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T-34/76 Model 1941

Eastern Front

Step-by-Step Finishing Russian Armor

By Glenn Bartolotti



A complete Step-by-Step Guide to Painting and Finishing Armor Models and Figures

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Materials Used

The materials I use are very easy to obtain and simple to use. Most are inexpensive and found at most all art supply stores. Over the years I have learned to use these basic materials to obtain finishes that look very realistic. **Consistency is very important and following each step is very important to obtain the desired finish.**

You will notice that in none of the steps will you see the method of dry-brushing. I do not like to use this method as some armor modelers do. I prefer a more subtle look in which I feel represents the look of a full scale armor vehicle.

The materials below were used to finish the 1 model in this volume.

Orderless synthetic turpentine

Micro Sol Decal setting solution

1 each No. 3 round paint brush

1 each No. 0 round paint brush

1 can generic flat grey spray primer

1 can Testors Model Master gloss spray

1 can Testors Model Master lusterless flat spray

Testors Model Master flat enamel paints-*colors specified in text*

Testors Model Master airbrush thinner

Model Color Vellejo acrylic paint

Brown

Yellow Ochre

Black

Artist oil paint

White

Raw Umber

Pastel Sticks

Yellow Ochre

Rust

Olive green

No. 2 Pencil



**Note: Materials used for painting and weathering only.
The figures seen in some of the photos used more paint colors than listed above.**

T-34/76 Model 1941



The T-34 was a Soviet medium tank produced from 1940 to 1958. Although its armour and armament were surpassed by later tanks of the era, it has been often credited as the most effective, efficient and influential design of World War II. First produced at the KhPZ factory in Kharkov (Kharkiv, Ukraine), it was the mainstay of Soviet armoured forces throughout World War II, and widely exported afterward. It was the most-produced tank

of the war, and the second most-produced tank of all time, after its successor, the T-54/55 series. In 1996, the T-34 was still in service in at least twenty-seven countries.

The T-34 was developed from the BT series of fast tanks and was intended to replace both the BT-5 and BT-7 tanks and the T-26 infantry tank in service. At its introduction, it was the tank with the best balanced

attributes of firepower, mobility, protection and ruggedness, although initially its battlefield effectiveness suffered from the unsatisfactory ergonomic layout of its crew compartment, scarcity of radios, and poor tactical employment. The two-man turret-crew arrangement required the commander to serve as the gunner, an arrangement common to most Soviet tanks of the day; this proved to be inferior to three-man (commander, gunner and loader) turret crews.

The design and construction of the tank were continuously refined during the war to enhance effectiveness and decrease costs, allowing steadily greater numbers of T-34s to be fielded. In early 1944, the improved T-34-85 was introduced, with a more powerful 85 mm gun and a three-man turret design. By the war's end in 1945, the versatile and cost-effective T-34 had replaced many light and heavy tanks in service, and accounted for the majority of Soviet tank production. Its evolutionary development led directly to the T-54/55 series of tanks, built until 1981 and still operational as of 2010 and which itself led to the T-62, T-72, and T-90 tanks, which, along with several Chinese tanks based on the T-55, form the backbone of much of the world's armies even today.

1



1. The **kit** used is the DML 1/35 Scale '39-'45 Series Kit No. 6205; T-34/76 Model 1941; 440 parts (395 in grey styrene, 41 etched brass, 2 clear styrene, 2 steel twist cables)

2



2. The completed model is given a **primer coat** to cover and protect the photo etch parts and give the model a good base to start the paint process. I use a basic spray can primer that can be purchased at the local home store. This primer coat makes painting the steps much easier because you get a smooth coat of color to allow you to see all the areas that will be needed to be painted in the steps used to shade and high light the model.

3



3. The first step in the painting process is the **pre-shade**. This is the darkest shadow color. Model Master Flat Black is used. What you are trying to achieve in this is to make sure any areas that your light source cannot hit is painted. You are for the most part adding artificial shadows. All the recesses, corners, tracks, and under objects that stand off the tank. It is also best achieved in some areas by painting the areas from under the tank as to just paint under the objects.

4



4. Next step in the painting process is the **base coat**. This is the main color Russian Armor Green 2129 is used with no mix. What you are trying to achieve in this step is to make sure you cover the areas that were not painted in the pre-shade painting. As you can see you don't have to worry about being perfect just make sure you can see the shadow for the most part and a blending effect is achieved.



Russian Armor Green

Available as:

→ Russian Armor Green (SG) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle

SKU# 2129 Price: USD\$ 3.45

5



Russian Armor Green

Available as:

→ Russian Armor Green (SG) MM - 1/2 oz.

Bottle

SKU# 2129 Price: USD\$ 3.45



Flat White

Available as:

→ Flat White FS37875 - 1/2 oz. Bottle

SKU# 1768 Price: USD\$ 3.29

6



6. Next step in the painting process are the **Tracks**. I thin 2005 Burnt Umber with airbrush thinner about 6/1 and spray it on the tracks as close as possible not getting any on other surfaces except the tracks. Your airbrush should be set to do a small spray which is usually achieved by turning the air pressure lower, and making sure your paint is thinned. Remember just get a hint of the color on the tracks. If some gets on the road wheels it is ok.

7



7. The model is now given a Testors clear gloss coat only in the areas that the **decals** will be applied. I used the decals included in the T-34 kit. (note that some of the slogans on the decal sheet were not used on this model T-34) When dry, spray the tank with Testors clear flat and allow to dry for about 2 days. A flat finish is very important to my step-by-step finishing.

8



8. Next step is the **wash**.

First I brush the model with clean turpentine in the area you will be working in. Work in small areas from the top of the model first ending with the running gear.

I put a dab of raw umber on a pallet, the oil paint is thinned and mixed with turpentine on the pallet and then applied to the model with a brush. I do not want the wash to coat the entire model, it is controlled just where I want it. This is called a pin wash, apply to all of the surface details to create false shadows around each one, and any excess wash is blended into the surrounding surface once dry. Note the difference in the left side with the wash and right side without wash.

Raw umber only is streaked down the sides like it would naturally, but care should be taken not to overdo this...be subtle. Make sure all the bolts/rivets get a wash.

NOTE: Always use clean turpentine for each step!



9. Once the body of the T-34 wash has dried it is turned on its side and the road wheels are given a wash. It is put on its side so the wash stays around the bolts and details not allowing the wash to drain down to the bottom of the wheels only. This gives all the wheel a even effect all around.

10. Next step in the weathering process is the **worn paint, paint chips & scratches.**

Photo on the right shows worn paint effects with Russian Armor Green 2129 lighten with white artist oil paint... think very small!

A No. 000 brush is used to apply the dark chips. The key to chips are make them **small** and without any pattern, keeping them on the most abused edges and damaged areas. Use common sense and remember that less is more with chipped/worn areas, and think very small!



NOTE: Always use clean turpentine for each step!



11. Next step in the weathering process are the dark **paint chips & scratches**. I add chipped paint with raw umber oil paint and a small no. 3 brush. The key to chips are make them small and without any pattern, keeping them on the most abused edges and damaged areas. On older damaged areas first paint the chip with burnt sienna, then add the raw umber inside the chip so the sienna borders the umber. Use common sense and remember that less is more with chipped/worn areas, and think very small!

12



12. Next step in the painting process are the **tools and equipment**. I paint all tools and equipment on the tank before final weathering. In painting these items study the way metal and wood looks in real life and add the colors into your paint to really get a good contrasting look and make sure you use various colors and shade as you can in each item. Most important don't paint items just one color or shade. I use acrylic paint but any paint you are comfortable with will work. The metal items are painted in dark shades of brown, they will be treated with a metallic finish later.

Here you see the leather straps being painted using a 000 brush.



13. Next step is **pastel pigment weathering**. I use pastels in the same way you use pigments, but I make my own powder. The pastels are \$1.00 a stick at the art store and come in a large variety of shades. I use a file to grind them into powder. I mix them with turpentine on a pallet and apply them with a brush. The body, wheel/tracks get a earth color thinned heavily with turpentine. **Make sure you thin the powder heavily because if not it will dry and cover to much of the tracks, a little goes a long way!**

Apply a very thin mixture on the T-34's lower areas were dirt would accumulate in cracks.

13



The spare tracks get pastel washes using shades of rust, brown, and olive green pastel powder. Apply the rust shade first and then add blotches of the brown and olive after. When the wash dries it is quite convincing giving a good representation of weathered iron. Add this same mixtures to the metal areas of the tow cables.



NOTE: Always use clean turpentine for each step!

14



14. Next step is **metal accents**
I use a no. 2 graphite pencil to add
the metal accents to the raised
parts of the tracks. I also add this
to the areas you can see on the
drive sprocket teeth.



The pencil is also used on the
Machine gun. Just highlight the
edges and not the entire metal
area.

Finished Model



Figure is from Miniart



Stay Tuned!

Be on the look out for more Step-by-Step Armor Finishing!



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