

V. Kitbashing a Tankcar



Kitbashing is a process of changing a kit or RTR item to create something new. This can be done by combining parts from two or more items or by adding or deleting sections of length, width, or height.

The advantage of kitbashing is that a unique model can be constructed using parts from existing models. The disadvantage can be the cost, especially when combining parts from two kits.



The basic parts of the model: Morgan Hill Models flatcar kit (shown completed), a Bachmann tank from a ready-to-run tank car, Kadee #5 couplers, Grandt Line trucks, Rio Grande Hobbies Bachmann On30 Tankcar Detail Conversion Kit and Texaco Tankcar



Lower overfill line, unloading valve, and NBWs.

Parts List

Flat Car: Morgan Hill Models #101 On30 Flat Car kit

Couplers: Kadee #5 HO Couplers

Trucks: Grandt Line #3113 On30 Trucks

Cradles: Rio Grande Hobbies #BCC-07

Bachmann On30 Tankcar Detail Conversion

Tank: Bachmann #27198 Tank Car tank and details

Tank Straps:

(2) .005 X .075 X 2 3/4" brass strip

(4) .045 X 3/4" brass wire

Handrail Filler: approx. 1/2" of black insulation from a piece of 22 gauge wire

Lettering: Rio Grande Hobbies #BD-04 Texaco Tankcar decals

(2) Shims: 4" X 9" X 18" wood

(4) Wood screws for couplers #1 X 1/4"

(8) NBW: Grandt Line #80 or 81 NBW castings

Overfill Line:

upper—18# floral wire 1 1/2"

lower—18# floral wire 3/8"

base—.020 X 1/4" X 1/4" styrene

Unloading Valve: 1/8" dowel 1/2" long

Details:

Hamm River Model Products #D-300

5 Gallon Jugs (2)

Banta Modelworks #5067 S Scale

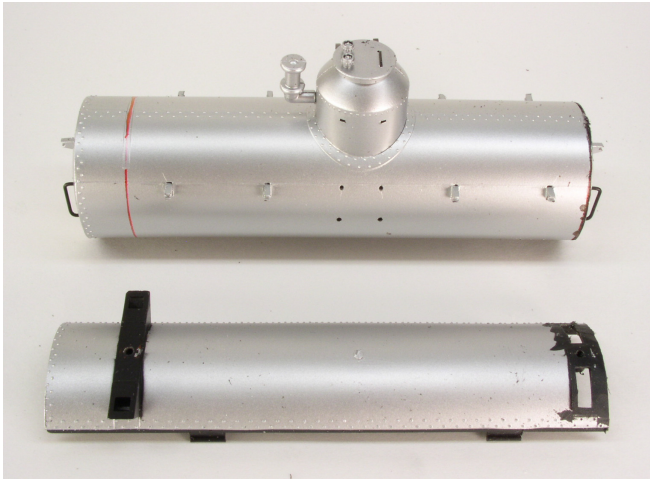
15 Gallon Drums (4)

Evergreen Hill Designs #EH8021 Pick



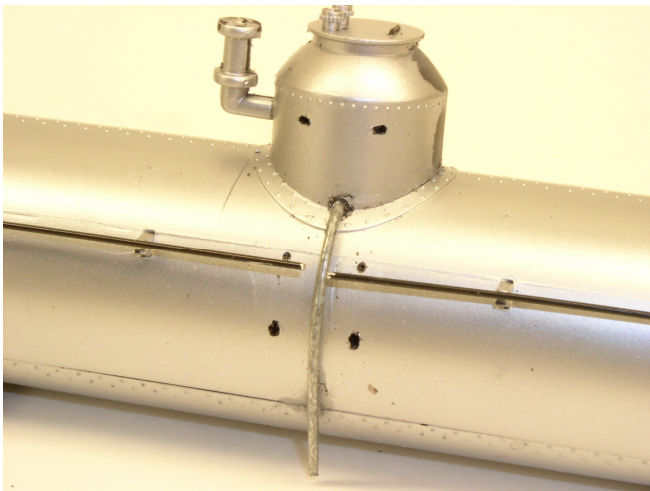
2. Build the Flatcar

Build the flatcar per kit instructions. Add the 4" X 9" X 18" shim between the body bolster and the truck bolster in order to allow the trucks to swing and the proper coupler height to be obtained. Use the back edge of a razor knife blade to scratch wood grain in the floorboards. Weather the wood parts with thinned acrylic black paint.



3. Shorten the Bachmann Tank

Remove the tank from the Bachmann tankcar. Find the flat area on top of each end where the straps sit and mark around the circumference of the tank. Cut off each end and square up the cut—make sure the flat area is totally removed. Remove the body material from the ends and glue the ends onto the tank body, with the handrails vertical. The photo shows the left end after marking off the cut line and the right end after the end is glued on.

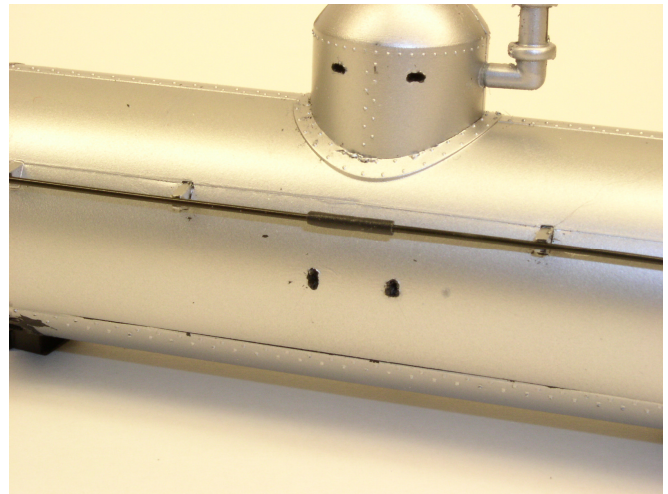


4. Pipes, Handrails, and Ladders

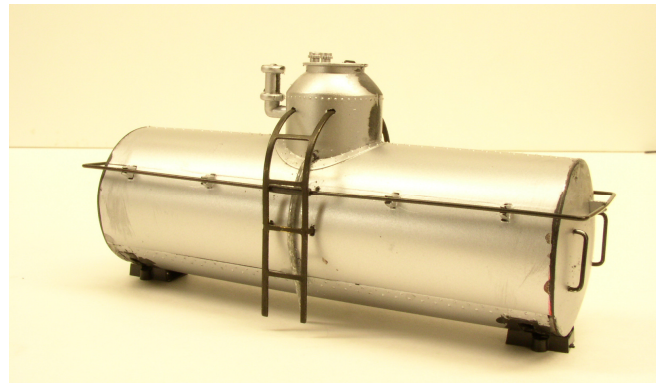
Overfill pipe is built in two pieces due to the steel plate in the flatcar floor. Drill a .046 hole (#56) in one side of the dome on the lower edge where it meets the tank body. Insert a piece of 18# floral wire and bend around the tank. Cut the wire just below the tank body and glue at the dome and underneath the handrails with CA glue. Final length will be approximately 1 1/2".

The handrails have to be shortened since the tank length was shortened. Clip the handrail in the middle to make two pieces. Cut off the two

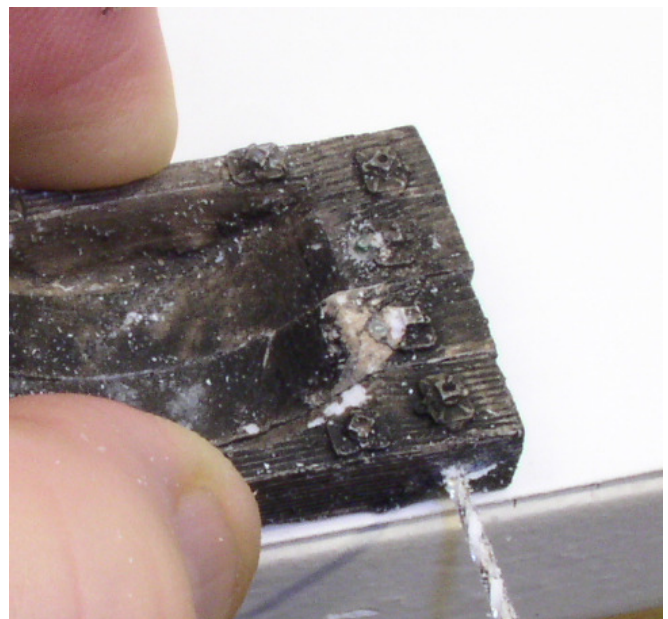
bent ends. Fit the two handrail pieces onto the tank and cut the four ends down so they have a small gap, which is centered on the tank body.



Cut two pieces of black insulation from a piece of 22# solid wire and slip over each end.

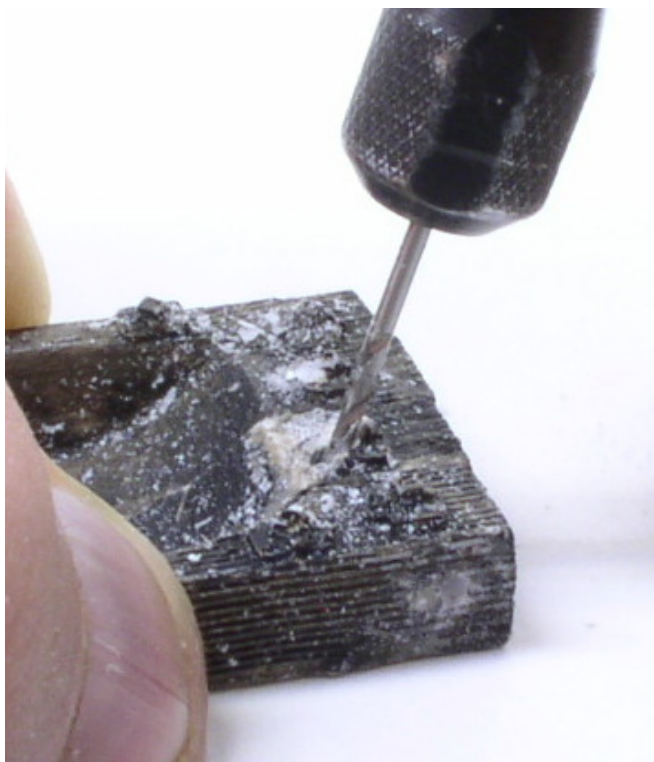


Enlarge the holes where the ladders fit so they can slide in further.

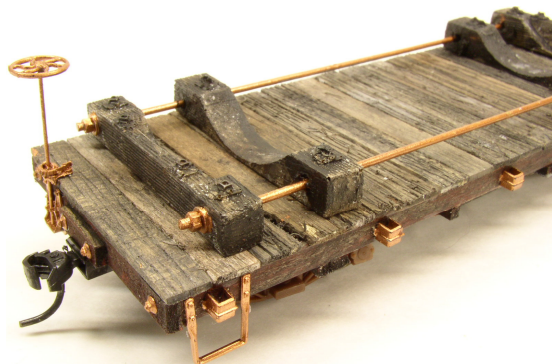


5. Tank Mount

Carve off the NBW castings on the outside of the two end pieces. Paint all four pieces and then drill with a #56 drill as in the photo. Drill as far as the bit will go and then remove one of the pieces and keep drilling until the bit goes all the way through all the pieces. Insert one of the brass wires. If the wire is at an angle, line up the pieces and enlarge the holes and keep adjusting the holes until the wire fits level. The material is soft and enlarges easily. Do the other side.



On the cradle pieces only, drill one hole on each end with the #56 drill, inside the NBW detail and tilting toward the outside edge.

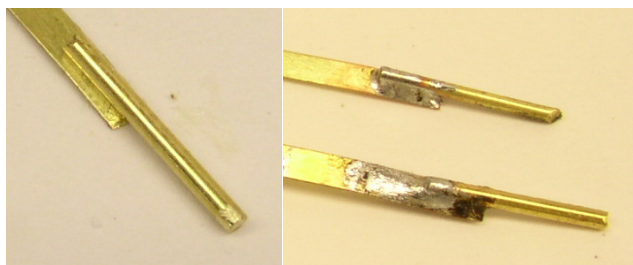


Use the tank and position the tank mounts, centered on the car floor, be sure both wires are inserted into the drilled holes. Glue one end piece with CA glue and measure over 1' 6" (3/8") and glue the cradle piece. Then glue the opposite end. Remove the wires and cut their length so they fit into each end piece only half way—this is to leave room for the stud on the NBW castings to insert into the end piece. The wires and the NBWs can be painted before or after installation. Install the wires, and then glue in the NBW castings. If white material is showing around the drilled holes, use thinned acrylic black paint to touch them up.



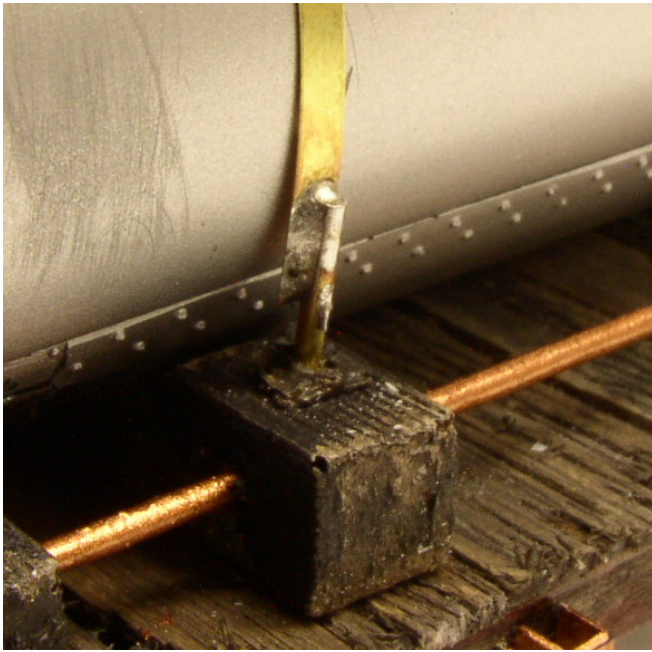
Checking the fit of the tank onto the cradle.

6. Tank Straps

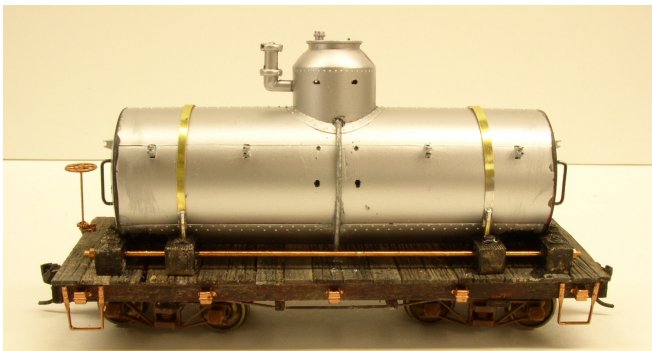


Make the tank straps from two pieces of .005 X .075 brass strip, cut to 2 3/4" long. Cut four pieces of the brass wire left over from the tank mounts, 3/4" long.

Solder one piece of the wire on each end of the strap, overlapping approximately 1/4" (the overlap does not have to be precise). Be sure the wire ends are inline with the strap.



Set the tank on the mounts and test fit the straps, putting the wire ends into the holes drilled previously. Hold one side down and use pliers or tweezers to push the other end into the hole. Be sure the strap will tighten up; if not, either clip small amounts off the ends of the wire or deepen the holes in the bolsters. Do both straps but don't glue them in at this point.



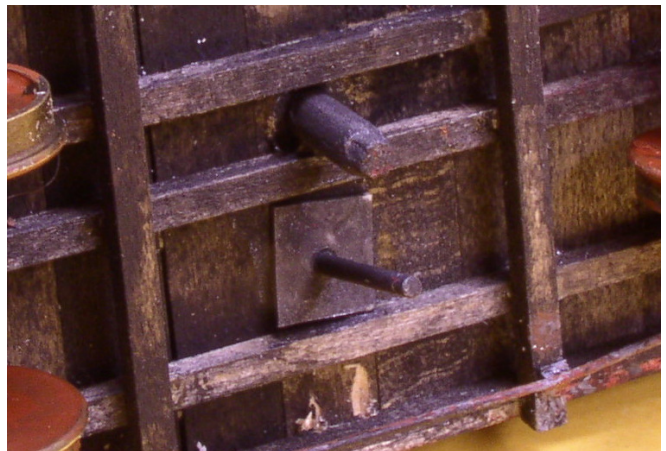
7. Painting and Lettering

Paint the tank and the straps gloss black and let dry. Glue the tank onto the mounts with Walther's Goo and install the straps with CA.



Cut out "Texaco Petroleum Products" from the sheet and then cut it into three pieces with the "O" in Products as the centerpiece. This extends up through the "C" in Texaco. This small piece

is placed on the right strap and the other two pieces butt up against the strap. Put "The Texas Company," the "CAPY" and "SHN WT" on as a single decal, to the right side of the left strap. Put one of the numbers between the two horizontal lines. Put a set of numbers on each end of the car. Walther's Solvaset was used to cause them conform to the surface. When all the decals are dry, spray the tank with Testors Dull Cote. Paint the handrail and ladders flat black and install.



8. Underframe Details

Glue the lower overfill line (floral wire and styrene) directly under the upper overfill line. This line has to appear to go through the floor. Taper the end of the unloading valve so the silhouette doesn't look like a pipe, and glue to the center of the car. Paint these to match the underside.



The completed car with details added. The barrels, jugs, and pick are added for interest. The four end barrels are painted gloss dark red. The pick is used just to maintain the size of the barrels. The pick handle is painted brown and the head, turquoise. The two jugs are painted gray and silver with green lids.