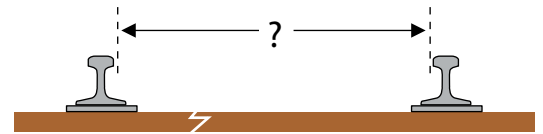




SIMPLE WAYS TO MEASURE Track Gauge, Track Curvature, Height of Rail and Track Clearance

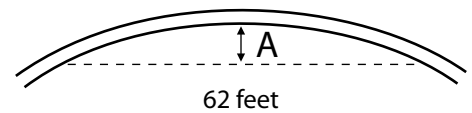
Measure Track Gauge

Most North American trackage is built to standard gauge, 56-1/2" spacing between the inside faces of the rail heads, as measured from a point 5 inches down from the top of the rail head. Narrow gauge track is less than 56-1/2" (such as mining railroads). Broad gauge is more than 56-1/2", and is used by transit lines for wider passenger cars. For accurate measuring of track gauge, see our line of levels and gauges, pages 44-46.



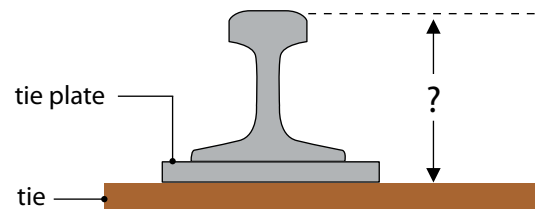
Measure Track Curvature

Stretch a 62 foot long string taut between two points on the inside of the curve. Measure the distance "A" at the midpoint of the string to the side of the rail head. Each inch of "A" distance is equivalent to one degree of curvature... a 5 inch measurement is thus equal to 5 degrees, etc. For a more convenient way to measure track curvature, see our Stringline 4024-03.



Measure Height of Rail

Various railroad track products such as derails, rerailers, and spill containment pans are sized by height of rail. Height of rail is usually measured from the top of the wood tie to the top of the rail. Do not forget the thickness of the tie plate. Put a pipe or straight piece of lumber across the rails and measure from the tie up to the underside of the pipe or board. For a more convenient way to check height of rail. See All-Rail Height-of-Rail Gauge 4022-17.



Measure Track Clearance

To avoid contact with passing trains, North American railroads typically require that any platform or dock adjacent to spur tracks should be at least 9 feet away from the center of the track. Other structures may require greater clearance. Contact your railroad and state/local government agencies. Devices installed between the rails (derails, hinged stops, weighing scales, etc.) should be no higher than 2-3/4" above the top of the rails. (An exception to this rule is any flexible urethane marking cone, such as our Track Clearance Marker 4015-144.)

