



# NEWSLETTER

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Digital Consultants  
Rick Sinclair  
Curtis Jeung

**Current Central Station 3 Version – 2.4.0 (5)**  
**Current Central Station 2 Version – 4.3.0 (5)**  
**Current Mobile Station 2 Version – 3.148**

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We have just come back from the annual European Train show in San Carlos, Calif. This is always a great show where great deals can be found. It was good to finally get back together with friends in the area that we have not seen in a while.

Our first article is a look into controlling the C-Track turntable with a Mobile Station 2. The second article is a Quick Guide to Märklin/Trix Track Plan software.

## **C-Track Turntable w/ MS2**

Since we have covered the mounting of the C-Track turntable (74861) and the connection to a Central Station 2. I thought I would cover the control of the turntable with a Mobile Station 2. This article is written with the assumption that the user is familiar with the "Keyboard" feature in the MS2. For explanations of the keyboard, please refer to the MS2 manual.

What is nice about the Mobile Station controller is that you can access all the functions, sounds, and lights with it, except for the automatic indexing of the bridge.

## **Correct Mounting**

To start with, the turntable needs to be mounted correctly in the layout. Many people claim to have had difficulties with the turntable when they test theirs. We have had many technical support calls about this.































The main issue we determined was that the user did not install the turntable correctly. I am guilty of this also, when I received the turntable, I was excited and wanted to see how it worked. I placed it on a table and started evaluating it with my CS3. I noticed that I had trouble getting it to program the correct segments and the bridge would get stuck. Like many users, I got frustrated. Then I thought I would start at the beginning and follow the mounting instructions in the manual. Once I installed the turntable correctly, it started to function as it

should. Please see our newsletter July/August 2021 where we show how to install the turntable.

## Turntable Manual

The manual that comes with the 74861 turntable has been updated. The updated version is on the Märklin website, and I suggest downloading it for the Mobile Station instructions. The printed manual that comes with the turntable doesn't have the Mobile Station instructions because it was printed before the turntable went into production.

For Mobile Station control, the most important page in the revised manual (after the mounting instructions), is page 15. Since the manual is online, page 15 can be printed out for reference at the layout. Here is what it looks like – NOTE: I greyed out the icons for the other controllers for clarity, Mobile Station users should only reference the column named “MS2 address”.

CS2/CS3 6021 (/CS2)	72760	MS2 address	Function
	end	225	Rotation is ended at the next track
	input Button 1	225	Unlocking/Locking the turntable deck (on = unlock)
	clear	226	Continuing to run after STOP
	turn Button 2	226	Rotating 180°
	step Button 4	227	Deck rotates clockwise to the next track
	step Button 3	227	Deck rotates counterclockwise to the next track
		228	Preselection of the rotation direction clockwise
		228	Preselection of the rotation direction counterclockwise
		229 – 236	Destination track to be stopped at
		236	Sound: Announcement of the turntable operator
		237	Operating sounds off
		237	Operating sounds on
		238	Sound signal: „(Locomotive) approaching“
		238	Sound signal: „(Deck) turning away“
		239	Light off (inside)
		239	Light on (inside)
		240	Light off (outside)
		240	Light on (outside)

\* In the CS 3, you can stop at the tracks by touching the desired track on the display. No special buttons are provided for this.  
 Note: The turntable accepts no switching commands as long as the locking feature for the deck is open.

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Fig. 1 - Page 15 of the manual online

On page 15, of the manual, there is a column of red and green numbers. Some people will get this right away, it took me a few seconds to realize what it was telling me.

## Turntable Operation

The turntable is set to a default address of 225 (fx protocol) which corresponds to keyboard page 15. The rest of the numbers in the column are the subsequent digital addresses to control all the

functions and the colors represent which button to push on that keyboard address. For example, address 237 (which is still on keyboard page 15), the GREEN button will turn on the turntable running sounds and address 237 - RED will turn them off (fig. 2).

There are a few things to mention at this point. First is that most of the GREEN and RED buttons will turn a function “on” or “off,” (or they will have the opposite effect of each other, so to say), as in the “ON” is an address with the green button and the “OFF” is the same address using the red button.

Secondly, address 226 - RED, “Continue to run after STOP” will prompt the bridge to continue to its destination track after there was an emergency stop with address 225 - RED.



Fig. 2 - Corresponding buttons

### **Track Indexing**

Now for the tricky explanation. While there is no diagram on the mobile station screen like the CS3, nor can the turntable be programmed for track or blank segments, the turntable bridge can be sent to a specific segment.

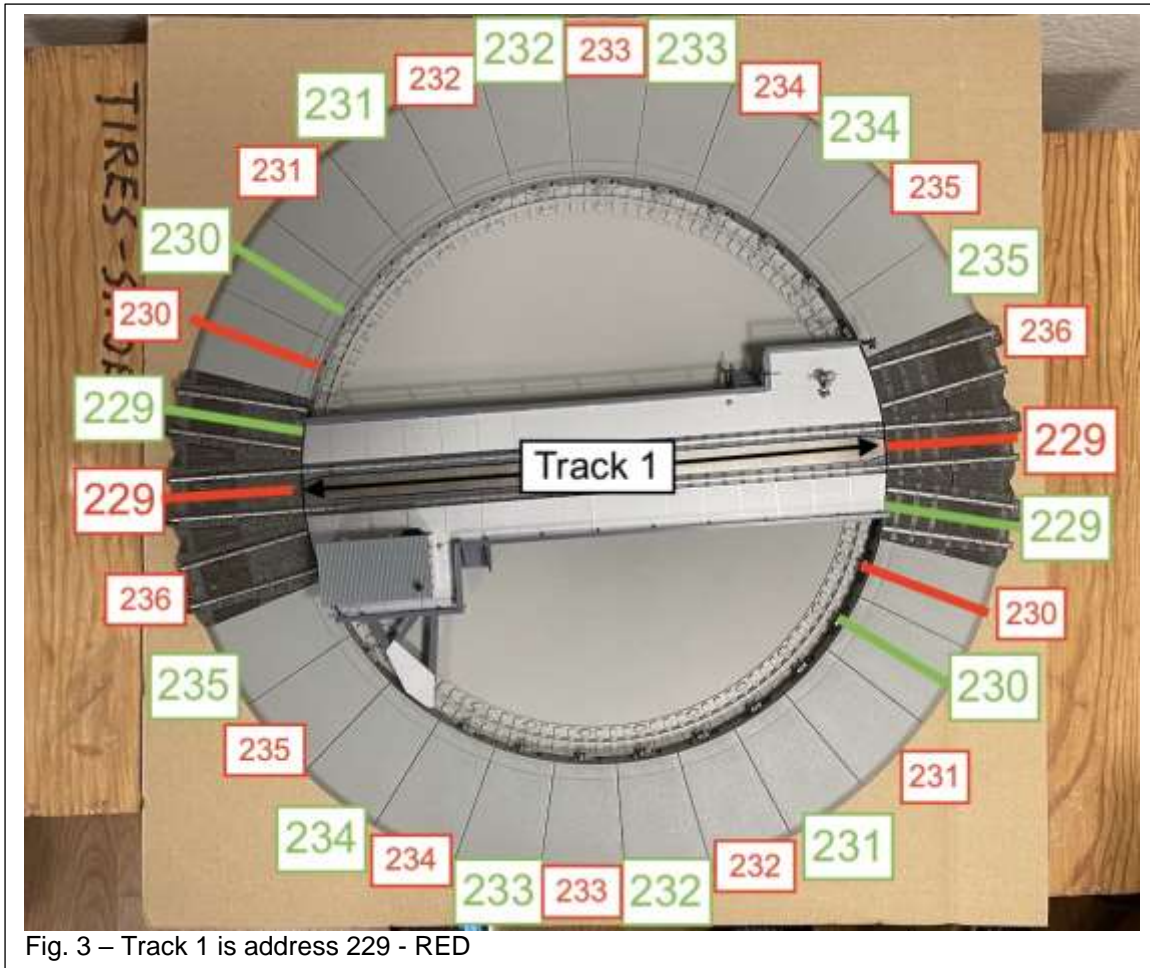
The way the turntable “knows” where the bridge is, is by counting. There are small plastic pieces sticking out of each segment. The plastic pieces are essentially the code disk, and the bridge houses an emitter and receiver of an encoder to count the segments. The turntable is made up of 30 segments. Since there is access at each end of the bridge for a locomotive to drive onto, the encoder only must count to 15. This is how the whole thing works.

Once the bridge is set to track 1, the turntable is ready to count to reach a specific segment. This is done by using addresses 229-236 red and green, which equals 15 segments. So, in a sense, the turntable can index to a specific track that is selected.

### **Identifying Track 1**

It is important to identify track 1 because it is the reference point for the bridge. The easiest way to identify it is to press address 229 - RED on the keyboard and let the bridge travel to track 1. It is VERY important to have all the plastic “code disk” pieces installed, or the bridge will miscount the number and not index correctly... EVER!

Once it has found track one, any segment can be selected. Figure 3 gives a busy example of the addresses corresponding to the segments. Remember address 229 - RED is track 1.



**Note:** The illustration on page 15 of the manual may be a little misleading because the segment addresses start with 229 - GREEN. I believe it should start with 229 - RED in the illustration on page 15, but I will let others debate this...

### **Setting Track 1**

If track 1 (address 229 - RED) needs to be in a different position, the turntable can be rotated, or the segments can be moved. If the segments are already in their needed position, then select address 229 RED and let the bridge turn until it gets to (what it thinks) is track 1. Then select 225 - GREEN to unlock the bridge. Now the bridge can be turned by hand (gently) to the desired track 1 position – BE CAREFUL! - the handrails on the bridge are fragile. Turn the bridge by pushing the deck, not the handrails! Once this is done, select 225 - GREEN once again to engage the bridge lock. Now the bridge is set at track 1 in the desired position.

## **One Last Note**

In figure 3, the turntable can be seen mounted on a piece of cardboard. This is just a temporary platform that I use to test controllers with the turntable. Like I said earlier, I had trouble with the turntable bridge getting stuck when it was placed on its base and not mounted. Once I mounted it correctly, (on this piece of cardboard), the turntable has worked flawlessly! This goes to show how important it is to install the turntable with the supplied hardware.

One thing I have noticed when writing these articles is that I learn new things while researching the topics. I probably would have never used the turntable with a Mobile Station if it weren't for this. Once I started understanding the turntable with the Mobile Station, I realized that it is very easy to operate, and I get all the functions that it offers (except a track diagram). All in all, I think it would be a very nice addition to any layout.

**Enjoy your hobbies!**

**Rick Sinclair**

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## **Quick Guide to Märklin/Trix Track Plan software ("Gleisplanung 2D/3D")**

In this month's article, I'll go over some basics on how to use Märklin's track planning software (Versions 9 & 10). Before I get started, be aware that the software is only available in German. During installation, you will come across a dialog box asking if you want to install using English, however, this will NOT load an English version and all commands will still be in German. While I do not speak the language, I do know the program enough to assist with basic setup and track planning.

Before you begin laying down track pieces, I recommend you consider your setup conditions. What track will you be using? What elements can you plan for? Do you have benchwork constraints that you need to draw out first? Are you going to build on multiple levels?

**General Overview** Let's look at a quick overview of the planning window. I will point out the more important functions only, because of the limitations in language. (Fig. 1) The tips will be color coded by outline:

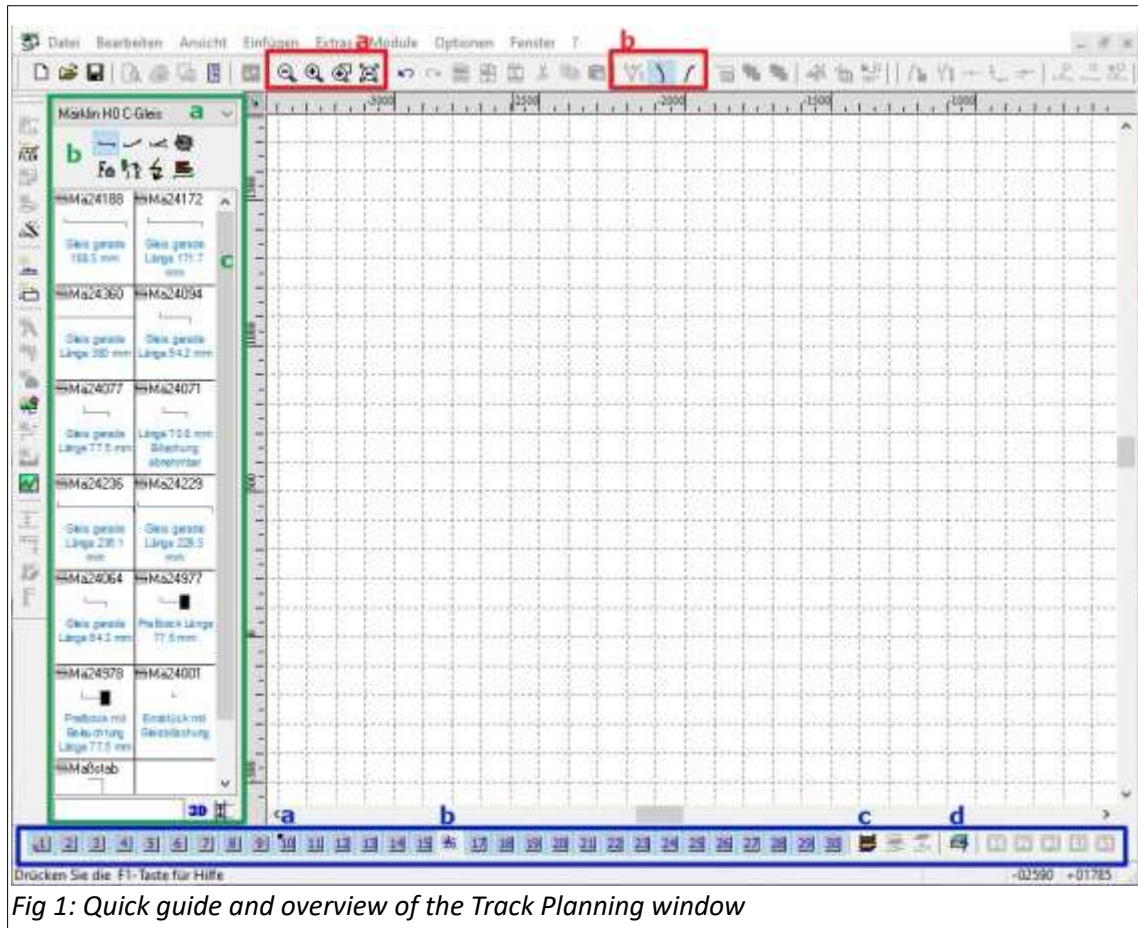


Fig 1: Quick guide and overview of the Track Planning window

**a (red)** - zoom in/out. The + w/square will magnify a rectangle of selected objects. The fourth icon will zoom out to display all objects placed in the layout grid.

**b (red)** - track direction tool. The second and third icons will set the direction of added curve pieces. The first icon will change directions of already added pieces (change a left curve to a right curve).

For turnouts, the first icon will change connection points on each of the three ends of a turnout. This occurs with each click.

**a (green)** - This is the track type selection menu for Trix/Märklin (and even Faller) HO product. Click on this to set your track type (i.e., C-track, K-track, etc.)

**b (green)** - select the group type to display in the selection column (below). Object list is: Straight track, curved, turnouts and crossovers, Miscellaneous trackage (turntables, circuit tracks, etc.), Accessory items such as signals, buildings, Trees, Tunnels, and Wiring to name a few. Some of these selections will display an additional menu of items to choose from. To see this, click on the Trees & Tunnels icon.

**c (green)** - Selection list. To use this, you can drag the element into the layout board, or click to add additional pieces to an existing track point.

**a (blue)** - Level display and selection. The black dot on this level number indicates that it is the active level, all items added will be placed on this level. To change active levels, hold the shift key down and click on a level marker.

**b (blue)** - By clicking on a non-active level, you can hide it from display

**c (blue)** - This button will set all levels as visible. The icon to the right will hide all levels except the active and base level (level 1). This becomes available once an object is placed in the layout.

**d (blue)** - This is the level options window. When you click here you can select colors for elements (track) on that level. You can also select which items to display in the different view modes (elevation and 3D view). A 'fix' column also lets you lock down a level. (Fig. 2)

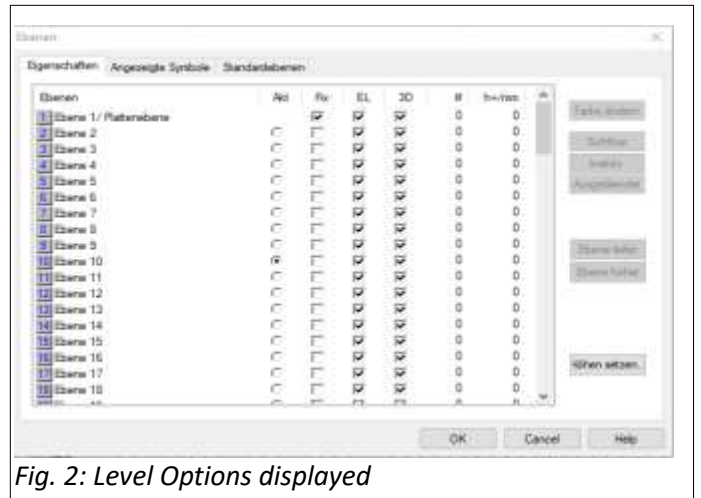


Fig. 2: Level Options displayed

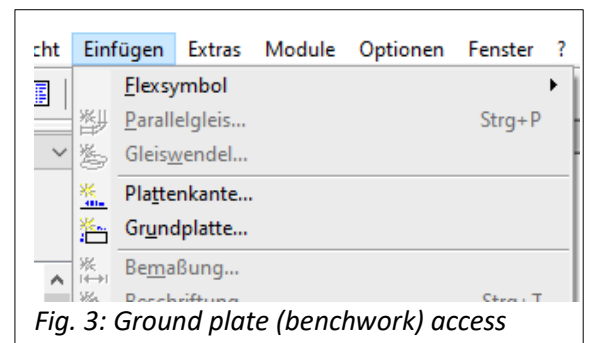


Fig. 3: Ground plate (benchwork) access

### Adding Benchwork

Knowing the dimensions of your benchwork can assist you with your track layout limitations. While this is not always necessary, it can come in handy when knowing you may not have the room for all your track ideas. Select the 'Grundplatte...' item in the 'Einfügen' menu (Fig. 3) and it will display some basic and common ground plate shapes (Fig. 4).

The measurements for these displays are in centimeters. Putting in the numbers here will place a benchwork outline in level 1 of your layout.

I found it more efficient to go and get a tape measure that has metric rather than constantly doing conversions. And while I don't expect any precision measurements towards accuracy, it is still faster for rough measurements.

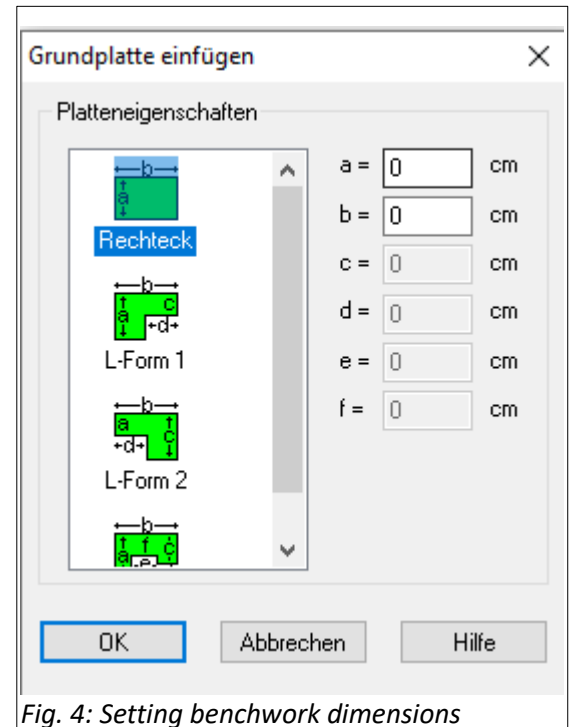


Fig. 4: Setting benchwork dimensions

## Laying Down the Line

To begin adding track that you want, simply click on the track group that you want to start with (straights, curves, or turnouts). Then from the selection list, click on the track piece and drag and drop into the layout area. Releasing the mouse will reveal a placement options window (Fig. 5). This also includes an angle of rotation for the track piece. Don't worry about precise placement, as you will more than likely need to move stuff around.

Adding more track can be done by double clicking other items in the track listings. However, this method only works if an end point is pre-selected. This add-on point is indicated by a red line (Fig. 6). All double clicks will add track to this point.

For curves, you may need to change the direction of added track. This is done by clicking on the direction change icon (shown in Fig. 1 as **b** (red)).

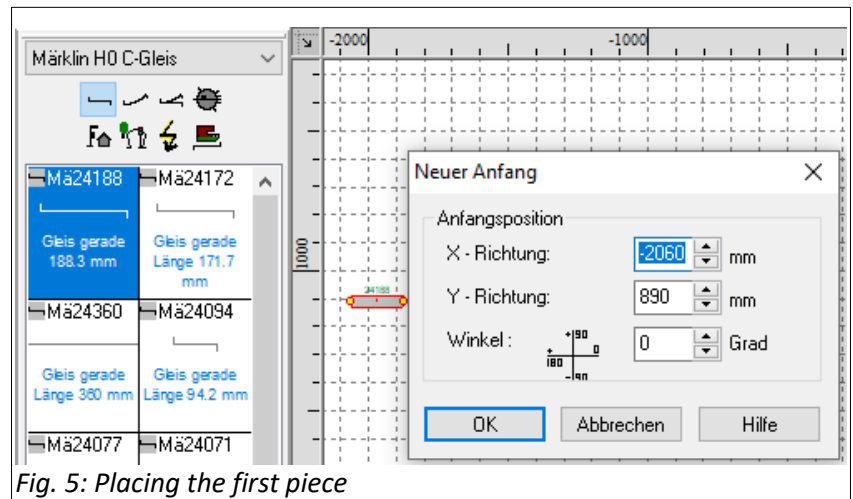


Fig. 5: Placing the first piece

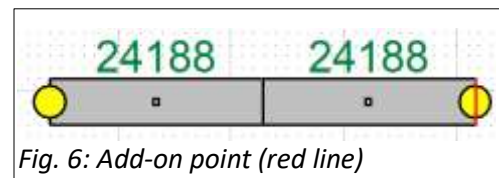


Fig. 6: Add-on point (red line)

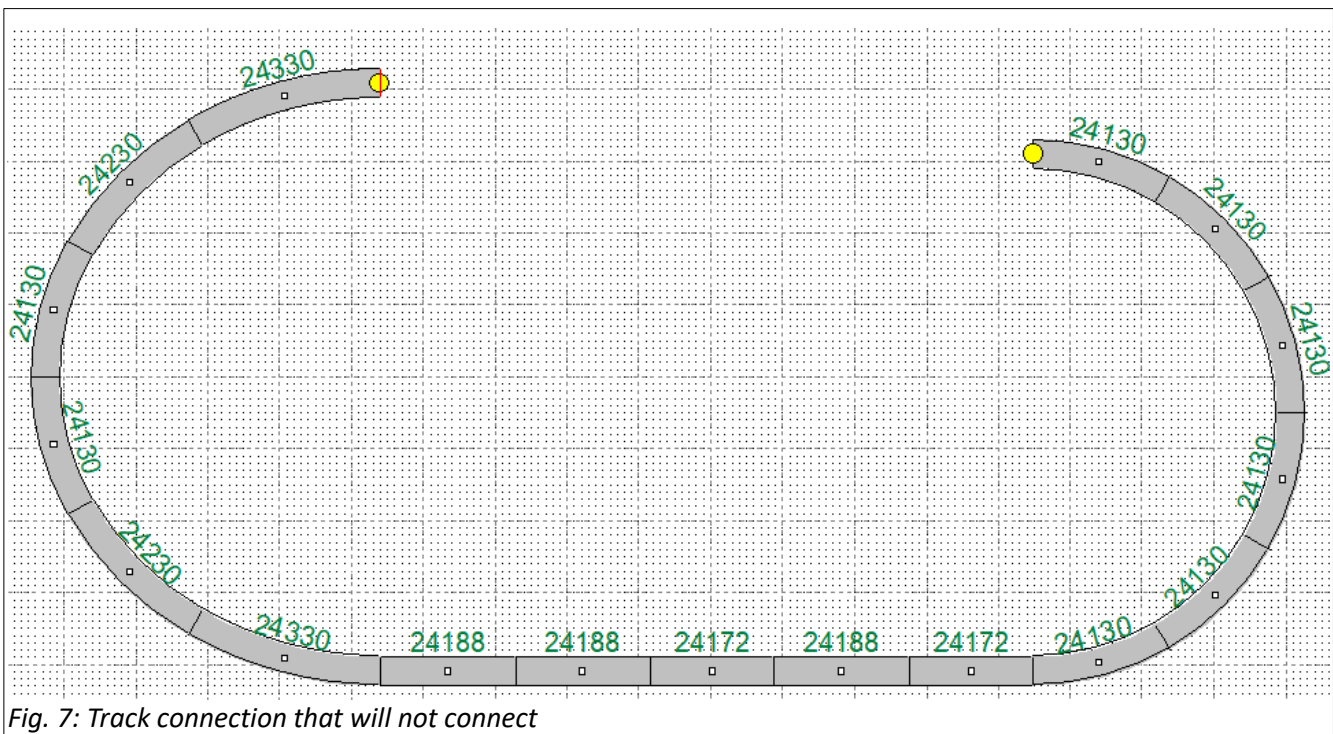


Fig. 7: Track connection that will not connect



## Filling in Track Lines

At some point, you'll need to close gaps in your track geometry. I've drawn out a somewhat unlikely scenario where two ends will not meet (Fig. 7).

To allow the software to calculate the trackage needed to connect the two ends, you can use the command under Bearbeiten > Gleise autom.verbinden... menu option. The keyboard shortcut to access this is: Command + B keys. (Fig. 8)

To use this command, you click on a non-selected connection point. In other words, you are connecting from a pre-selected endpoint to a non-selected point. By doing so, a dialog box with options will pop-up (Fig. 9). This will give you the option of connecting using multiple curves (S curve solution) or a single curve. You can decide on curve track limitations by clicking on the 'Gleise' button.

Clicking on 'Suche fortsetzen' begins the solution search. There can sometimes be alternatives to the solution. You'll have an option to accept the first solution, or search for an alternate selection of track. Fig. 10 shows the 'keep' or 'continue' options. 'Suche fortsetzen' will continue for alternate connections, whereas 'Übernehmen' will accept the selected track.

One note to make about the auto track search: The software will want to utilize as many straight track connections as possible first. Then it will start to look for curve track connections. This is important because you may need to alter your starting point when finding track connections.

Another tip before doing a track search is to get your desired track curves in position first. In this way you'll minimize the degree of curved sections that the track auto fill needs to resolve.

To assist with track alignment (on the horizontal or vertical axis), you'll want to use the position indicators located at the bottom right of the window. These are your x-position (location point from the left edge) and y-position (location point counting from top edge) coordinates. Matching these numbers with two separated tracks can help insure they are both aligned on one of the two axis.

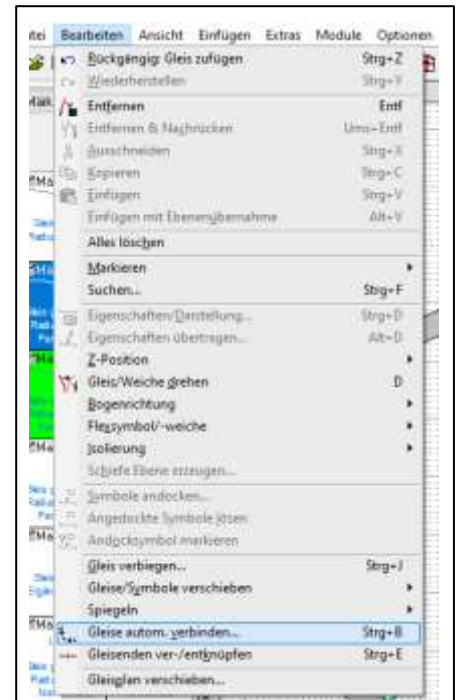


Fig. 8: Track Auto-Fill Command

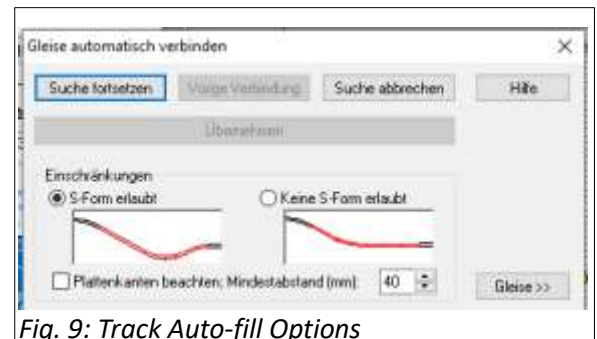


Fig. 9: Track Auto-fill Options



Fig. 10: Search Solutions Options

To show this, compare the solutions displayed in Fig. 11. The top figure shows the starting point on the top left. The bottom figure shows the starting point at the right.

You should now be able to start designing a track plan with these basic tools. There are many more elements which are not discussed here. They include functions which deal with multiple levels, hidden lines and many more. While the software is only available in German language, it can still be a useful tool once you understand some of the function locations.

Curtis Jeung

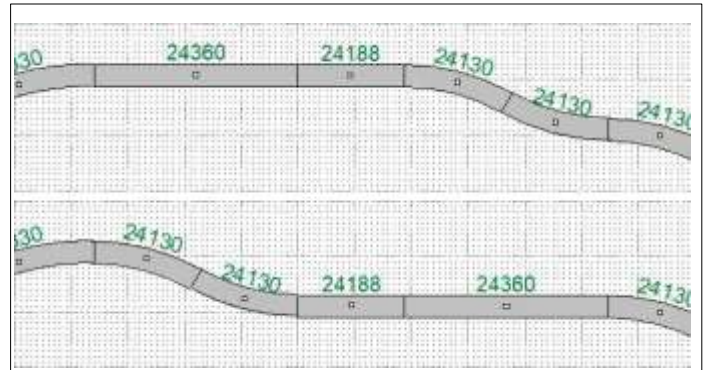


Fig. 11: Importance of starting point in regard to track Auto-fill. Left side start (top) vs. right side start.

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### Upcoming appearances:

- **NMRA National Train Show**  
Collinsville, Ill. (St. Louis)  
August 12 – 14, 2022
- **ONLINE Webinar**  
August 17, 2022  
Delayed 1 week due to NMRA

**To contact Rick and Curtis for help with your Digital, technical and product related questions:**

Phone: 650-569-1318 Hours: 6:00am – 9:00pm PST. Monday through Friday.  
E-mail: [digital@marklin.com](mailto:digital@marklin.com)

Märklin Digital Club · 1406 Creek Trail Drive · Jefferson City, MO 65109