





Building Realistic Gondola and Flat Car Loads From Easy to Find Everyday Materials

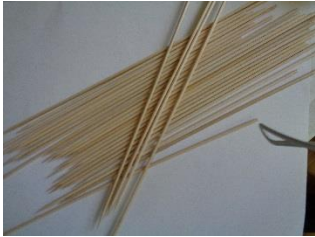




Hands-On Make and Take Clinic

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Materials to build realistic gondola and flat cars load are readily available around us, you just have to look for them. Many are available at low cost at discount stores, warehouse stores, and art supply stores or even free when included with the purchase of coffee or cold drinks. Such items are:

1.		<p>Various sizes of plastic drinking straws can be used pipe loads. Typical pipe lengths are known as single random length of 18 to 25 long and double random length of between 38 and 40 feet long. These lengths fit on 40 to 50 foot flat cars and gondolas. New modern pipe lengths can now be up to 80 feet long.</p>
2.		<p>Round plastic sip-n-stir sticks for coffee can be used for smaller size pipe loads. The color of the straws can easily be changed with a little paint. Cut to length and stack with intermediate cross supports and side bracing supports.</p>
3.		<p>Thin round plastic stir sticks for coffee can be used for smaller size pipe loads as well. Include the intermediate supports so to make it easier to for unloading. Thin Chart-Pac self-adhesive graphic tape can be used to secure the individual portions of the load together.</p>
4.		<p>Wood coffee stir sticks can be used for rough cut lumber loads. These are larger cuts of wood that are ship to mills to be planned and finished into nominal cuts of lumber. The wood loads are stacked randomly and have different lengths. Finished lumber loads can be made with wood blocks that can be scribe to simulated the individual uniformly stack lumber.</p>

5.		<p>Thin bamboo or wood skewers can be used for wood telephone and telegraph pole loads. Typical utility poles can vary in length from 22 to 35 feet long, which make for excellent freight car load. They can be either untreated natural wood or treated with creosote preservative (India ink and alcohol mixture). Wood Dowels or Bamboo chop sticks could be used to make larger and longer wood poles.</p>
6.		<p>Sand can be used for sand, rock or ballast loads within gondolas. Just need to build an underlying support structure and cover with a thin layer of sand. This way the load can be removable to have an empty car. The back side of the load can be covered with a different material so that two loads can be made with one insert. This way you increase the operating possibilities of the car.</p>
7.		<p>Black ash tray silica sand can be used for coal or cinder loads for gondolas. Likewise, just need to build an underlying support structure and cover with a thin layer of the silica sand. This way the load can be removable to have an empty car.</p>
8.		<p>Kitchen scouring pads can be used to simulate scrap metal shavings and lathe turning from metal milling shops. These make a different scrape metal load for gondolas. These can be attached to a sheet of plastic or cardboard so to be able to flip it over and have a different load on the other side.</p>
9		<p>Make your own from balsa wood, bass wood, used match sticks or purchase pre-cut wood track ties, either natural wood, stained new or weathered can be used to make gondola loads. Evenly stack in the car to represent fresh cut ties, new creosoted ties or maintenance-of-way used ties that have been collected along the railroad tracks.</p>