

Peco Track

Peco makes some of the best track components available on the US market. Because some of their sizing standards differ from those of other manufacturers, and because Peco catalogs are occasionally hard to find, I've taken the liberty of charting out some of the variables so you can more easily determine if the Peco components fit your needs.

Although Peco makes track in N and O gauges, as well as various narrow gauges, I've just done the HO stuff here. Following English practice, Peco marks their stuff OO/HO, but it is 16.5 mm gauge, which is US standard HO. In addition, I've limited this survey to Peco's "Universal" line, which has NMRA-standard flangeways and clearances.

In Universal OO/HO, Peco makes two "series" of track, the Setrack series, based on sectional track and roughly like Atlas Snap-Track, and the more serious Streamline series, which includes flex track and wider-radius turnouts. Both series are identical in details, as far as I can tell, including the turnout point tensioning springs. Setrack stuff has part numbers beginning with "ST" and the Streamline with "SL."

Everything listed here is Code 100 nickle silver rail, with "wood" ties in cast plastic, unless noted.

Flex track

Available in 36 inch lengths as part number SL-102X. Also available in "code 75 fine scale," whatever that is.

Straight sectional track

Available in lengths of 1.625", 3.125", 6.625", and 13.1875". Also in a 6.625" section with a built-in electrical isolation switch.

Curved sectional track

Available in Radius #1 (14.625") and Radius #2 (17.25"), in half, standard, and double length units.

Crossings

All are of "Insulfrog" construction, see below.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Angle</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Part #</u>	<u>NMRA</u>
Short	24.0	5.0"	SL-93XX	#5
Medium	22.5		ST-250 (Setrack)	#6
Long	12.0	9.84"	SL-94X	#8
Double Slip	12.0	9.84"	SL-90X	#8

Turnouts

Name	Radius	Length	Part#	Construction	NMRA
Right	17.25"	6.625"	ST-240	Insulfrog (Setrack)	#4
Left	17.25"	6.625"	ST-241	Insulfrog (Setrack)	#4
Small R Right	24.0"	7.283"	SL-91X	Insulfrog	#5
Small R Left	24.0"	7.283"	SL-92X	Insulfrog	#5
Small R Right	24.0"	7.283"	SL-E91X	Electrofrog	#5
Small R Left	24.0"	7.283"	SL-E92X	Electrofrog	#5
Medium R Right	36.0"	8.625"	SL-95X	Insulfrog	#6
Medium R Left	36.0"	8.625"	SL-96X	Insulfrog	#6
Medium R Right	36.0"	8.625"	SL-E95X	Electrofrog	#6
Medium R Left	36.0"	8.625"	SL-E96X	Electrofrog	#6
Large R Right	60.0"	10.15"	SL-88X	Insulfrog	#8
Large R Left	60.0"	10.15"	SL-89X	Insulfrog	#8
Large R Right	60.0"	10.15"	SL-E88X	Electrofrog	#8
Large R Left	60.0"	10.15"	SL-E89X	Electrofrog	#8
Short R Wye	24.0"	5.825"	SL-97XX	Insulfrog	#5
Short R Wye	24.0"	5.825"	SL-E97XX	Electrofrog	#5
Large R Wye	60.0"	8.66"	SL-98XX	Insulfrog	#8
Large R Wye	60.0"	8.66"	SL-E98XX	Electrofrog	#8
Curved Right	14.625	17.25"	ST-242	Insulfrog (Setrack)	
Curved Left	14.625	17.25"	ST-243	Insulfrog (Setrack)	
Curved Right	30"/60"	10"	SL-86XX	Insulfrog	
Curved Left	30"/60"	10"	SL-87XX	Insulfrog	
Curved Right	30"/60"	10"	SL-E86XX	Electrofrog	
Curved Left	30"/60"	10"	SL-E87XX	Electrofrog	
Medium R 3-way	36"	8.625"	SL-99X	Insulfrog	#6
Medium R 3-way	36"	8.625"	SL-E99X	Electrofrog	#6

The Peco catalog doesn't give "numbers" for the turnouts, and the turnout angles in the catalog are obviously in error (listing all but one of the turnouts as 12 degrees), so I'm not repeating them here.

In my estimation, from observation not from measurement, the Setrack turnouts are about a #4, the Short Radius Streamline about a #5, the Medium a #6, and the Large a #8. The internal radii differ from other manufacturer's turnouts, especially Atlas's, so direct comparisons aren't possible. Keep in mind that an Atlas Snap-Track turnout is a #4, but an Atlas Custom Line "#4" is really a #4.5.

The curved turnouts are pretty strange, since the Setrack ones are quite sharp, and the Streamline ones aren't curved much at all. With inner and outer radii of about 15" and 18", on what looks like a continuous curve, the Setrack curved turnouts might be just the ticket for a traction layout or a really tight dock area.

All the Peco turnouts have an over-center spring that holds the points in firm contact in one position or the other, and they all take the same twin coil switch machine. The switch machine clips to the turnout and fits below the points, in a hole in the roadbed. If you prefer manual

actuation, you don't need anything at all, since there is a raised portion of each throw bar that is designed for just that purpose, and the over-center spring will hold the setting you desire.

Peco turnouts should have track power supplied only from the "point" end of the turnout. Insulfrog turnouts will provide power only to the track selected, with one rail of the non-selected track being electrically isolated. Electrofrog turnouts, with their all-rail frogs, also supply power only to the selected route, but both rails on the non-selected route will have the same polarity.

Always use insulated rail joiners between "back-to-back" turnouts on sidings and crossovers.

Using power-switching turnouts like Peco can make layout wiring simpler, since each spur becomes a de-facto block, and will have no power unless the turnout is set to the spur.

If you hand-lay track, Peco also has US-style flat bottom bulk rail in nickle silver, brass, steel, aluminium, or stainless steel, in the following sizes:

Code 60	Part number IL-1X (nickle silver)
Code 75	Part number IL-3X (nickle silver)
Code 80	Part number IL-4X (nickle silver)
Code 100	Part number IL-5X (nickle silver)
Code 250	Part number IL-9X (nickle silver)

They also have English-style bullhead section rail, chairs, and fishplates, turnout parts, and other stuff.

They also have an extensive line of N-gauge rolling stock, and special narrow-gauge track in various configurations.

Peco makes other ready-to-run track pieces, such as modern English-style derails ("catch points") and expansion joints, grade crossings, and track-end bumpers, as well as structure kits, scenic backgrounds, etc. The non-track stuff is in English 4.0 mm scale, not American 3.5 mm scale, and it's all English prototypes as far as I know. If you're in need of any of this other stuff, you really need the catalogue.

This file prepared by Sheldon T. Hall, CompuServe ID 76701,103, from a catalog provided by Jeff Kucsma of the Susquehannah Group, Box 168, Fanwood, NJ, 07023. The Susquehannah Group is a Peco dealer.

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Mr Hall has no relationship to the manufacturer except that of a customer.