



## Wooden Mini Build Tips!

- **Length and Alignment:**
  - These are shorter than Pinewood Derby or Pinecar type kits and are more sensitive to alignment. Making sure your car runs straight is a key factor!
  - Please make a decent attempt to install wheels and axles so all 4 wheels touch the ground flat. We know that this is difficult and will be realistic in the judging. Blatant attempts to run a 3-wheeler will result in a DQ for the racing portion of the program. A wee bit of tiny teetering is expected. A wee bit.
- **Weight:** Being shorter also means being lighter. If you don't add weight, your car probably won't make it to the end of the track. Max weight is 5 ounces, and our scale is pretty accurate. If you don't have a scale, use two measuring cups and a balance, or head off to the post office!
- **Axles:** The axles supplied are a little longer, but the same diameter as Cub or Boy Scout axles, and are better polished - that is NOT a hint to use them on your son's Pinewood Derby car! They also aren't pointy on the end. Use care in installation so the wood doesn't split. If it does, a little Elmers (white glue) cures that easily. Gluing the axles also greatly improves durability and helps "fix" the alignment so it doesn't come out.
- **Painting wheel centers:** Using a large washer as a "mask" can make this a REALLY easy job using a spray bomb. Do insert an axle so paint doesn't get into the "bearing surface) where the axle goes. If you also mask wheel "tread" paint won't seep over there. A good alternative is a silver Sharpie, which shows up well on the black plastic centers.
- **Sanding and Painting the body:**
  - Sanding the body first allows paint to stick better and look better. Pine sands (and Dremels) fairly easily.
  - Pine soaks up paint. Once you've got the body prepped, a light base primer coat seals the wood, making the following coats of paint look and dry better.
  - Since Pine soaks up paint, make sure your base layers of paint dry *thoroughly* before adding layers! Several THIN coats are MUCH better – plan ahead and use patience! Trust me! Smudged paint isn't fun.
  - Decent primers: Kilz (spray), matte clear spray paint, automotive primer. Marine varnish works well for a natural wood finish...
  - Painting at the event: Spray paint takes a good hour to dry enough to handle, and Fontana doesn't want paint in their facility. Please plan ahead! We are really trying to get kits available far ahead of time this year.
- **Rules:** Please read the rules carefully! We've tried to make this a fun, and sportsmanlike, event. Please ask for clarification if needed!
- **Kits:** The kits supplied are standard "Pinecar" kits (available at many hobby stores) which are cut down to a Mini shape. Should you need extra parts or (egads) mess up the body, replacement parts are available through us (\$5/kit + actual shipping, email [LRDixon@att.net](mailto:LRDixon@att.net)) or at your local hobby store.