

# JUST FOR KIDS

## Mailboxes

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THESE TWO MAILBOXES are a couple of easy, often-overlooked items you can make for your railroad. Without mailboxes you couldn't get your copy of *Garden Railways!* We'll make two types, the familiar round-top rural box and the street-corner or platform-type deposit box that used to be common in towns.

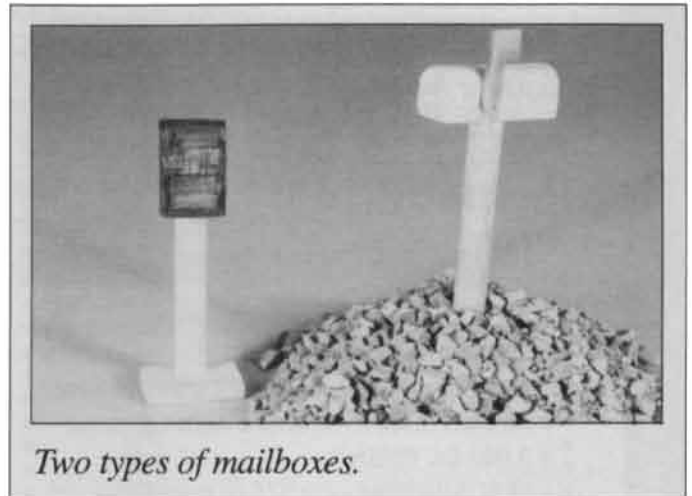
The rural type is made of just three parts. The box itself is made from a piece of  $\frac{3}{8}$ " x  $\frac{3}{8}$ " stripwood, 1" long. Round off the top, as shown, with sandpaper or a file.

A flag is cut from a piece of wood or plastic,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " x  $\frac{3}{4}$ " x  $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick. File away an area  $\frac{1}{8}$ " x  $\frac{1}{2}$ " to create the flag (see the drawing), and glue it to the side of the box. If the flag is up it means the mailman is to stop and pick up a letter; the flag down means there is no mail to pick up.

The post is a piece of  $\frac{1}{4}$ "-diameter dowel,  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " long, sliced at an angle at the bottom. Glue the top of the post to the bottom of the box. The angled end is to be pushed into the ground. You could make dozens of these boxes, one for each house, in an evening. Remember that the flag wouldn't be up except at just a few houses!

The box could be any color, and the post could be painted or stained. Flags are always red. Use plenty of water seal.

Our second mailbox starts out as two pieces of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " x  $\frac{1}{2}$ " stripwood, each  $\frac{3}{4}$ " long. File one end of each piece round, as shown,



*Two types of mailboxes.*

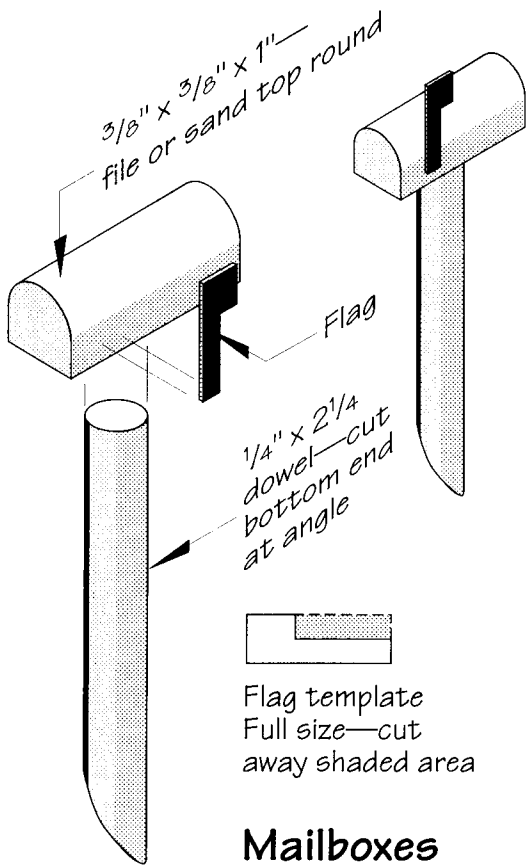
and glue them together back-to-back.

Cut a piece of  $\frac{1}{4}$ "-diameter dowel,  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " long. File a notch  $\frac{1}{2}$ " long, as shown in the drawing, and glue on the  $\frac{1}{8}$ " x  $\frac{1}{2}$ " pieces, as shown. Cut a  $\frac{3}{4}$ "-long piece of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " x  $\frac{1}{2}$ " stripwood, and glue it to the other end of the dowel to form a platform. Make sure that the dowel is glued at the center of the "back" of this piece. This is so that the mailbox will be balanced.

A bit of detail could be added. A pick-up schedule could be made from a scrap of  $\frac{1}{16}$ " x  $\frac{1}{4}$ " stripwood and glued to the lower front of the box. Make a handle from a scrap of  $\frac{1}{16}$ " x  $\frac{1}{8}$ " strip. Both of these pieces would be about  $\frac{3}{8}$ " long.

These older-style boxes would have been painted dark green, though more recently they were painted dark blue, with the post and base a different, lighter color. These letterboxes would be found on street corners or station platforms. Today they have mostly been replaced by the larger, package boxes.





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