

N'Crowd Model Railroad Society
4007E Bellaire Blvd.

www.houstonncrowd.org

The N'Crowd has promoted N-scale model railroading in the Houston area for over 30 years. The club's layout is in a dedicated room at Papa Ben's Train Place on Bellaire Blvd. at Stella Link. The layout is open most Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Galveston County Model RR Club
409 6th St., Texas City

www.gcmrrc.org

Housed in the fascinating Texas City Museum, the Galveston County Model Railroad Club has something for everybody! The club has model railroads in multiple scales, including G, N, HO, O, S, and Lionel. Open most Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; museum admission applies. Be sure to ask about the annual Texas City Train Festival!

National Model Railroad Month

The San Jacinto Model Railroad Club sponsors home layout tours every fall in recognition of National Model Railroad Month. See the best model railroads in the region! For information, go to: <http://sanjac.leoslair.com/>

Union Station and Locomotive No. 982

Houston Union Station, now part of Minute Maid Park, home of the Houston Astros, was the largest train station in the Southwest United States when it opened in the early 20th century. Located downtown at 501 Crawford St. at Texas Ave., the station is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

On display a block from Union Station is T&NO steam locomotive No. 982. Cosmetically restored, the big 2-10-2 is a superb example of the steam power that once moved people and goods in Texas.

Liberty Road/Englewood Hump Yard
Northeast Houston

The largest rail yard in the city, Englewood Yard can be viewed from several public streets, including Liberty Rd., Wayside Dr. Wallisville Rd. and Lockwood Dr. DO NOT TRESPASS ON RAILROAD PROPERTY! To get to the former Southern Pacific (now UP) yard, take the Wayside Dr. exit off the North Loop (I-610). Stay on the feeder to Liberty Rd., which runs almost the entire length of the yard, or turn south on Wayside Dr., which goes directly under the hump right at the yard tower. Wallisville Rd. will take you along the south side of the yard, while Lockwood Dr. goes over the yard near the engine servicing facilities. Exercise care as these are busy public streets.

Settegast Yard
Northeast Houston

Settegast Yard, a former MoPac/HB&T facility now operated by Union Pacific, is near Englewood Yard. Exit the North Loop (I-610) at Kirkpatrick St. and follow the road alongside the yard. Kirkpatrick will take you alongside the locomotive servicing and intermodal facilities. At Ley Rd., turn right to go over the north end of the yard. DO NOT TRESPASS ON RAILROAD PROPERTY!

Greater Houston Train Show

Sponsored every February by the San Jacinto Model Railroad Club. For info, go to: <http://sanjac.leoslair.com/>

Hobby Shops

Hobby retailers in the area stocking model railroad supplies include G&G Model Shop, Papa Ben's Train Place, Spring Crossing, Larry's Hobbies, Mike's Hobby Shop, The Train Cellar and M&M Hobby Center. Search the Web for more information.

Where to see

TRAINS

in Houston

Museums

Houston Railroad Museum
Galveston Railroad Museum
Rosenberg Railroad Museum
Alvin Depot Museum

Train Rides

Houston Area Live Steamers
Hermann Park Miniature Train
METRORail
Amtrak

Model Railroads

Houston Area 'G' Gaugers
Houston Tinplate Operators Society
N'Crowd Model Railroad Society
Galveston County Model RR Club
National Model Railroad Month

More Trains

Union Station & Locomotive No. 982
Liberty Road/Englewood Hump Yard
Settegast Yard
Greater Houston Train Show
Hobby Shops

Houston: Where 17 Railroads Meet the Sea

Houston has a rich and long railroading heritage, so much so that it was promoted for many years as the place "where 17 railroads meet the sea."

This guide offers a few suggestions for experiencing and learning about trains in Houston and the surrounding area.

Houston Railroad Museum
7390 Mesa Dr., Houston
www.houstonrrmuseum.org

Take I-610 N Loop and exit McCarty Dr. Go east on McCarty Dr. to Mesa Dr., then left about 1 mile to the museum.

The museum's unique rail collection includes locomotives and passenger and freight cars with a Texas connection. Board a *Texas Special* chair car, *Texas Eagle* sleeper, and *Texas Chief* lounge car, blow the horn on a Texas-Mexican diesel, take a seat in a Missouri-Kansas-Texas caboose and more! Open Saturdays 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. from April to November, and by appointment year-round for birthday parties and other functions.

The museum is operated by Gulf Coast Chapter, National Railway Historical Society, Inc. Admission charged. Tel.: 713-631-6612

Galveston Railroad Museum
On the isle in the Strand Historic District. The museum was hit hard by Hurricane Ike; call for information on hours of operation: 409-765-5700.

Rosenberg Railroad Museum
1921 Ave. F, Rosenberg
www.rosenbergrrmuseum.org

At the busy junction of the Southern Pacific (now UP) and Santa Fe (now BNSF) railroads, a visit to the Rosenberg Railroad Museum offers a taste of history and modern Texas railroading in one special location. The museum is open Tuesday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Special tours and activities by appointment. Admission charged. Tel.: 281-633-2846

Alvin Depot Museum
119 E. Willis St., Alvin
Another great place to watch trains. The historic Alvin depot is located on the Santa Fe (now BNSF) mainline in downtown Alvin.

Houston Area Live Steamers
Zube Park, Roberts Rd., Hockley
www.hals.org

Fun for the whole family: Miniature train rides through wooded Zube Park. Open one Saturday each month from March to November. Go to www.hals.org for more information on opening dates.

Hermann Park Miniature Train
6000 Fannin St., Houston
The historic Hermann Park Miniature Train is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Combine a visit to the park with a ride on METRORail! Admission charged.

METRORail
The sleek rail cars of the Metropolitan Transit Authority take less than 30 minutes to travel from Reliant Park to UH Downtown, passing through the Medical Center, Hermann Park, the Museum District and the Main St. corridor on the way. Fare charged.

Amtrak
902 Washington Ave., Houston
www.amtrak.com

Located near the main post office in downtown Houston, the current Amtrak station, built in the late 1950s, sits near the site of the original Grand Central Station.

Visit the station at train time when the Sunset Limited arrives and departs with passengers destined for places near and far. Call the station at 713-224-4756 or 1-800-USA-RAIL for train information. While you're at the station, ask the agent about trips on Amtrak - Beaumont is just a two hour ride, Lake Charles and its attractions are just over three hours away by train, and a longer trip to New Orleans or even Los Angeles offer exciting possibilities to see America at "see" level.

Houston Area "G" Gaugers
Northwest Mall
www.aabp.com/hagg.htm
For a kid-pleasing outing, head to Northwest Mall (I-610 at US 290) and visit the Houston Area "G" Gaugers' large model railroad. Big trains run on six continuously operating loops, and streetcars and a cog railway are in action as well. Open most Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. (subject to HAGG volunteer availability).

Houston Tinline Operators Society
Memorial City Mall
www.htos.org
Fun for kids of all ages who like classic toy trains: the Houston Tinline Operators Society layout at Memorial City Mall is open Saturdays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. This is the place to go to see pre- and post-war Lionel and Lionel-compatible trains and accessories in action. Tel: 281-277-7630