

Vol. 17

\$1.95 USA

Sherman M4A1 (76)W

Europe late 1944



Step-by-Step Finishing American Armor

By Glenn Bartolotti

A complete Step-by-Step guide to painting and finishing Armor Models and Figures

Vol. 17

Sherman M4A1 (76)W

Europe 1944



Step-by-Step Finishing American Armor

By Glenn Bartolotti

A complete Step-by-Step guide to painting
and finishing Armor Models and Figures

Copyright © 2011 by Glenn L. Bartolotti
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or
transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or by
mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information
storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the author.
Printing is allowed by the purchaser only as reference and not mass production.



Bladerunner8u Production, © 2011
bladerunner8u@netscape.net

Materials Used

The materials I use are very easy to obtain and simple to use. Most are inexpensive and found in 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 also 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.



I use a basic single action airbrush. Nothing special.

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

Sherman M4A1



The M4A1 Sherman first saw combat at the Second Battle of El Alamein in October 1942 with the British 8th Army. The first U.S. Shermans in battle were M4A1s in Operation Torch the next month. At this time, Shermans successfully engaged German Panzer IIIs with long barreled 50 mm L/60 guns, and Panzer IVs with short barreled 75 mm L/24 guns. Additional M4s and M4A1s replaced M3 Lees in U.S. tank battalions over the course of the North African campaign. The M4

and M4A1 were the main types in U.S. units until late 1944, when the Army began replacing them with the preferred M4A3 with its more powerful 500 hp (370 kW) engine. Some M4s and M4A1s continued in U.S. service for the rest of the war.

Encounters with a company of Tiger Is, with their heavier armor and 88 mm L/56 guns, in Tunisia were typical of the mid-war period: the fearsome quality of a few German heavy tanks and

their crews could be overcome by the quantity and mobility of the Shermans, supported by artillery and airpower, but sometimes at a great cost in U.S. tanks and crewmen. By June 1944, the Panzer IV had been up-gunned with a 75 mm L/48 weapon, and 75 mm Shermans were out-gunned on a regular basis. The first Sherman to enter combat with the 76 mm

gun in July 1944 was the M4A1, closely followed by the M4A3. By the end of the war, half the U.S. Army Shermans in Europe had the 76 mm gun. The first HVSS Sherman to see combat was the M4A3E8(76)W in December 1944.



1



1. The **kit** used is the Old Italeri Sherman 76mm. I used solid wheels from a Tamiya kit along with tracks. The metal barrel is from Jordi Rubio (TG-42) The texture was made using Mr. Surfacer.



Mud was made by sprinkling sand on instant cement (super glue)

2



2. The 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 Testors OD Green was used with no mix. What you are trying to achieve in this step is to make sure you cover the areas that stand off the model leaving small recesses and areas that light can't get to.. 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.



Olive Drab

Available as:

→ Olive Drab (ANA613) (F) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2050 Price: USD\$ 3.29

5



5. Next step in the painting process is the **high-light**. This is the main color, Olive Drab mixed with 2142 Flat White, mix 4/1 ratio to lighten the base color. You want to add enough white to alter the base color and contrast is important in this step. What you are trying to achieve is to make sure any areas of your light source can hit is painted. A faded effect is also achieved since this step and will bring out your tank's details. Paint all the high spots, centers of any panels and the tops of objects that stand off the tank. **This step eliminates the need for dry-brushing. Once again contrast is important!**



Olive Drab

Available as:

→ Olive Drab (ANA613) (F) MM - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 2050 Price: USD\$ 3.29



Flat White

Available as:

→ Flat White FS37875 - 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 1768 Price: USD\$ 3.29

6



6. The model is now given a Testors clear gloss coat only in the areas that the **decals** will be applied. I used the decals supplied with the kit. When dry spray the tank with Testors clear flat.

7A



7A. After the Testors clear flat has dried completely the next step in the painting process is the **fading**. Fading helps tie the colors together, tone down the decal markings and get the tank the look that it has been in the elements. Testors Sand is mixed with Testors airbrush thinner 10/1 mixture is used for this. Set your airbrush at a high pressure with a wide spray and make passes over the entire model. The more passes you make the more it will fade the paint.

B



7B. Testors Burnt Umber is mixed with Testors airbrush thinner 10/1 mixture is used for this. Set your airbrush at a high pressure with a wide spray and make passes over the entire model. The more passes you make the more it will fade the paint. It is applied to the lower part of the tank.

8



8. 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.

9



9. 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 and black oil paint 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.

NOTE: Always use clean turpentine for each step!

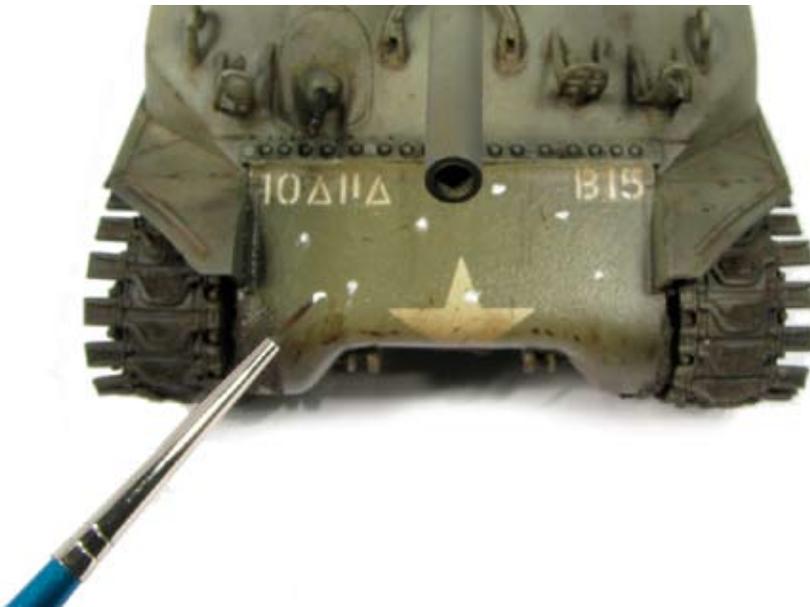
10



10. Next step in the weathering process is the **paint chips & scratches**. I add chipped paint with Raw Umber oil paint and a small 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!

11



11. Next step is the **effects**. I use heavily thinned white artist oil paint to give flat areas of the tank a look as though water that has mixed with dust and dried on the surface.

I paint the area with clean turpentine as before. I put a dab of oil paint mixture on a pallet, the oil paint is thinned with turpentine on the pallet and then applied to the model with a small brush. Other earth oil colors can be used as desired.

Blend in with clean turpentine being very subtle as you go over the model.

NOTE: Always use clean turpentine for each step!

12



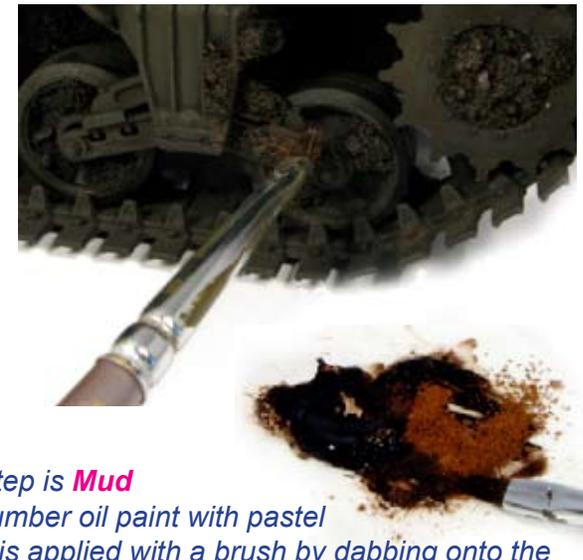
12. Next step in the painting process are the **tarps, bags, rut sacks, etc.** I paint all cloth equipment while attached to the Sherman. In painting these items study the way wood and cloth looks in real life and add the colors into your paint to really get a good contrasting look and make sure you use various colors and shade as you can in each item. Most important don't paint items just one color or shade, make sure folds contrast.
I use acrylic paint thinned and applied as controlled washes so the paint flows around each item.



13

13. 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.

14



14. Next step is **Mud**
I mix raw umber oil paint with pastel powder. It is applied with a brush by dabbing onto the areas where the sand was added.

Finished Model



Finished Model



Stay Tuned!

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



A complete step-by-step guide to painting and finishing Armor Models and Figures



\$1.95 USA

Bladerunner8u Production, © 2011
bladerunner8u@netscape.net

