

Modular Integrated Landscaping System (V)



By Legotron (A. Bellón)

We now have many basic elements – modules - to build our dioramas. We can display many terrain features, but now we need to build more complex elements to get better terrain features. We want to get a more realistic display and to have new elements that are compatible with the MILS modules we built in past articles.

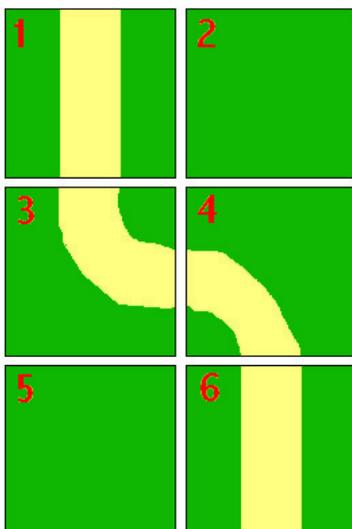
Modgrups

One of the main problems with modular landscapes is the final appearance. They look like a chessboard. This is critical with elements or features that need several modules to be carried out, as can be seen with roads or rivers. To preserve the simplicity of the MILS rules, the terrain elements must have very restricted dimensions at the borders of the modules. The more simple the rules are the less diversity of terrains can be displayed in a diorama. We can have a section of a road with many curves, but they are always 90 degrees. So we need a new element to confront this problem. That element must be compatible in some way with MILS rules, but with more options to display terrain features different from those described by our rules. So the idea is to join several modules, with many sides that are not compatible with MILS rules, to combine them into a bigger element, in such way that the final outer border is MILS compatible. Sets of modules with these characteristics will be called “modgrups”. There is no size or shape to delimit a modgrup, but they must always be made up of multiples of 32x32 studs.

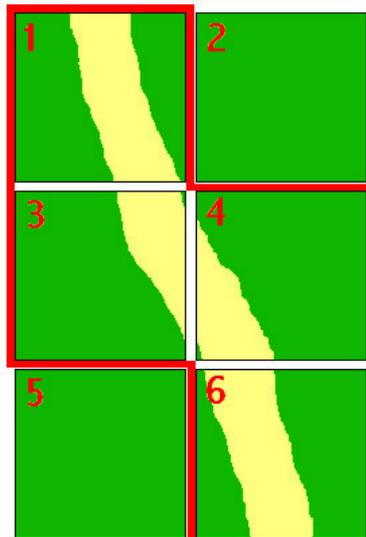
The main idea of a modgrup is that it is made up of different modules or elements of 32x32 studs. The outer border of all the modules packed in a modgrup have to fulfill the MILS rules. Internal border between different elements of the modgrup don't need to comply with MILS rules, they just must be consistent with the modules around them. When these elements or modules are taken out of their modgrup they are not consistent with the rest of MILS modules, because they have some sides with different measures for the terrain features on them, than modules built following MILS modules. In order to use these elements out of a modgrup you need to create a good design, so you can place them in corners or sides of the diorama, where this element doesn't need to have all its sides connected with other terrain modules. If the module has any side that is compatible with MILS rules, these sides can be faced towards the other MILS modules, and the other sides, with no MILS elements, can be oriented to the side of the diorama.

The modgrups are a set of modules, whose main characteristic is that the outer contour of the modules of that modgrup are compatible with MILS rules. The shape and size of a modgrup can be anything, but it must be made up of elements of 32x32 studs. A modgrup can be formed by only two elements, or may contain a multitude of modules with a very complex shape. Within the borders of a modgrup there is no limitation to its content.

Road with MILS modules



Road with a modgrup



The modgrup is made up of modules 1, 3, 4 and 6.

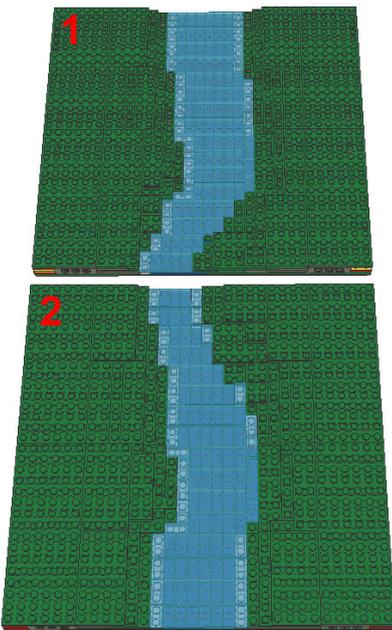
The outer contour of the modgrup is compatible with MILS rules.

The sides between the modules 1 and 3, 2 and 4, 4 and 6 are not compatible with MILS rules

Modules number 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be taken individually in a MILS diorama only if they are placed in corners or extremes of the diorama.

Example of how to change a regular layout with a modgrup.

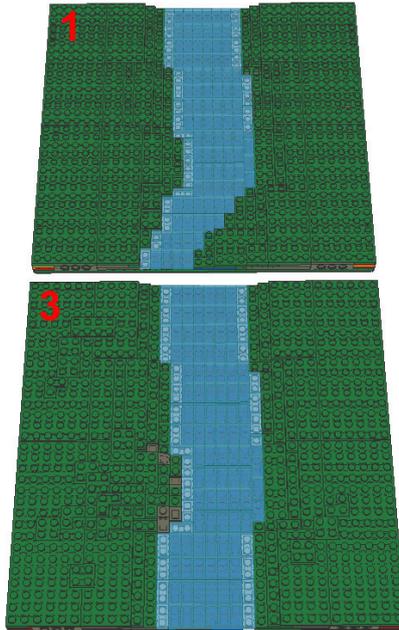
Modgrup



This is a simple modgrup with two modules with a section of a river with different widths in the borders of the modules that the mandatory size of the MILS rules.

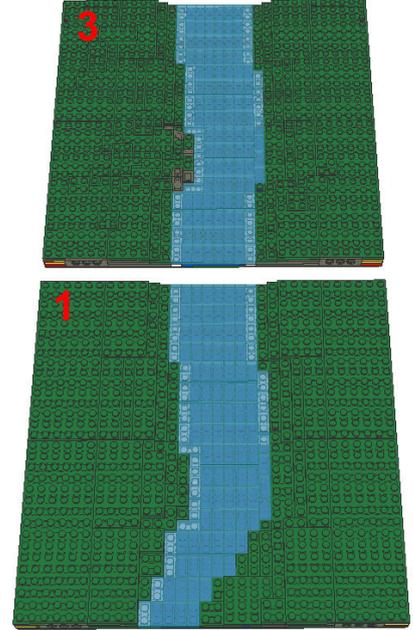
This river modgrup can be placed between two other MILS river modules, because the outer extremes of the modgrup are compatible with MILS rules.

Incorrect connection



In this case, the module 1 cannot be placed with another river section compatible with MILS rules because they have different widths, so they are not consistent.

Correct connection



Some of the modules of the modgrup can be used individually in MILS dioramas. If they have a side compatible with MILS rules, they can be placed in the border of the diorama, with the MILS side facing other modules. This is a way to have more ways to build terrains with our modules.

The modgrups can be very useful if they are used to construct river sections or road sections with different widths, or with a curved run that is too complicated to be built with MILS modules. There is an opportunity to use this type of elements to get a better appearance, with more realistic terrain features. The modgrups can be seen as an extension to the simplicity of the rules of the MILS system, that are intended to be as simple as possible, in order to get an easy way to have common

terrain elements made by different builders for the same diorama.

You can use the modules of the modgrups individually with other MILS modules under some circumstances. They need to have a good design to do so. But they are not restricted to use within a modgrup.

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Modgrups examples

