

HANDRAILS

Yet another recent improvement by manufacturers is the inclusion of appropriately colored handrails and stanchions. This is especially welcome since most handrail/stanchion castings are molded in acetal engineering plastic (Delrin is one brand), which is difficult to paint.

Some models still include metal handrails and stanchions (Athearn's standard line and others). These can be easily brush-painted the appropriate color.

Vertical handrails at the corner steps of locomotives are usually painted a bright color to increase visibility. A good paint to use for handrails is Pactra Racing Finish, an extremely flexible paint designed for use on clear R/C car bodies.

Figure 8-23 shows how to apply it to a handrail. When painting engineering plastic, it's important to completely coat the handrail so that the paint forms its own "jacket" around the part. This will

help keep it from scratching off. Two coats are usually necessary for complete coverage.

The Life-Like Great Northern switcher required white on the corner handrails, but don't automatically reach for the white paint—check photos for specific prototype examples. Some railroads used yellow, and others used odd combinations of colors.



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Fig. 8-23. Pactra's Racing Finish is a flexible paint that works well on locomotive handrails. Be sure to coat the entire handrail so the paint forms a jacket around the part.