

Oklahoma & Western RR

The simplest of these three track plans uses one straight and one diagonal cut to add a branch line and an interchange track to an HO scale oval. The double-ended track allows for runaround operations needed to switch the three industrial sidings inside the loop, but it's the eight-foot-long, tapered peninsula that breaks this layout out of the box.

Wrapping the lead for the branch line around the outside of the loop maximizes its length, while a variety of facing- and trailing-point turnouts makes switching challenging. Note that the second track in front of the O&W depot can't be used as a passing track for the loop without a backing maneuver.

The track that crosses the main and the branch represents the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Ry., a real railroad with which the O&W interchanges. This doesn't just add visual interest, but also allows the O&W to ship any kind of car via the interchange track. Cars for delivery to the O&W can be staged in front of the M-K-T depot before the operating session, and shifted to the interchange for pickup by a road switcher. Likewise, cars from online industries for destinations off the layout can be dropped off on the interchange track to be picked up by the Katy.

The locale is the hills of western Oklahoma, hence the elevation on two corners of the layout. The deep cut also serves to visually break up the main line, disguising the oval.

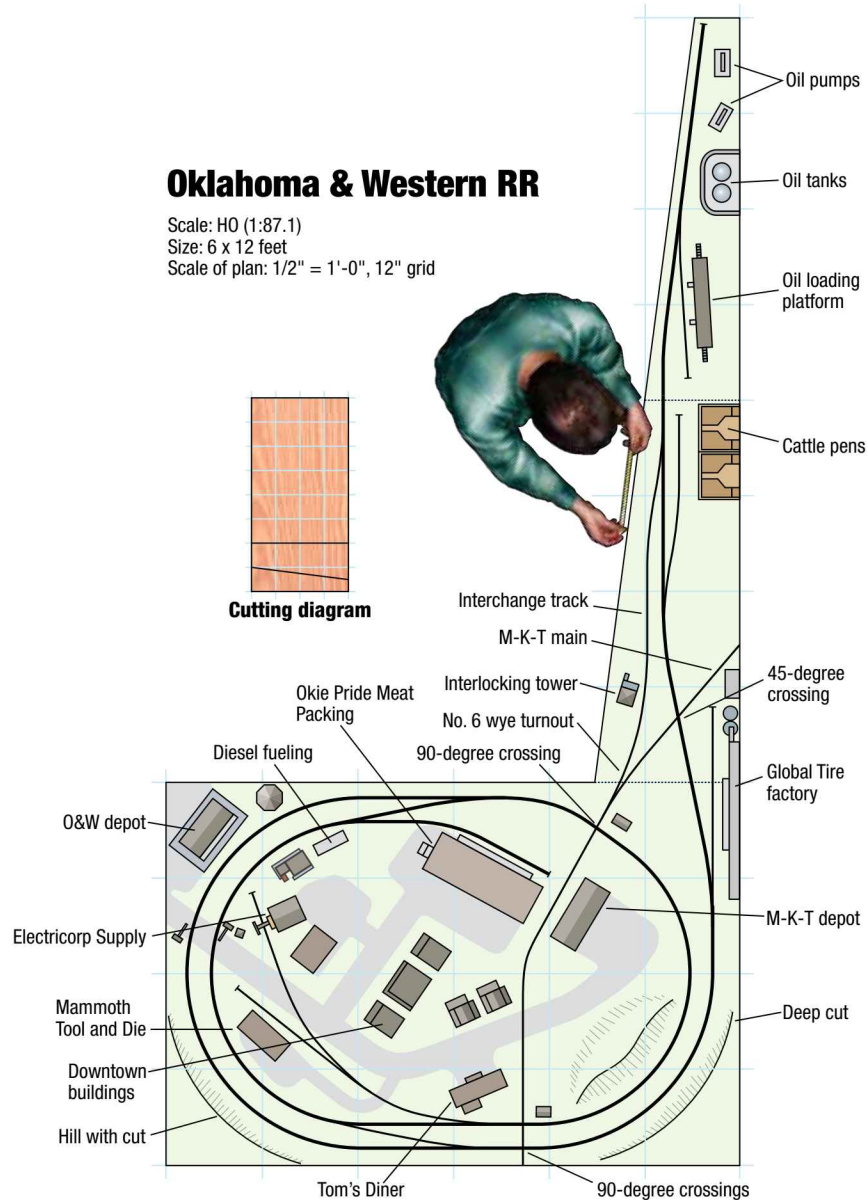
The major industries and resources of the region – cattle, meatpacking, tire manufacturing, and oil – are represented, helping reinforce the layout's sense of place. A couple of industrial spurs branching off the main loop add options.

Setting the railroad in the transition era means either early diesels or oil-fired steam locomotives would be at home on this layout. A Vanderbilt-tender 2-8-2 Mikado or an F unit could handle motive power duties on the O&W. For the M-K-T, an Alco RS-3 would be a good choice.

If you wanted to expand this layout later, the line at the end of the peninsula could be connected to a staging yard. You could also extend the Katy track into a new area.

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Scale: HO (1:87.1)
Size: 6 x 12 feet
Scale of plan: 1/2" = 1'-0", 12" grid



▶▶ The track plan at a glance

Name: Oklahoma & Western RR
Scale: HO (1:87.1)
Size: 6 x 12 feet
Prototype: freelanced
Locale: Western Oklahoma
Era: 1950s
Style: tabletop with shelf
Mainline run: 29 feet
Minimum radius: 19"
Minimum turnout: no. 5
Maximum grade: none

▶▶ Suggested structures

Okie Pride Packing: Atlas 721 Middlesex Manufacturing Co.
Mammoth Tool & Die: Design Preservation Models 103 Cutting's Scissor Co.
Electriccorp Supply: Wm. K. Walthers 933-3611
Tom's Diner: City Classics 110 Route 22 Diner
Global Tire factory: Wm. K. Walthers 933-3172 Armstrong Electric Motors (background building) and 933-3514 industrial tank set