

15 Ride Construction for Beginners

CHAPTER 15: RIDE CONSTRUCTION FOR BEGINNERS 151

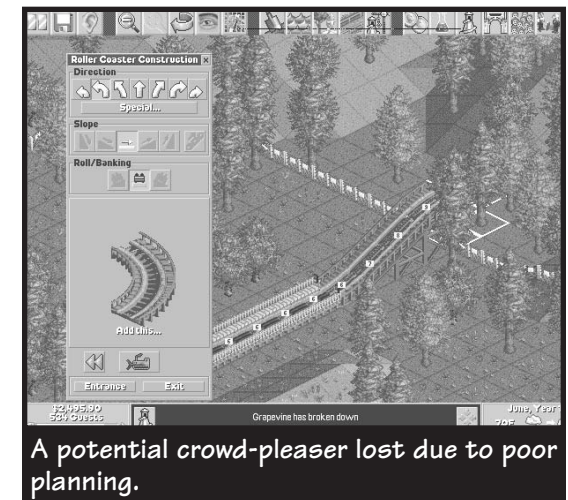
OK, OK. The *RollerCoaster Tycoon* game, *CorkScrew Follies*, and *Loopy Landscapes* give you an amazing number of Roller Coaster styles to design and build, but before you get to all-out Roller Coaster design, hone those ride-building skills on some simpler attractions.

By building rides like the Cycle Railway, Go-Kart tracks, and even Hedge Mazes, you'll get a feel for both construction and how your guests will respond.

General Guidelines

Whether you want to build the tameest Car Ride or the most rip-roaring Coaster the world has ever seen, you need to know some simple guidelines before you begin construction. If you keep these in mind throughout, you might avoid some destruction later when the ride doesn't fit in your park or guests don't ride it.

- Plan ahead. Pull the view way back with the “–” tool to see what land you can use and in which directions you can build. If you rush into construction, you may end up tearing down a nearly completed ride because you forgot to leave room for the end of the ride to connect to the station platform. Always keep track of your boundaries.
- The longer the station platform, the more trains and cars. Got it? Good. Don't go overboard, though. Stick to a maximum of 12 station platform tiles.
- With all ride types, keep in mind the various factors that influence Excitement, Intensity, and Nausea Ratings. Always remember that high excitement draws guests, high intensity starts to drive some guests away, and high nausea keeps most all guests away. Combine high Intensity and Nausea Ratings, and your ride will wonder where its riders went.
- Use the landscape to your advantage, rather than altering it from the start.
- Keep the laws of physics in mind as you design your ride. Rides with cars that don't attach to a track fly off when they move too fast.



- Longer isn't always better. Yeah, as a rider, you'd love a 10-minute Log Flume ride, but remember that you're not just thinking for yourself in the *RollerCoaster Tycoon* game. You must consider the likes and dislikes of all your guests.

While a few of your guests may like a tremendously long Log Flume, many won't. Even those who try it could change their mind during the ride. Plus, long rides force your guests to stand in queues longer, and while some guests may leave the ride happy, they can't make up for all the unhappy ones in line. Try to make most rides three to five minutes long, and never more than seven.

- When you create rides that present a possible risk of guest life and limb, such as the Whoa Belly and the Ghost Train, test them first. You don't want to spend the time and energy to build a ride only to see the first trainload of guests on the ride meet a fiery death, ending the ride's brief career. Also, if nothing else, test runs will convince you to have a plan in mind before you build. Guests who see test car after test car crash *will not* ride the ride for a long time after it opens.

NOTE

Once a ride is constructed, click on the yellow light within the Ride Construction window to perform a test ride.

Gentle Rides

Car Ride

No real tricks here. Remember to give the riders a nice view. Try to limit the number of inclines and overall height of the ride, as the cars will slow tremendously when they crawl uphill. Also, your guests will enjoy long straight-aways that allow them to go fast... well, as fast as miniature cars can go, anyway.

Hedge Maze

While the Hedge Maze looks like the simplest customizable "ride," it does present a few challenges. First, don't make your Hedge Maze too long or impossible. Guests will quickly get tired and angry if you include too many dead ends or switchbacks. Try not to think of yourself as you design the maze, but think of your guests.



While you may prefer a maze that takes 20 minutes to complete, it could give some guests fits. The longer guests stay lost in the maze, the less time they can spend buying food, riding other rides, etc.

Simple mazes tend to become very popular with guests, and it doesn't hurt to draw out your maze before you start building.

It will take a little while to get used to the Hedge Maze construction interface. Some quick reminders:

- You cannot fill a whole tile with hedge. You do that with the Scenery and Gardens Window.
- You can only build, fill, and move. Work with the controls and try to build a very small maze before building a nine-by-nine monster.
- Build the "solution" path first, then build other paths and fill in later.



Observation Tower

Not many tricks here. Just remember that a taller tower means a longer ride. Observation Towers never become wildly popular, so long ascents and descents make your guests feel they got a good value (even if it's free!). Guests on the tower will rarely complain that they want to get off.

Ghost Train

Of all the Gentle Rides, this one most resembles a Roller Coaster. You can build the Ghost Train either above ground or underground. The latter leads to a more exciting experience for your guests. Add plenty of tight curves in your track, and *always* add brakes to any drop (available under the Special button in the Ride Construction window). If the speed of a Ghost Train car reaches 15 miles per hour, nothing but strong brakes will stop it. You can only put brakes on a straight track segment, so never come out of a drop with a tight curve. Add the spinning tunnel segment to increase the excitement of the ride.



TIP

Doors will appear at tunnel entrances and exits only if you tunnel the Ghost Train through land where you have covered the exposed surfaces with Gray wall, Yellow wall or Red wall edging. All other surfaces will only allow an open tunnel entrance.

Mini Golf

Fun? Yes. But a potential headache if not constructed properly. With Mini Golf, you must limit the length of your course to about six holes. Any more, and your queuing guests will get tired and irritable. Also, guests who have to play through a 17-hole Mini Golf course actually take advantage of your park by spending a lot of time on a rather low-income ride.

Cycle Monorail

Your guests power the Cycle Monorail, so try not to make the track for this slow ride too long or the inclines too severe. Both long rides and steep climbs tend to tire out your guests. Try to keep your hills at 11 or below. Higher tracks will work, but guests will get tired pedaling uphill all the time.

Don't worry about "stepping" your downhill slopes, as you may want to do with the Ghost Train. Your guests can apply the brakes as they descend, making the Cycle Monorail one of your safer rides.

Finally, make your station platform as long as you can to ensure as many cycles as possible. The Cycle Monorail often becomes one of the more popular rides in your park, and the line can stretch for ages. Try to move as many riders through as quickly as possible.

Cycle Railway

Generally, the rules for the Cycle Monorail apply for the Cycle Railway. Steal a page from your Transport Rides with both the Cycle Monorail and Cycle Railway rides and build the tracks so the riders get a good view of the park and the other rides.

Thrill Rides

Whoa Belly

Height and launch speed directly affect Whoa Belly's intensity. The higher and faster you build the ride, the more intense it gets. For upward launches, remember this rough rule of thumb: Tower height + 20 = Safest takeoff speed.

NOTE

This formula is not exact. The number of guests will alter the weight and thus the maximum height of the car. Always remember to run some trials without riders!

Don't forget that the Whoa Belly also has a downward launch mode that hauls the car up to the top of the tower and lets it drop. This increases the excitement for your guests a little, but remember that intensity depends mostly on height and speed, so the taller the tower, the faster the car drops, and the more intense the ride feels for guests.

Despite the high intensity you can achieve with Whoa Belly, guests will flock to it, so don't hesitate to mix and match your tower height and speed to keep your Intensity Rating in the high to very high range.

Go-Karts

Remember the designing you did for the Car Ride and bump it up a notch or two for your Go-Karts. If you plan to run the Go-Karts primarily as a race ride, add a long straight-away, which will allow your riders to pass each other. As with the Car Ride, stick to one large uphill slope, because the engines on the Karts can't handle too much punishment.

Thankfully, riders on the Go-Karts will use good judgment and won't go crashing through the tire barricade that surrounds the track, no matter how fast they drive.



Roto Drop

The same rules you follow for the downward launch mode of the Whoa Belly apply here. The higher you build the tower, the faster the car will fall, raising the intensity to white-knuckle levels. Roto Drop has the added benefit of rotation on the way up, so nausea will increase with this ride, unlike the Whoa Belly, which maintains a rather low Nausea Rating regardless of tower height.

Try to keep your Roto Drop at a height of around 120 to 150 feet for a really good ride that keeps guests coming back. Anything higher, and you'll start attracting a smaller number of guests.

BUILDING RAISED STATION PLATFORMS

Occasionally, you will find it a great benefit to build your entire ride, station platform and all, above the crowds. While getting a station platform up there may seem impossible, you can do it in two ways, both quite easy.

First, begin on flat ground in an open area. Raise one tile to the height you'd like your station platform, then build a platform tile for the appropriate ride from the Ride Construction Window. Continue building your platform normally, and supports will appear underneath adjacent sections. Return to your initial section after you complete your platform and lower the land under that tile.

You can also begin on flat ground and build an upward-sloping piece of track for your ride. Continue adding track until you reach the desired height for your station, then click the horizontal track button and lay one section of track. Now, the Special box will allow you to select Station Platform. Build your platform, then use the Previous arrow to go back to your sloping track and demolish it using the Bulldozer button, leaving only your raised platform.

Of the two building choices, raising the ground costs less, but all raised station platform sections cost more than those on the ground, depending on their height. Speaking of cost, remember that if you lift your station platform high into the sky, you must still build footpaths to your ride's entrance and from its exit. So try not to go too high.



Two approaches, same result. Elevated platforms serve as the launching point for your elevated rides.

Water Rides

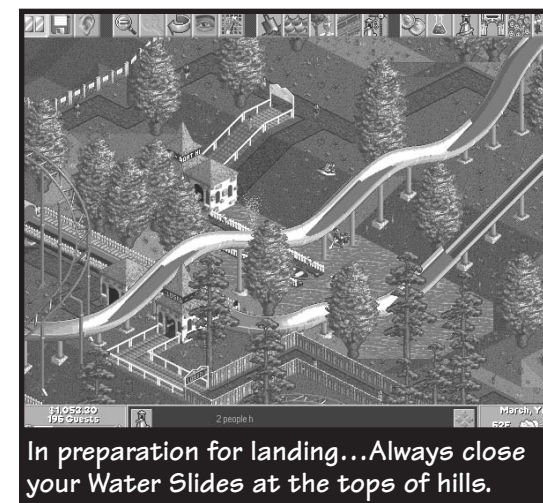
Water Slide

When you create a Water Slide, remember that the dinghies are *not connected* to the track. Keep this in mind during your entire construction, especially at the base of drops.

It pays to keep your Water Slide design simple because of the dinghies' lack of connection to the track. Try a course with one main hill and some twists and turns. Always, always, always use a closed tunnel piece anywhere your slide will build up appreciable speed, especially on turns at the bottom of hills and at the tops of smaller hills. In both instances, your riders can pop off the ride if you used the semi-circle track.

Don't just use the closed tube for safety reasons. The alternating light and dark can add excitement to the ride.

Finally, adjust your Minimum Wait time to allow each dinghy a substantial head start over the others. Too many dinghies on the incline conveyor can cause it to stall, marooning your guests in rather fear-inducing positions.



In preparation for landing...Always close your Water Slides at the tops of hills.

Log Flume

Ideally, try not to give your Log Flume more than three drops, or you'll eat up all your ride time getting riders to the top of the hill. As with all rides, keep your timing around three to five minutes with the Log Flume, but realize that you can use it to show your guests the rest of the park, lifting them nearly above the treetops.

Bump your Minimum Wait time to a value that allows each boat to ascend the incline by itself, just like you did with the Water Slide and the River Rapids.

CAUTION

Always conduct a test run of any customized rides that have crash potential. If a test car crashes, guests will avoid the ride for a little while. But if guests die in an accident, people will shun your ride for a long time.

River Rapids

The River Rapids feels more stable than the Log Flume and the Water Slide, and it won't crash nearly as often, if ever. Again, you want simplicity balanced with thrills. Either lift your riders up for a single or double drop, or keep them near ground level for a rapids-style ride, complete with slight drops, whirlpools, and waterfalls.

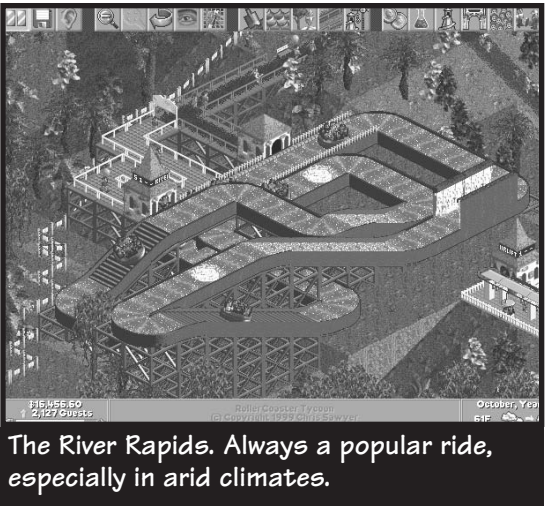
When you combine hills and special features of the ride itself, remember that guests in a fast boat will miss some of the fun. Whirlpools won't affect boats if they move at a certain speed, and the same goes for waterfalls and rapids. If your guests move too fast, they'll get none of the benefits you wanted to give them with the special feature. If riders travel under 10 mph, they'll feel the pull of a whirlpool and the shake of the rapids, and they'll notice a waterfall as they whiz by.

While drops make the ride pick up speed, don't forget them altogether. Normal speed for the River Rapids without a speed boost from a drop is only about 3 mph, which guests would describe as somewhat less-than-thrilling.

NOTE Whirlpools induce nausea. Remember to place benches near the exit if you use whirlpools in your ride.

You should keep in mind that River Rapids doesn't allow you to build too high. You can't lift water-filled channels as high as Coaster tracks, so plan ahead.

Finally, make sure you adjust the River Rapids' Minimum Wait time to allow each boat to get an adequate head start on the following craft. If you don't, too many boats will get jammed on the incline conveyor, stalling the entire ride. If your River Rapids does stall, double click the red light in the Ride Information Window, and then reopen it by clicking the green light. A Mechanic will usually come around to fix things up in no time at all.



Boat Hire

Remember the two approaches to Boat Hires: Those with a track will see the riders again. Those without a track will see a lot of unhappy guests waiting in a queue for boats that don't come in, or return at a snail's pace.

River Ride

You can take two approaches to this Water Ride. You can erect a gentle, transport-style ride that gives your guests a chance to relax and see your park. Or you can build a Thrill Ride with drops and more. The second option ends up closer to a Roller Coaster than, say, the Boat Hire.

Typical rules and guidelines apply to the River Ride as they would with either a Car Ride for the gentle approach or Wooden Roller Coasters if you want to thrill your guests. A design tip to remember, especially if you have a drop before your station: Check "Leave if Another Boat Arrives at Station" under the Operations tab in the Ride Construction Window, even if it means sending out empty boats.

Though your station brake should stop the boats and water helps with the braking, you can never be 100 percent sure with this ride. Accidents do happen. This problem becomes more likely when you get a number of boats backed up, waiting for riders when the ride becomes less popular over time.

One important factor to remember as we finish talking about Water Rides and move to Roller Coasters: Station brakes perform the task of slowing cars, boats, and other vehicles as they return to the station. Unfortunately, these brakes will fail unless your Mechanics inspect them frequently.

Keep an eye on the River Ride, the Log Flume, the Water Slide, and the River Rapids' inspection schedule. Never schedule inspections fewer than every 30 minutes, and do it more frequently if you have the manpower to pull it off. Mechanics will inspect and service station brakes as part of their daily routine.

