

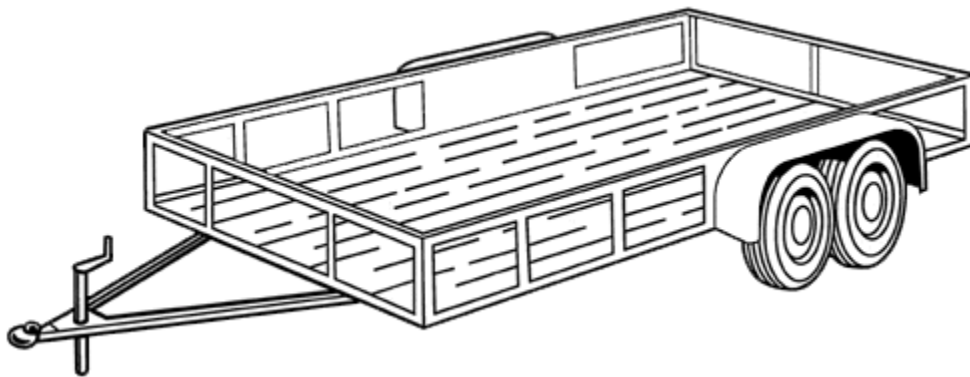
After you choose your float size, try to determine what message you want to convey, staying within the parameters of the parade theme. If your theme is humorous, make sure that no one will be offended by it. Always use good taste and remember that no one likes a blatant advertisement so try to keep your message subtle and positive. Another important design consideration is the capabilities of your float builders. If you're planning on having elaborate props or woodwork, make sure that you have access to someone who is a capable technician, with proper tools and equipment. If you have electrical requirements, consult a qualified electrician\*. Animations and prop movements can also be human-powered. Simple pulleys and rope can be used to make props rotate and move.

\*Some parades do not allow gas-powered engines or generators on the float itself. Always consult the Fire Marshall and Parade Chairman before finalizing your float design.

## Beginning Construction

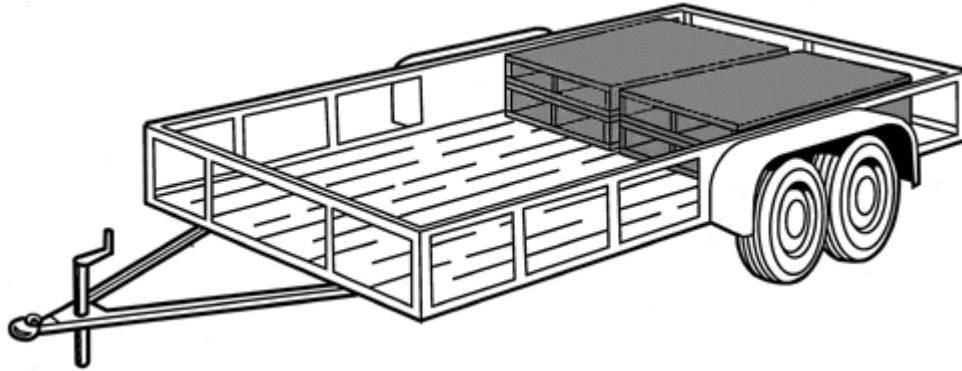
A few items you will want to have on hand before building your float. A staple gun, nails, wire, chicken-wire, 1" X 1" and 2" X 2" construction grade wood and plywood can be purchased at your local hardware store. Once you have an approved\* float design and all of the necessary materials you are ready to begin construction.

\*Float entries often must be approved by the Parade Chairman before allowed into the parade.



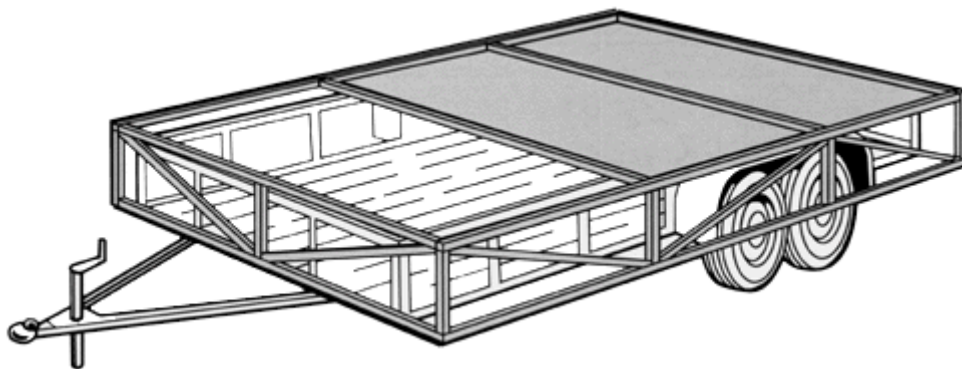
**Low-boy trailers are great for float building!**

Low-boy type trailers usually have rails around the perimeter. The instructions below will show you how you can create a great looking basic float for your next parade!



**Pallets can be used to build a partial or full sub-structure to elevate the platform of the float.**

It is a good idea to build a partial deck that will be even with the top rails of the float. You can use good quality pallets to make a platform. Make sure the pallets are firmly fastened to the bed of the float. Next, lay sheet plywood over the pallets. Now you will have a platform for your props and an area in the bed where float riders can stand or sit. If your float riders will be standing, make a stanchion and secure it to the trailer bed so that they have something to hold onto while traveling the parade route. Remember...***Safety first!***



**Attachment of skirt frame and sheet plywood.**

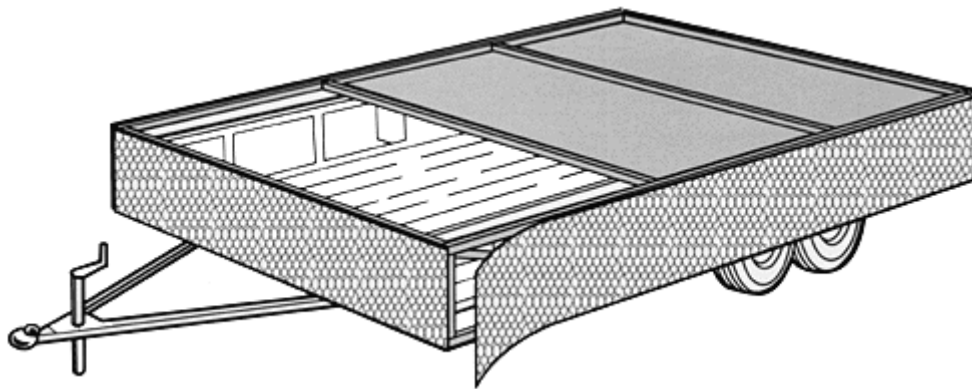
After the plywood is laid over the pallets, build a skirt frame using 1" X 1" or 2" X 2" pieces of wood and fasten the frame to the trailer rails and the plywood. The skirt frame is used to hide the wheels and

undercarriage. Any number of items can be used to fasten the skirt frame to the rails: plumber's tape or construction U-shaped brackets are ideal for attachment of the skirt frame to the trailer bed rails. Be sure to terminate the skirt frame approximately 16" from the ground and allow for tongue movement at the front of the float.

## Decorating the Float

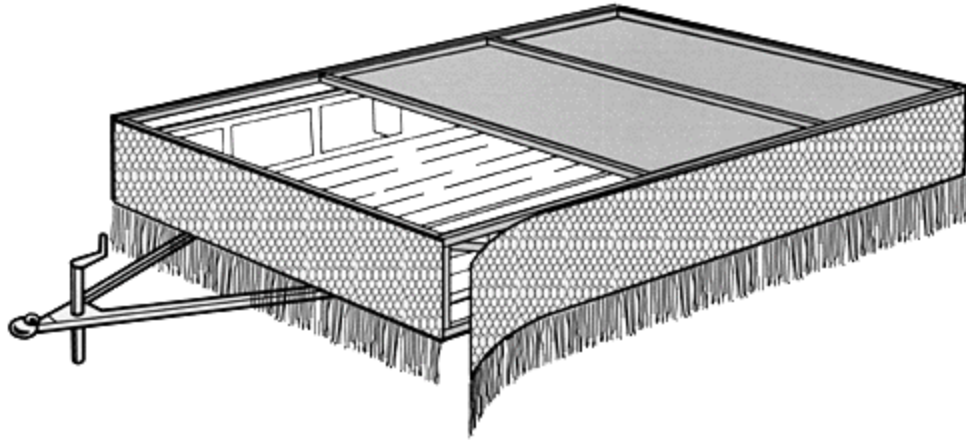
**Deck and side skirts:** Calculate the floral sheeting requirements in square yards by multiplying the length times the width of each differently colored area, (floral Sheeting comes 36" wide by 10 or 25 yard lengths). See [Float Decorating Products Page](#) for more information on Valley's float decorating supplies.

Cut the floral sheeting as needed and attach to the bottom of the skirt and staple to the deck of the trailer.



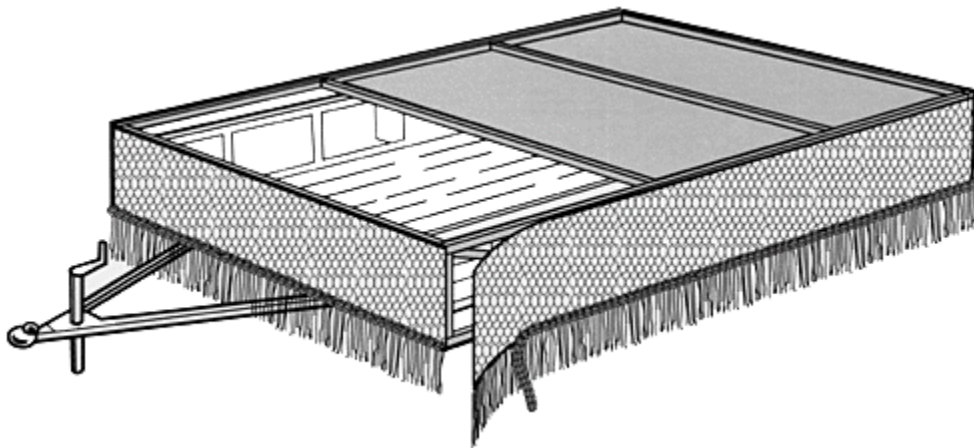
Attachment of floral sheeting to the skirt frame

Next, apply Valley's floral sheeting by stapling it to the wood skirt frame as shown above. Additionally, you can use our floral sheeting to cover the deck-platform as well as on the bed of the float. To see our complete line of float decorating products visit our [Float Decorating Products Page](#)



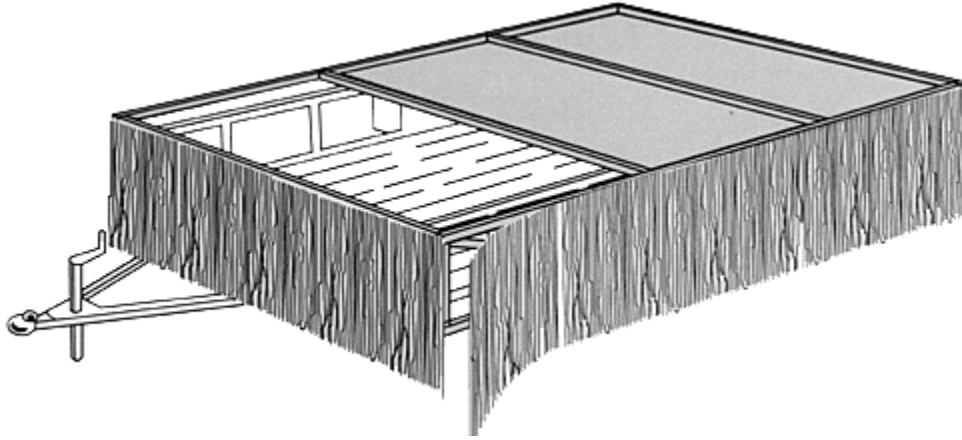
**Attachment of fringe to the floral sheeting and wood skirt frame**

Staple "float away fringe" into the wood skirt frame at the bottom of the frame. It is ok to staple through the decorating material and into the wood frame. This will give your float the "floating" appearance.



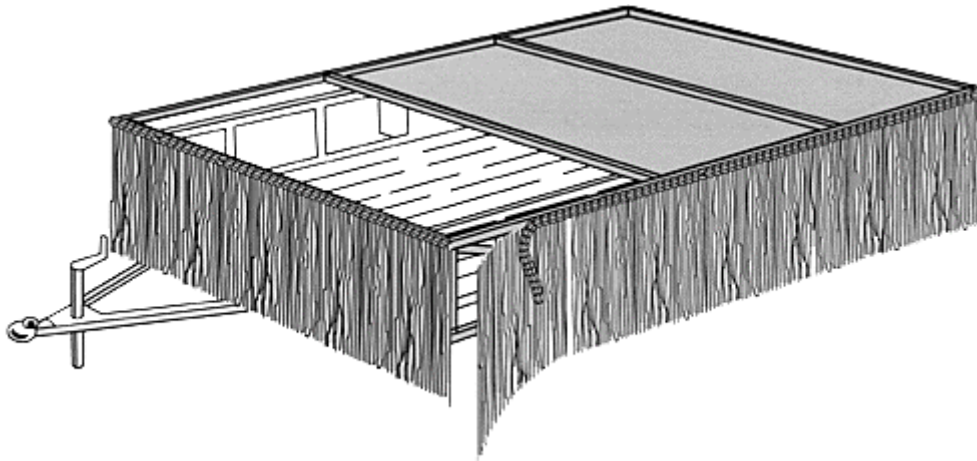
**Using Festooning to hide the seam between the floral sheeting and fringe**

Hide the seam between the float fringe and floral sheeting, use Valley's petal festooning (a stiff-wire petal garland). The festooning color you choose allows you to add even more color to your float! Festooning can be stapled through the fringe and floral sheeting materials and into the wood frame.



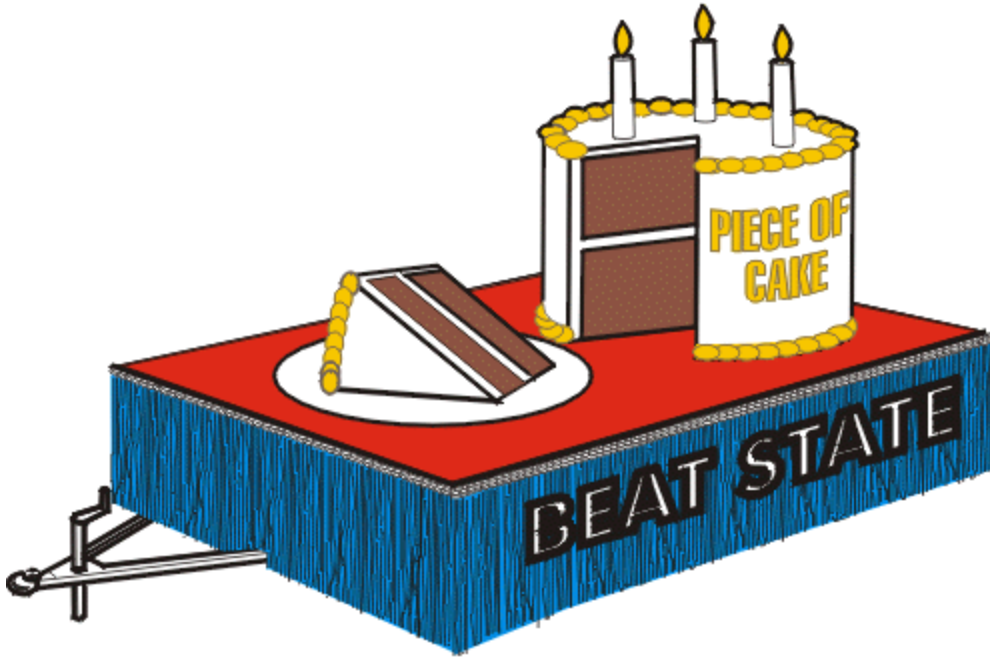
**An alternative to using floral sheeting, you can also use "fringe panels"**

The above sketch uses a longer fringe-skirt instead of a floral sheeting product. This skirt is approximately 30" tall and is designed to give the float a taller "floating" appearance. Many float builders like to use our fringe-panels because of the ease of decorating.



**Attachment of festooning to top of fringe panels.**

Whether you use floral sheeting or fringe-panels on the sides of your float, it is a good idea to use festooning to finish the edges of the float. You can use festooning in a color other than your fringe panels to add more color to your float!



Here it is! The Finished Product!

This float concept uses the longer fringe panels and pallets across the entire trailer bed to create a level deck area.