Hustle and bustle at the station: In this part, we devote ourselves to the design of the layout.

## These parts have already appeared:

- Small, but wow! (Märklin Magazin 05/2013)
- Elegant tracks (Märklin Magazin 06/2013)
- Crafted by hand (Märklin Magazin 01/2014)
- Quite simple: Pulling wires (Märklin Magazin 02/2014)
- Work at it and build houses (Märklin Magazin 03/2014)
- I'm in the Garden (Märklin Magazin 04/2014)

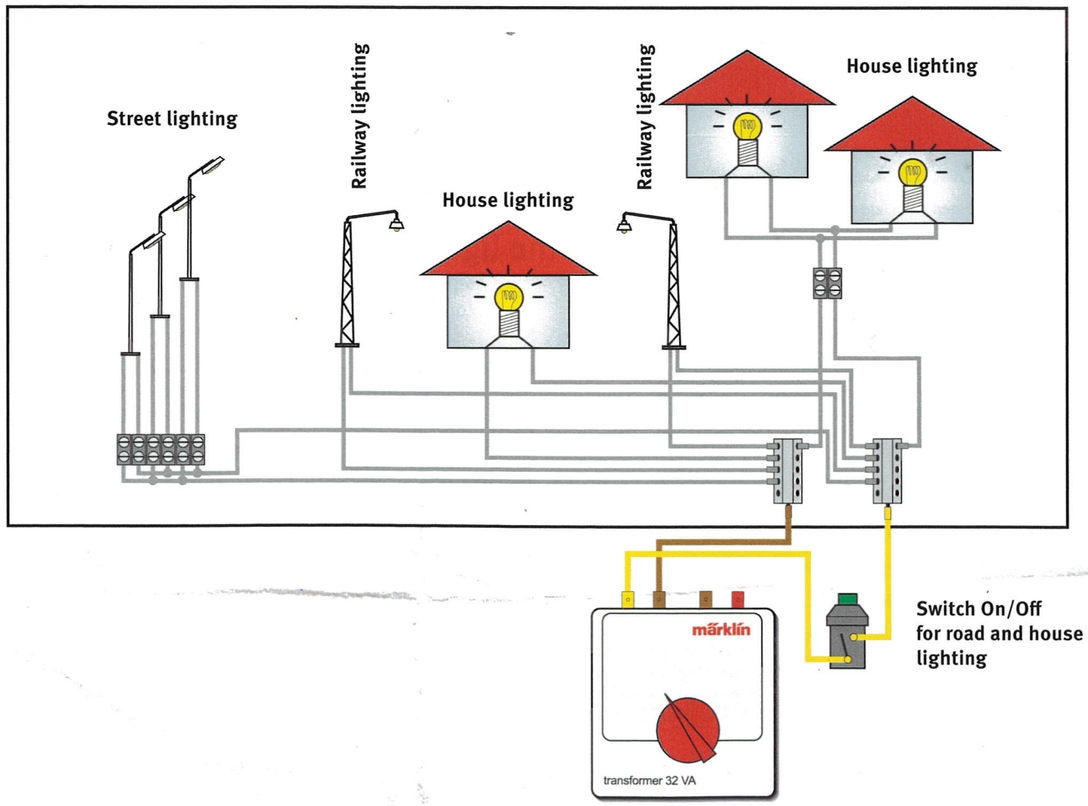
MÄRKLIN RAILROAD & FALLER CAR SYSTEM, PART 7

# Life to the full

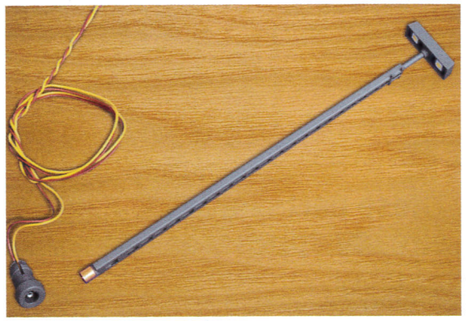
It's all green, the trees are planted – almost ready? Yes, almost, but people, animals, cars and other accessories are still missing from the layout. First of all, though we must take care of the electrics.

This time, the electrics are rather less complicated, as for the lighting, we shall only need two wires for each user and lo! and behold, it works. Our schematic diagram (right) shows the path the electricity takes and the principle clearly, so there is no need for a further diagram with details of all the users. At the transformer, we take the 16 V lighting lead (brown/yellow). The lighting power (yellow) is switched on and off quite simply using a central switch. Now we connect two Märklin distribution strips. Following the Märklin color coding (see part 4, issue 02/14), the users are each supplied with current by two grey cables. Street and railway lighting in attractive brass designs have been part of the Märklin range for some time now (picture 1). The modern LED lamps are very bright and reproduce very well the typical cold light emitted by mercury vapor lamps.

Assembling the plug-in sockets is very practical: all we do is drill a hole in the track-bed or the station baseboard, lead the wire through to the underneath and plug in the base (picture 2). Then the lamp is plugged in to the base (picture 3) →

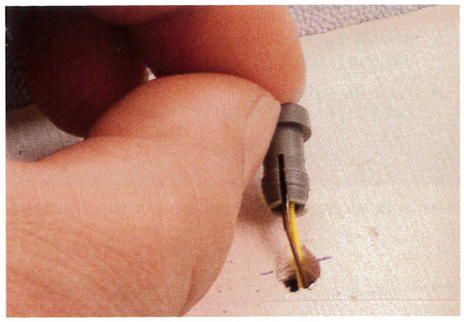


1



**Simple and practical:** Modern street and railway lighting is very easily installed.

2



**Plug in, ready:** The base of the lamps with wiring is simply pushed through a pre-drilled hole.

## Take care! Advertising hoardings belonging to different eras do not go together.

→ and the wires connected up – finished! The advantage of such a plug-in connection is not only that the lamps are easy to replace. If your clothing gets caught in one, it doesn't break immediately as it might have done earlier; it just gets tangled in the pullover but remains in one piece.

### Hoardings, traffic signs and direction signs

Now our layout is adequately provided with lighting and lamps, we turn to other details of its design. If you look around you down town, you realize how few corners there are without advertising of some sort. We can take advantage of that in the model railroad world since, at this moment, our houses and buildings (except for the station sign 'Neukloster') really look pretty bare. Now we're going to change all that.

In principle, the same applies to advertising and instruction panels and traffic signs as to laying the greenery: hardly is grass in place everywhere, when it all looks almost ready. But it's only the extra touches like planting trees, putting down Heki-Flor and flock which gives the greenery its individual appearance. It's just the same with hoardings. Once they are carefully cut out and pasted in place, it's hard to imagine you ever saw a naked wall there (see also the box on page 50). Accessory manufacturers offer splendid sets of posters, which are very accurately divided into eras (see photo 4). This is so important, because an advert for the old VW Beetle and one for the modern Ford Kuga would not suit on the same wall – and above all, not in the same era.

It's the same again with traffic signs. That's why Faller offers sets with precise details of the era. The basic signs are all the same, it's just the pictures rubbed onto them which are different. When rubbing the pictures onto the signs, take your time and above all be patient. Care is required as the paper-thin adhesive foil can easily tear and the results don't look at all good. To put them up, we drill a 1.2 mm hole and simply glue the sign in; that's all there is to it! If you really want to' you can spray the white castings light grey and then weather them, but the difference is hardly going to be noticed.

### Figures, cars and fences

We're getting closer and closer to finishing the layout and we are pleased to see that it's coming to life more and more. With people, animals, cars and other little accessories there now develops the dynamism of which there was earlier no sign at all. So now, following our personal taste, we buy figures. Confronted with the huge selection, we must remember it is first and foremost a model railroad, so railroad staff are essential. We must have animals too, otherwise the layout has no contact with the real world. Thanks to the range offered by the figure manufacturers, everyone will be able to find something to suit his tastes. How do we proceed? Before starting work, we open all the packs of figures and then pick →

## These are the tools we need for the lighting

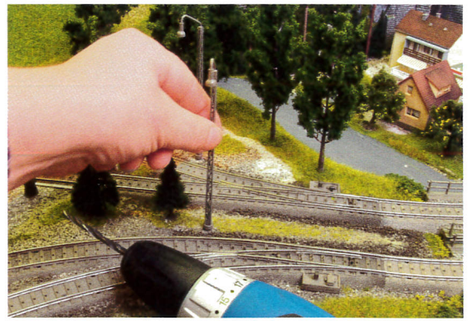
**Few tools, little material: the lighting on our layout is easy to install.**

- **Wire (grey = lamp connection, brown = ground, yellow = lighting power)**
- **Luster connectors**
- **Lighting socket with lamp (houses)**
- **Electronic pliers**
- **Screwdriver (cross-slot and flat-blade)**
- **Insulation-stripper pliers**

In contrast to wiring the whole layout, wiring the lighting turns out to be child's play, both in the buildings and in the supplies to both street lighting and railway lighting. Only two wires are needed for each user, and they run together in the distribution strips. If you want to reread the principles of electrics, you will find a corresponding tutorial ready to download under www.maerklin-magazin.de.

Here is a very good view of some 'finishing touches' – figures, advertising and other everyday items.

3



**Plug in:** When the base is in place, we only have to plug in the mast, and our lighting is installed.

4

Not to everyone's taste: Not even a retaining wall is safe from our billposters.

## These are the tools we need for posters and traffic signs

- Cutting underlay
- Straight-edge
- Sharp carpet-knife
- Universal glue
- Scissors

Even if there is little to go wrong here, nevertheless care should be taken: the paper-thin stickers for the traffic signs tear easily and that of course doesn't look so good.





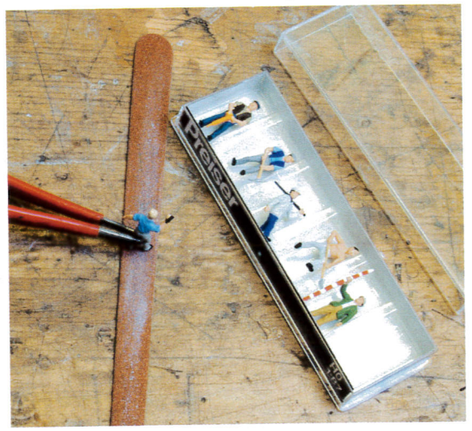
## Little groups of people make an ideal center of attraction.

Vehicles from various eras are all part of the scene.

→ out suitable figures one after the other. As a first step, the spots where they are to be glued are freed of paint. As a rule, that will be the soles of the feet. These are drawn with care across a strip of sandpaper (picture 5). That will make the surface flat for standing the figures on. Apart from that, the glue gets a better grip on the now paint-free surface. Now a little contact adhesive is dribbled onto a sheet of card and the 'feet' of the figure are carefully dipped in this (picture 6). Now let the glue air for three to five seconds, and put the figure in position. Incidentally, less is often more: only two horses with riders – that's enough to set an entire scene (picture 7). When this layout was on display at an exhibition, our observations showed that it was this scene which made most impression on the visitors.

By the way, beginners in particular often underestimate just how many figures a layout like this one will swallow up. If you start off thinking: "Well, I've bought 15 packs of figures – that's sure to be enough", you'll end up wondering where they all disappeared. It's the same with miniature figures as it is with the model trees: one here, one there, another one somewhere else – almost before you look round, they are all →

5



**Clean feet:** So that our figures can stand upright on the layout, we sand the soles of their feet flat.

6

**Wet feet:** A brief dip of the feet in some contact adhesive is enough to let the figures be positioned.

7

**Less is more:** To avoid the scenery having an overloaded effect, try using just two or three figures.

A variety of trades are involved on our little building site, from bricklayers to carpenters and fitters.

→ distributed all over the place. That's why it makes good sense to concentrate on specific locations on the layout. At the station for instance, it's sensible to place figures in greater numbers: a small group waiting for the train will catch the attention. Once our layout is well-populated with miniature people and animals. in principle it only needs some cars and a few other little accessories. Taking the construction site as a theme, here are a few tips for a successful design of your layout: here, there are many different trades at work, from the bricklayers, carpenters to build the roof-trussing to specialist fitters.

## Detailed individual scenes bring more realism to the model layout.

Each trade has its own workers, its own trucks and its own special tools. Specialist retailers offer different sets for these, already made up. These include items like concrete rings for drainage shafts, a tile-cutter with pallet of tiles, levelers and compactors or a wheelbarrow and suitable workers. These accessories are essentials around the railroad too. In the transshipment area around the freight shed there are cases, sacks and packages of all shapes, sizes and colors stacked. And since the freight shed is a popular target for thieves, fences had to be erected to protect the valuable goods. Generally speaking, we find matchboard fencing more often in rural areas, and chain-link fencing more often in urban areas. The individual fencing elements are quick and secure to fix with the hot-melt glue gun. To remove the telltale plastic shine from the fence, we paint it over with some poster paint in various shades of brown using the dry-brush method.

The next and last part of this series aims to summarize the design and building of our little layout. The idea is to highlight the scenes which are already completed and to whet the appetite for a first, or perhaps a completely new, layout construction project. In addition, we'll give you a few ideas of what trains are especially suitable for this layout. This much we can tell you in advance: anyone expecting long ICEs or express trains will be disappointed. Due to our space restrictions, the platform tracks are simply too short. But never fear: there are plenty of locos which paired with appropriate cars will cut an extremely good figure on our beginner's layout and give you any amount of running enjoyment.

*Text and photographs: M. T. Nickl*

**All the parts in this layout series can also be found on the Internet under www.maerklin-magazin.de**

## Preparation of the figures

- **Tweezers**
- **Fine sandpaper**
- **Electronic pliers**
- **Contact adhesive**

Figures are available both ready-painted and as 'blanks' to paint yourself – the selection is enormous, and there are no bounds to the imagination.