

Improved S-Trax Connector Track
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The S Helper S-Trax is one of the best rail systems available to the S-Gauge modeler. However, it has one major deficiency that makes the track difficult to use when having to repeatedly handle the track or move it. The method for connecting the power wires to the track was a poor design. Photos 1, 2, and 3 shows how the power wires were designed by S-Helper to connect to the track. The thin tab under the track cannot take much flexing. The connector on the end of the wire may or may not fit requiring a little persuasion which aids the weakening of the tab. In the process of building my layout, I broke numerous tabs while getting the wiring positioned through the table.

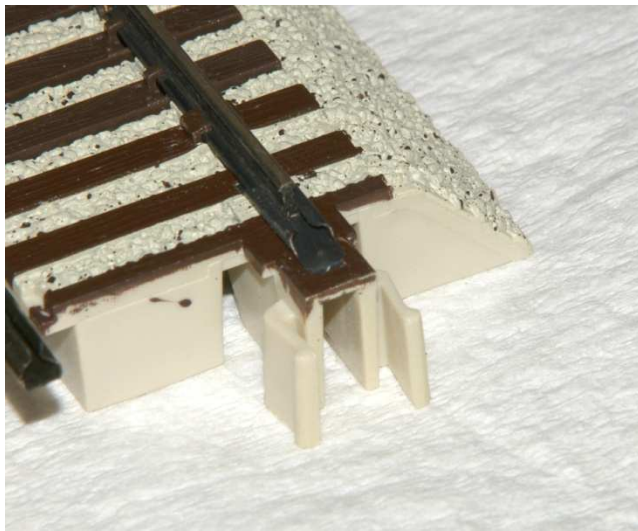


Photo 1 S-Trax rail joiner from top

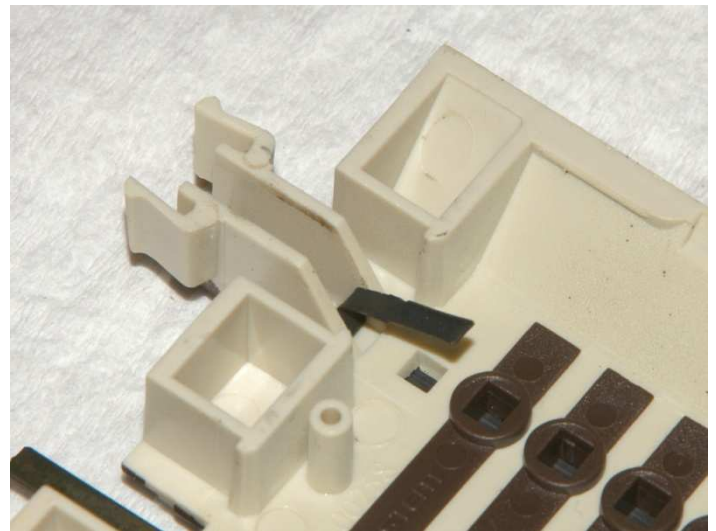


Photo 2 S Trax connecting tab



Photo 3 Power wire installed on tab

I developed a solution that I have found works well and is much more robust. Below are the step by step instructions and photos of how to fix this problem easily and know that you have a sound electrical connection.

1. Cut the end piece from the interlock. See photo 4.
2. Remove the existing rail joiner that has the tab extension.
3. Cut the slot back to the rail edge. See Photo 5.

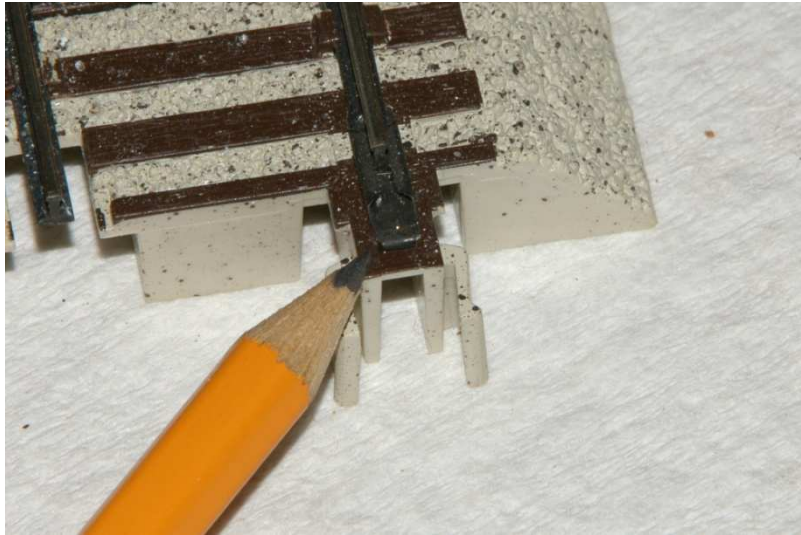


Photo 4 Cut material to expose the rail joiner to make it easy to remove.



Photo 5 After rail joiner is removed, cut the remaining material back to the edge of the rail.

4. Photo 6 shows two types of rail joiners. The top is an American Models version. The bottom is one from S-Helper. Either one will work well for the operation.
5. Cut a wire that is at least 18 inches in length. Solder the wire to the bottom of the rail joiner at one end. See Photo 7.



Photo 6 Two types of rail joiners

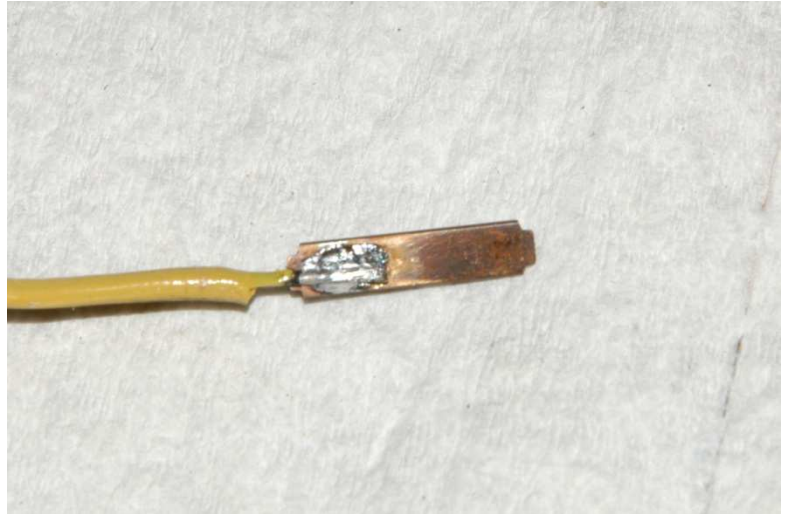


Photo 7 Wire soldered to rail joiner.

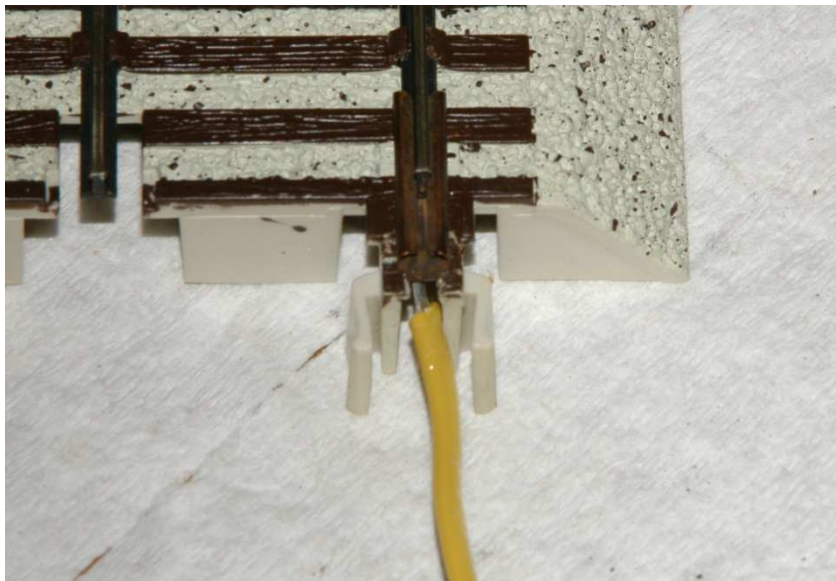


Photo 8 S-Helper rail joiner installed with wire facing out

6. Insert rail joiner with the wire pointing away from the track. Photo 8.

7. Fold the wire back under the track in the slot of the interlock. Photo 9.
8. The finished modification is seen Photo 10.
9. Repeat for the other end.



Photo 9 Wire is folded under the track.

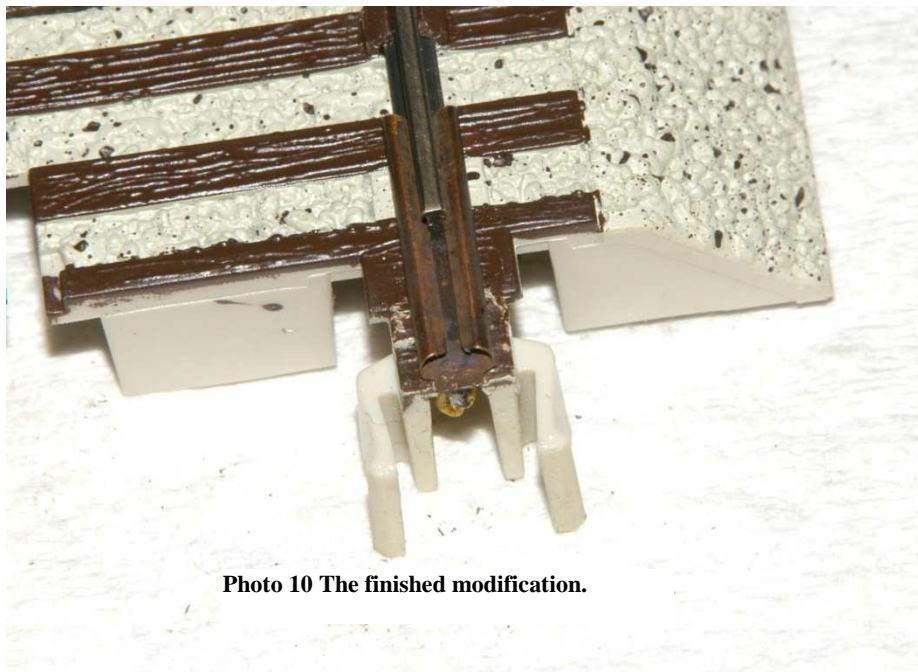


Photo 10 The finished modification.