



▲ **Fig. 6 END STREAKS.** Earth streaks over each rail on the ends of a car are caused by dirt sprayed up from the wheels of the next car in a train. Match the color used on the trucks and underframe.



▲ **Fig. 7 RUST.** John paints Rust onto any parts of the car that would receive a lot of wear. He added rust to the steps, ladder rungs, coupler faces, and truck parts of this boxcar with a 5/0 brush.



▲ **Fig. 8 SOUTHWESTERN DUST.** To create distinctive weathering on a car from the Southwest, John sprays Dust down the sides at a narrow angle from a point above the roof. The paint, like real dust, settles on all the upper surfaces of the car's details – ribs, ladders, even the wood grain – and really makes them stand out.



▲ **Fig. 9 GALVANIZED ROOF.** Using a no. 1 brush, John painted patches of Undercoat Light Gray on the roof of this boxcar to simulate paint peeling off a galvanized steel roof. He then sprays Engine Black over the roof (shown on the right-hand end of the car) to represent locomotive soot.

panels. I put larger blotches in the middle and only a few tiny ones, using the end of the brush's bristles, on the end panels as shown in fig. 9.

Advantages

My quick and dirty weathering process consists of a few simple steps that allow you to weather freight cars in a minimum amount of time with an airbrush and readily available paints. Rolling stock weathered using this process will look great on your pike "as is," or you can easily add some of the optional techniques to make individual cars really stand out. ☐

John Pryke is a frequent contributor to the pages of MODEL RAILROADER. "Quick and dirty freight car weathering" is a follow-up to his article "Realistic weathering for steam locomotives," featured in the August 2002 issue. John models the New Haven in HO scale.

► More on our Web site

To see a video clip of weathered freight cars in action on John's HO scale New Haven layout, go to www.modelrailroader.com.

TABLE 2 – Dirt color mixes for different regions

Region: Northeast
Polly Scale: Earth
Floquil: Earth

Region: Southeast
Polly Scale: 3 parts Earth,
1 part Oxide Red
Floquil: 3 parts Earth,
1 part Boxcar Red

Region: Midwest
Polly Scale: 3 parts Earth,
1 part Mud
Floquil: 3 parts Earth,
1 part Mud

Region: Mountain states
Polly Scale: 3 parts Earth,
2 parts MOW Gray
Floquil: 3 parts Earth,
2 parts Grime

Region: Desert southwest
Polly Scale: Dust
Floquil: Dust

Region: Northwest
Polly Scale: Dirt
Floquil: 3 parts Earth,
1 part Roof Brown

TABLE 3 – Additional weathering for specific cars



Caboose

Detail: Streaks on sides

Polly Scale: Erie-Lackawanna Gray
(light coat)

Floquil: Grime (light coat)

Note: Most cabooses display little weathering except for soot on the roof and dust on the trucks and underframe.

Chemical tank car

Detail: Dome

Polly Scale: Erie-Lackawanna Gray

Floquil: Grime

Detail: Streaks on tank

Polly Scale: Erie-Lackawanna Gray

Floquil: Grime

Detail: Drip marks under dome
Polly Scale: 3 parts Milwaukee Rd. Gray,
1 part Depot Buff

Floquil: Dust

Note: On chemical tank cars, I spray Grime on the dome and tank and then paint drip marks of Dust or very light gray with a 5/0 brush.

Coal hopper

Detail: Top ¼ of carbody

Polly Scale: Engine Black

Floquil: Engine Black

Detail: Hopper doors

Polly Scale: Engine Black

Floquil: Engine Black

Detail: Panels
Polly Scale: Erie-Lackawanna Gray
(light coat)

Floquil: Grime (light coat)

Detail: Side posts

Polly Scale: Grimy Black

Floquil: Grimy Black

Note: I spray Control Coat liberally over these cars to simulate the coal dust.

Covered cement hopper

Detail: Drips and streaks on car side
(use stencil)



Polly Scale: Concrete

Floquil: Concrete

Detail: Side posts

Polly Scale: Concrete

Floquil: Concrete

Detail: Bottom of hoppers

Polly Scale: Concrete

Floquil: Concrete

Detail: Coating on trucks

Polly Scale: 1 part Concrete, 1 part Earth

Floquil: 1 part Concrete, 1 part Earth

Note: I paint drip marks on the side panels by spraying through a narrow V-shaped stencil, made from an index card. When the stencil is removed a neat drip mark remains.

Car Type: Gondola

Detail: Panels

Polly Scale: Erie-Lackawanna Gray

Floquil: Grime

Detail: Ribs

Polly Scale: Rust over Grimy Black

Floquil: Rust over Grimy Black

Detail: Interior of car

Polly Scale: Rust

Floquil: Rust

Note: If the car is used for carrying other materials such as pipe loads, spray the ribs Grimy Black and only lightly dust the interior with Rust.

Petroleum tank car

Detail: Dome

Polly Scale: Engine Black

Floquil: Engine Black

Detail: Streaks on tank

Polly Scale: Engine Black

Floquil: Engine Black

Detail: Drip marks under dome

Polly Scale: Oily Black

Floquil: Oily Black

Note: I use a 5/0 brush to add Oily Black drips around the filler hatch, down the sides of the dome, and a short way down the tank.

Refrigerator car

Detail: Streaks on sides

Polly Scale: Erie-Lackawanna Gray
(light coat)

Floquil: Grime (light coat)

Detail: Door hinge pins

Polly Scale: Rust

Floquil: Rust

Detail: Drips under ice hatches
(use stencil)

Polly Scale: Rust (light coat)

Floquil: Rust (light coat)

Note: I paint Rail Brown on the ice hatch hinges and handles, as well as on the door hinges. On steel reefers, I spray a few, very light rust drips through a stencil onto the sides just under the hatches.