



Condition/Grading Standards

The following Condition and Grading Standards apply to **all** toy train and related accessory items. The items that are being evaluated may or may not include the original box. Boxes and other paper are subject to a separate set of grading and condition standards. Standards for all toy train related accessory items apply to the visual appearance of the item and do not consider the operating functionality of the equipment.

The Standards have been expanded with the introduction of a separate designation for restored/refinished items. Restored/refinished items must continue to be marked as such using the pressure sensitive labels (Ident Tags) available from the TCA. The Association provides these labels through members of the Standards Committee or the National Business Office.

Condition and Grading Standards are subjective, at best, and are intended to act as a guide. It is important and logical that wishful thinking not be allowed to influence the choice of grade.

C-10 Mint—Brand New: all original; unused and unblemished.

C-9 Factory New—Brand New: all original; unused; may evidence factory rubs and the slightest evidence of handling, shipping and having been test run at the factory.

C-8 Like New—Complete all original: no rust, no missing parts; may show effects of being on display and/or age; may have been run.

C-7 Excellent—all original: minute scratches and paint nicks; no rust and no missing parts; no distortion of component parts.

C-6 Very Good: Minor scratches and paint nicks, minor spots of surface rust, free of dents. May have minor parts replaced.

C-5 Good—Sign of play wear: scratches and minor paint loss. Small dents, minor surface rust. Evidence of heavy use.

C-4 Fair: Scratched, moderate paint loss, dented missing parts, surface rust. Evidence of heavy use.

C-3 Poor—Requires major body repair: Heavily scratched, major rust and missing parts. Restoration candidate.

C-2 Restoration required.

C-1 Junk—parts value only.

Restored / Refinished Items Standards

Restored/refinished toy train and related accessory items must continue to be marked as such using pressure-sensitive labels available from TCA. All replacement parts considered “major component parts” such as an engine frame, boiler or cab that have been used in the restoration of an item must include the required identification marks of the manufacturer.

R-5 Professional Grade—Restored in all aspects of finish and detail as when manufactured: Finished in correct type of paint, color, texture and gloss. All wiring exactly matches the original. All trim in correct finish or plating. Virtually identical to the original. No surface imperfections in the metal work. No wear or evidence of use present. Authentic in all aspects.

R-4 Very Good—Restored to a general high standard: However, noticeable differences exist particularly with respect to the color, finish, and texture of paint when compared to an original piece.

R-3 Good—A restored piece that has signs of play wear with minor dents and scratches.

R-2 Fair—A non-professional restoration: Color, texture and finish clearly different from the original. Other items, such as non-authentic wiring are also evident.

R-1 Poor—A poorly constructed restoration in all respects: May be a candidate for restoration. Includes dents or rust pitting under the finish.

Paper/Box Grading Standards - Revised 1/2/09

P-10 MINT-BRAND NEW Complete and all original as manufactured and unused.

P-9 STORE NEW Complete and all original and unused. May have merchant additions such as store stamps, price tags et al. Boxes must have inner liner/s, if appropriate.

P-8 LIKE NEW Complete and all original. Evidence of light use and aging, additional notations since leaving publisher or manufacturer. Contents of box may be missing.

P-7 EXCELLENT Complete and all original. Handling indentations, minute edge wear, small creases.

P-6 VERY GOOD Complete and all original. Minor abrasions, creases and/or folds. Small tears, slight color changes, minor soiling. Box may have inner liner/s missing.

NOTE: Any paper or box that has been repaired can be graded no higher than P-5.

P-5 GOOD Items show substantial wear. Moderate abrasions, creases and/or folds; moderate tears and losses. Moderate color changes, staples may be rusty or replaced. May have been repaired with archival tissue and adhesive.*

P-4 FAIR Heavy damage but generally legible. May or may not have been repaired. Paper may be brittle. Boxes may have inner flaps missing.

P-3 POOR Incomplete, may be very brittle, significant deterioration. Extensive amateur repairs. (Scotch Tape® or equivalent).

*Archival tissues are Japanese tissue papers used for paper conservation. Archival adhesives include starch pastes, methyl cellulose pastes and archival heat-set tissues such as Crompton coated tissues. Pressure sensitive ‘archival’ tapes have been shown to be problematic in conservation testing, therefore take this into account should you consider using it.