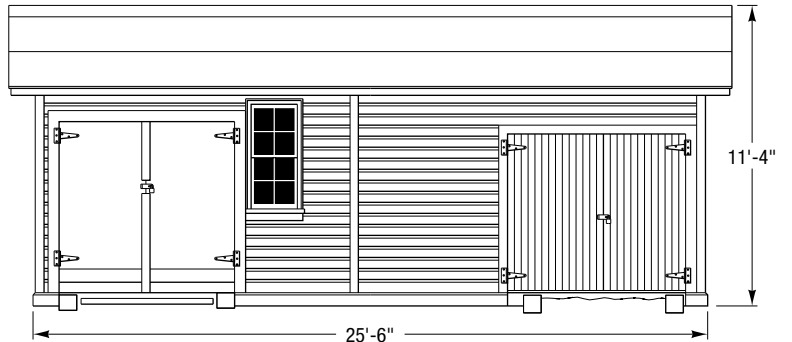
You can model either of these sheds by following the plans and using the materials of your choice. I've outlined a few suggestions for each structure. (For more ideas, see "Build your own lineside structures" by Paul J. Dolkos on page 44. – Ed.)

Wooden shed



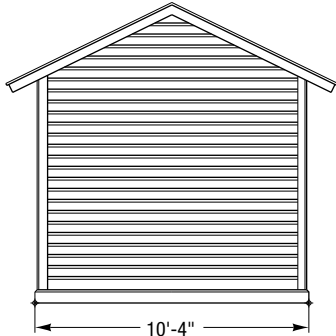
East end

Ratio 1:87, HO scale
 TO CONVERT HO SCALE
 DRAWINGS TO YOUR SCALE
 COPY AT THESE PERCENTAGES:
 N 54.4 percent
 S 136.1 percent
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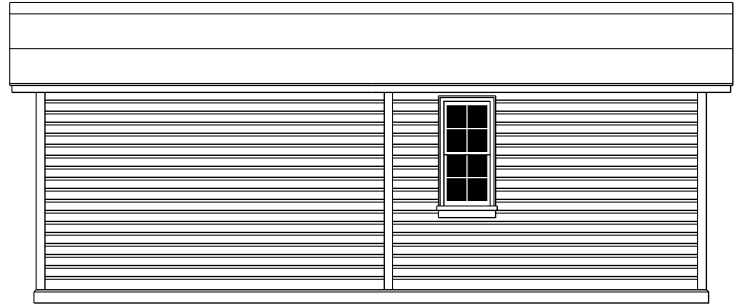


25'-6"
 Front

11'-4"



10'-4"
 West end

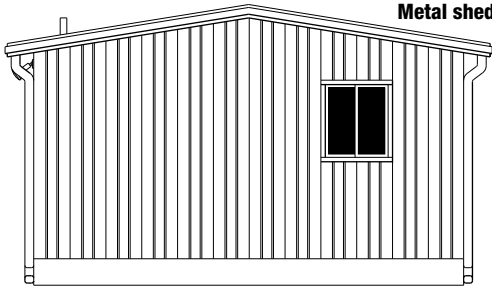


Rear

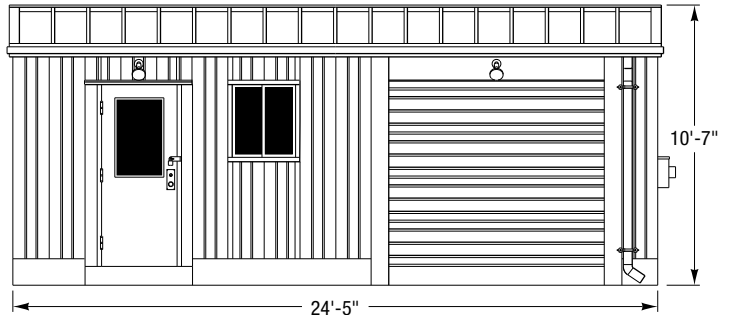
Drawn for *How to Build Realistic Layouts* by
HAROLD W. RUSSELL

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Metal shed

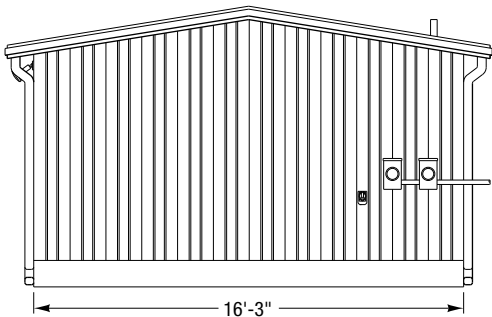


East end

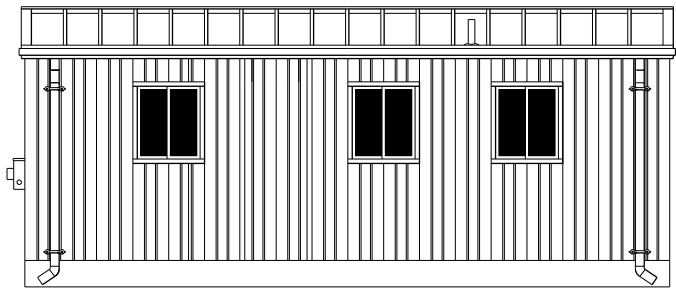


24'-5"
 Front

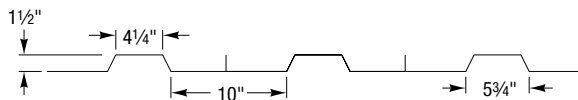
10'-7"



16'-3"
 West end



Rear



Cross section of metal siding, 5 times HO scale



Two pairs of wooden beams leading to the track indicate that this old building is set up as a speeder shed. The well-worn walls show years of service; a seam down the middle indicates the structure was once half its current size.



Assorted junk around the structures offers some interesting modeling opportunities, as seen in this photo of the modern shed's east end. This shed could serve as an office since a telephone line runs down to a connection under the roof eave.

Commercially available clapboard sheathing and other basswood shapes could be used to build most of the wooden shed. Fine emery paper makes good tarpaper roofing. Don't forget details like hasps and padlocks, for some realistic finishing touches.

The siding for the steel-sided shed would require a bit more work. I don't know of any ready-made materials with the profile of the corrugated metal. Strips of styrene with angled edges probably match the closest. This material is also a good choice for constructing roof ribs, windows, and

doors. Other distinctive details include downspouts and electric meters.

Both sheds are painted light gray or dingy white, though each is in a different state of repair. In this regard, modeling the older structure may provide more of a challenge. This building looks like it's seen decades of service and probably started out even smaller. The vertical boards on the front and back hide a seam indicating that one half of the shed was a later addition to the original structure. Dull, peeling paint covers the walls, which also include some broken slats.

The steel shed, on the other hand, stood in relatively pristine condition, shiny and without any visible rust.

As these two examples have illustrated, lineside structures built for the same general purpose can vary widely in size, age, and construction. Each of these versatile railroad maintenance sheds offers a great project, whatever era you model. RL

A longtime O scale modeler, Harold W. Russell has published numerous prototype scale drawings in Model Railroader magazine.