

Any model of a dropside or platform lorry will look better either fully or partially loaded, as lorries never earned their keep by running around empty. We do list five unsheeted loads, which if used on a display or diorama in a loading or unloading situation is okay, but if intended to be en route to somewhere, really should be roped and sheeted. Any odd off cuts and bits and pieces can be bundled together under a sheet to make an effective looking load.

1. Materials required

Ropes

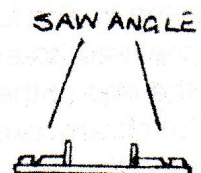
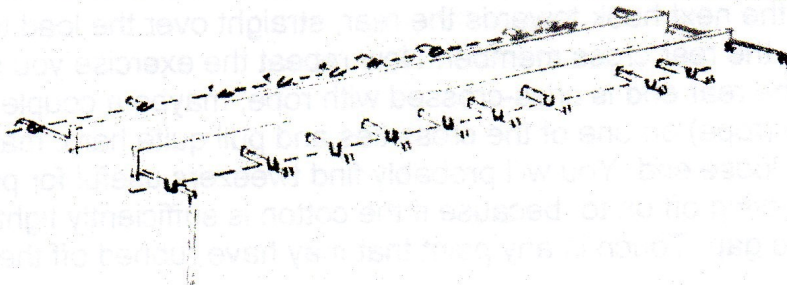
Very fine twine or thin cotton can be used for roping, but do ensure that it has no fine, loose fibres protruding from the main thread. If so, this can be treated by putting a small amount of PVA between thumb and forefinger and running the thread through it a couple of times. This should bind the fibres to the main thread.

Sheets

Until recently, I have made sheets by spraying undercoat paint on to toilet paper both sides, then allowing to dry and screwing up in the hand to make many creases, flattening out, applying a coat of PVA to the load, then spreading the sheet over the load and folding as necessary before the ropes are applied. Within the last year, a fellow Guild member introduced me to the benefits of using foil membrane from margarine and butter tubs that save all the hassle of waiting for spray paint to dry, plus the creasing and flattening process. Remove the membrane carefully from the plastic tub - the 500g size will measure approximately 140mm x 90mm. This can be cut to a maximum of 120mm (30ft) long and up to 75mm (18ft 9ins) wide, depending on the intended height of your load. An average size sheet would have been 80 x 80mm (20 x 20ft), two of which would be required for an eight wheeler. A six or eight wheeler would require two sheets, the rear one to be applied first, so that the rear of the front sheet overlaps the rear one by 1-2ft (4-8mm), to prevent wind and rain ingress as the vehicle is travelling forward.

2. Rope hooks

I prefer to have the vehicle sheeted and roped before the body is glued to the chassis. This way, no damage is caused to previously fitted chassis accessories when concentrating on the roping process. Before painting, turn the body upside down to reveal the cross members running down either side of the body. You will note that the **RTI** generic platform body has some cross members missing, this is to allow for shortening to ensure that they don't foul mudguards, etc. The missing cross members should be added using 1 x 1.5mm plastic strip, cut to 8mm long with the lower outer edge radiused to match the moulded cross members. Once these have set hard, a cut needs to be made, 3mm in from the outer edge to act as the rope hook. **DO NOT MAKE THIS CUT INTO THE REAR CROSS MEMBER.** It is possible to make this cut using short strokes with a Pro Edge saw along the entire length of the body (except the rear one) or you can make individual cuts with a craft knife. The cut should be angled to form a hook type slot, ensuring the cotton will not slip out when it is applied.



3. Loading the vehicle

Glue the intended load on to the loading deck of the vehicle and allow the glue to set before sheeting the vehicle.

4. Sheeting the load

If the sheet you have cut will cover the entire load, place the foil over the load so that the sheet wraps over the front, covering at least half, or the entire headboard. Now ensure that the rear will cover the entire load down to the platform. Now fold down either side, ensuring the load is completely covered over the dropsides if fitted, or down to the side rails on a platform body. If you find the sheet is too