

Trackplan Tools v. 23 for Adobe Illustrator CC 2019 - 2022

Trackplan Tools is a plugin by Rick Johnson/Graffix that's proprietary to Kalmbach Publishing Co. and is available to Kalmbach's affiliates at no charge. In order to see it, you must register as a user at rj-graffix.com. After being added to the Kalmbach group, the plugin will be visible to you throughout the site. In order to use the plugin, you must authorize it. Add it to your "cart" and at the website's checkout, enter the code "mr21027" for a 100% discount. You'll receive an email with your authorization code. Copy the code from the email, then in Illustrator go to the menu **Illustrator CC > About Graffix Plugins > Trackplan Tools**. Click the Activate button and in the dialog that appears, paste the code into the first of the four text fields and click that dialog's Activate button. If you're connected to the internet, within a few seconds you should receive confirmation that the plugin has been activated.

To install the plugin, just drop it into Adobe Illustrator's "Plug-ins" folder. It doesn't matter if you put it in a subfolder you create (just to keep things tidy) or at the top level of the Plug-ins folder.

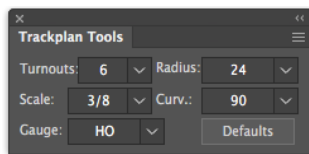
The correct path to the main plugins folder under **Windows (64-bit)** is:
Windows (C:)\Program Files\Adobe\Adobe Illustrator [version]\Plug-ins

The **Windows 32-bit** path just adds the "(x86)" like this:
Windows (C:)\Program Files (x86)\Adobe\Adobe Illustrator [version]\Plug-ins

On a **Mac**, the path to the plugin folder is:
/Applications/Adobe Illustrator [version]/Plug-ins

For more support information, please visit <http://rj-graffix.com/support/>

Usage



Trackplan Tools consists of four tools plus a panel. To show the panel, select Trackplan Tools from the Window menu. The tools should be visible in the tool bar.

Choose your turnout size from the Turnouts combobox. The Gauge combobox refers to track centers. The popup includes standard track centers for common scales, and now includes two Lionel settings, O27a and O27b for 4.5" or 6" track centers.

The Radius popup is for curves, and now includes the most common radii for toy trains, along with its diameter in parentheses.

The Curvature popup includes the common curvatures we're likely to use (in degrees) with the number of pieces per circle in parentheses.



When using the turnout tool, pressing the cursor up or down keys will increment the turnout size by .5, or pressing 4, 5, 6, or 8 on the keyboard will give you that size turnout. If you're connecting a turnout to an existing path, pressing the Control key will spin the turnout around to connect at the diverging route. If you release the Control key, then press it again, the turnout will spin to connect at the straight section. Pressing the Command key will draw the curved section of a turnout only, for the last track in a yard ladder.

When using the straight line tool, holding the Option key while starting to draw a tangent to a curve will give you a tangent guide line so you can drag along the curve to find the tangent you want, then release the Option key to start drawing the constrained line.

When using the curve tool, pressing the up or down keys will increase or decrease the diameter by the track-center distance to make concentric curves with consistent track centers. Pressing Command while drawing a curve will add an easement. Pressing the left or right key will add or remove additional curve sections while dragging. Pressing the [or] keys will increment the curve diameter by one inch or turnout size by .5. When the curve is active, hovering the cursor over a curved path will display the curve's radius at that point.

Use the yard tool to draw sidings and yard tracks. Click on a path/track (it does not need to be selected) and drag to place equidistant tracks spaced at the current track centers (gauge) setting. Press Option while dragging to place tracks on both sides, or press Cmd to just draw lines the width of a bridge or trestle. You can select "Show annotations" in the panel's flyout menu to display help text so you need not memorize these key commands.

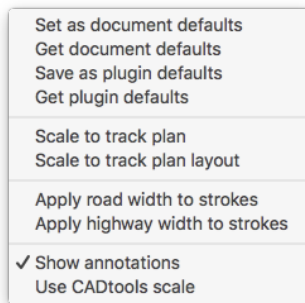
The curved turnout tool draws curved turnouts using the formula where the radius is different by twice the track centers. Peco HO curved turnouts are different, with radii of 60 and 30 inches. When adding a curved turnout to an existing curve, the default will be to make the turnout to the inside, but you can hold the Option key to swap the turnout track to the outside. When drawing new curved turnouts it's probably best to draw one track, then press the down arrow twice to adjust the second curve size.

When using either the curve tool or curved turnout tool, hovering the cursor over a curve will display the curve's radius.

Using the keyboard to adjust the turnout size or radii as you work updates the panel settings accordingly.

You can use the line tool to simply measure something in the scale of the drawing by holding down the Command key: if you're pressing the Command key when you release the mouse, the just-drawn line will disappear.

A flyout menu has been added to quickly set or restore either global plugin defaults or document defaults.



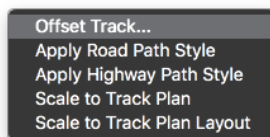
Use the flyout menu in the panel to save the current settings as the document defaults, or as the plugin's global default for all new documents. You can also re-apply the saved defaults to your panel settings.

To scale selected art to match your current drawing scale, select "Scale to track plan." This is recommended for track plan people.

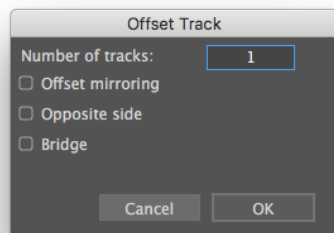
To scale selected art to match the layout in your scaled drawing, select "Scale to track plan layout." This is recommended for pasting clipart such as commercial structures drawn at 1" = 1'-0" for HO, especially when your layout is any scale other than HO such as N or O.

To format a selected path as a scaled road 18 feet wide, select "Apply road width to strokes" from the panel's flyout menu. If the path stroke is black, it will be set to a tan color. To format selected paths for 26-foot wide highways, select "Apply highway width to strokes" from the flyout menu. If the path stroke is black, it will be set to light gray. A white stripe will be added on a duplicate path. The original paths will be deselected and the dashed paths selected so you can simply delete them if they're not wanted.

An annotator displays information next to the cursor for instant feedback. It shows the size of a turnout or crossover as we draw it, the radius of a curve (plus number of curve sections and total rotation), or the length of a line. Select the item from the flyout menu to hide or show them.



A menu is available at Object > Trackplan with four items also found in the flyout menu (here you can assign keyboard shortcuts), plus "Offset Track..." which brings up the following dialog.



Track will be offset to the track's right based on the current distance for track centers. To offset two or more tracks for a yard, enter a number other than 1 in "number of tracks:" The option for "Offset mirroring" adds tracks on both sides of the track. The option for "Opposite side" adds tracks on the left side of the track. The "Bridge" option adds one track to each side, offset 1/2 the track center distance in each direction.

Please let me know if you encounter any problems or have any suggestions.

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