



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 we 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 OK. 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.
- *UNDERBODY CLEARANCE IS CRITICAL!* This is an old and bumpy track, any lower than 3/8" WILL drag on the center rail, your car will not make it to the finish.

Sanding and Painting the body:

- Sanding the body first allows paint to stick 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. 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: Don't. Even.
- 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 your local hobby store, or email me (LeonRDixon@gmail.com).

We've done everything we can to make the cars as equal as possible, but using hand bandsawing and natural materials means variation is inevitable – be understanding and do your best! Above all, HAVE FUN!

IF YOU STILL REALLY WANT TO CHEAT: We will have an "unlimited" class, max 7 ounces, no propellants or motors, gravity only, nothing unsafe, and it's got to look kinda like a Mini. There is a SINGLE trophy for this class, win or bust (only winners get sprinkles). If you try to cheat in the non-unlimited class, your Mini will likely be ceremoniously brought to the bonfire and torched, or at least publicly mocked at the Brew Swap!

HAVE FUN!