

# KITBASHING 101:

## Improving Lima's Auto Rack



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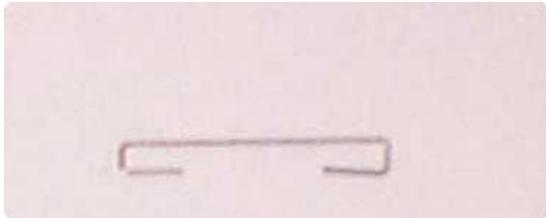
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As it came from the factory, Lima's articulated auto rack is a pleasingly unique model, though those poorly detailed Mercedes autos are the first things that have to go! Two screws on the underside of each half will separate the model into its component pieces, but you'll probably have to pry the autos from their mountings.



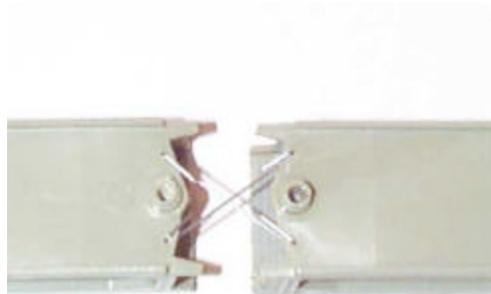
Separate the two superstructures by cutting away the 'gooseneck' and rivet assembly that connects the two. If desired, take a moment here to remove the vehicle mounting tabs from the upper and lower decks. Notice the wheel well bumps over the outboard wheel sets? These are a modeling compromise and could be removed. Unfortunately, the size of the wheel below will not allow you to fill this hole, but you can later position an auto to partially mask the openings.

To construct a new and much less obtrusive articulation joint, you'll need some small gauge (0.015" diameter) steel music wire, available at most hobby shops. Using a suitably sized drill held in a pin-vise, drill two holes in each superstructure following the illustration.



Cut two pieces of music wire approximately  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " long. Bend each end into a hook using two  $90^\circ$  bends so that the length between the hooks is approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$ " long. It's important that both pieces have exactly the same shape and length.

Install the two wires on one superstructure. Cross one over the other and hook the second superstructure to the other ends. Check to make sure that the car halves are square with one another.



Modify the center 'truck' by opening each of the two pivot holes forming a slot to the end of the piece. (In the photo, one of the holes is not yet modified.)

Test assemble the superstructures, center truck, and both underframes. Verify that the two halves pivot while holding the center truck steady.



Reassemble the model and make whatever detail enhancements inspire you. If you would like to bring the model fully into Era IV (characterized by the widespread use of the UIC 12-digit car numbering system), decalENNE ([www.decalenne.com](http://www.decalenne.com)) produces a decal set for this car (#160-22) as it was used by the 'Ausiliare' company. That car is painted a medium blue and the lettering is white.