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LVT-(A)1

**Yellow Beach 2,
Saipan 1944**



Step-by-Step Finishing American Armor

By Glenn Bartolotti

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

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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 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 modified the airbrush bottle syphon to fit Testors Model Master paint jars and Tamiya jars so I can spray the paint directly from the bottle without having to mix in a new bottle.

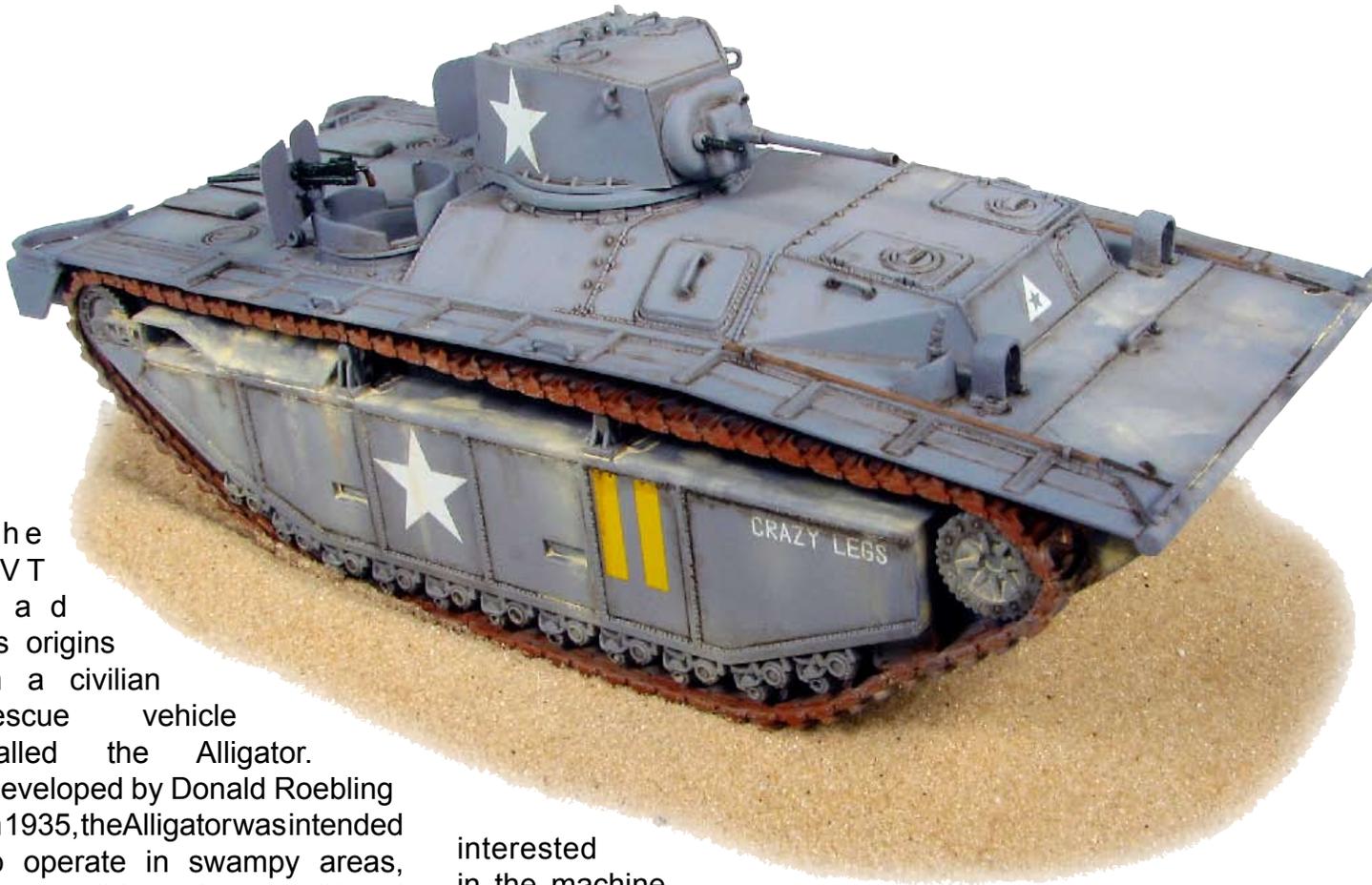


Materials used for painting and weathering. In this Step-by-Step Acrylic paints are used to paint the model showing the same results can be achieved with enamel or acrylic paints!



I use a basic single action airbrush. Nothing special.

LVT(A)1



The LVT had its origins in a civilian rescue vehicle called the Alligator. Developed by Donald Roebeling in 1935, the Alligator was intended to operate in swampy areas, inaccessible to both traditional cars and boats. Two years later, Roebeling built a redesigned vehicle with greatly improved water speed. The United States Marine Corps, which had been developing amphibious warfare doctrine based on the ideas of Lt. Col. Earl Hancock "Pete" Ellis and others, became

interested in the machine after learning about it through an article in Life magazine and convinced Roebeling to design a more seaworthy model for military use. After more improvements, made difficult by Roebeling's lack of blueprints for the initial designs, to meet requirements of the Navy, the vehicle was adopted as Landing

Vehicle Tracked, or LVT. The LVT 1 could carry 18 fully equipped men or 4,500 pounds (2,041 kg) of cargo. Originally intended to carry replenishments from ships ashore, they lacked armor protection and their tracks and suspension were unreliable when used on hard terrain. However, the Marines soon

recognized the potential of the LVT as an assault vehicle. Armored versions were introduced as well as fire support versions, dubbed Amtanks, which were fitted with turrets from Stuart series light tanks (LVT(A)-1) and Howitzer Motor Carriage M8s (LVT(A)-4). Among other upgrades were a new powerpack, also borrowed from the Stuarts, and a torsilastic suspension which significantly improved performance on land. Production continued throughout the war, resulting in 18,621 LVTs delivered. In late 1940s a series of prototypes were built and tested, but none reached production stage due to lack of funding. Realizing that acquisition of new vehicles was unlikely, the Marines modernized some of the LVT-3s and LVT(A)-5s and kept them in service until late 1950s. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

1



1. The **kit** used is Dragon 1/72 US Landing Vehicles Tracked (Armored) LVT(A)-1 Military Model Kit - 7387

About the Model

Dragon has successfully recreated the LVT(A)-1 in plastic at a scale of 1/72. The kit's very smartly designed, with the bottom hull made as a single-piece molding. This provides a stable and vital foundation on which to add such details as the complicated suspension system.

Although the running gear is originally complex in design, Dragon's engineers have ensured it's easy to assemble for modelers.

Upper hull detail can also be easily attached to the basic hull. The deck is well detailed, and even the weld seams are visible. The turret is also a product of slide molds, and so it's well constructed. As would be expected, the gun muzzle is hollowed out. PE gun shields are also included.



2



2. **Primer coat - Base coat**

Since the model is in 1/72 scale I did not use primer as I do in my Step-By-Step process. This time I painted the entire model with a base coat of Testors 4754 Dark Gray. This was done since the scale is smaller and with very fine detail so I did not want to put to many coats of paint on and build up paint on the model.



Dark Gray (F-15)

Available as:

→ Dark Gray F-15 FS36176 Acryl (F)- 1/2 oz. Bottle

SKU# 4754 Price: USDS 3.69

3



3. Next step in the painting process is the **high-light**. This is 4754 Dark Gray mixed with 4722 Radome Tan. What you are trying to achieve is to make sure any areas of your light source can hit is painted. This step will bring out your LVT details. Paint all the high spots, centers of any panels and the tops of objects that stand off the tank. Once again contrast is important!



Dark Gray (F-15)

Available as:

→ Dark Gray F-15 FS36176 Acryl (F)- 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 4754 Price: USDS 3.69



Radome Tan

Available as:

→ Radome Tan FS33613 Acryl (F)- 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 4722 Price: USDS 3.69

4



4. I used 4722 Radome Tan to make some streaking down the sides of the LVT to represent sand weathering. The paint is finely sprayed with my airbrush. This will later be enhanced as more weathering effects are added.



Radome Tan

Available as:

→ Radome Tan FS33613 Acryl (F)- 1/2 oz. Bottle
SKU# 4722 Price: USDS 3.69

5



5. The model is now given a Testors clear gloss coat only in the areas that the **decals** will be applied. Micro Sol was used to flatten the decals down. I used the decals from the kit. 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.

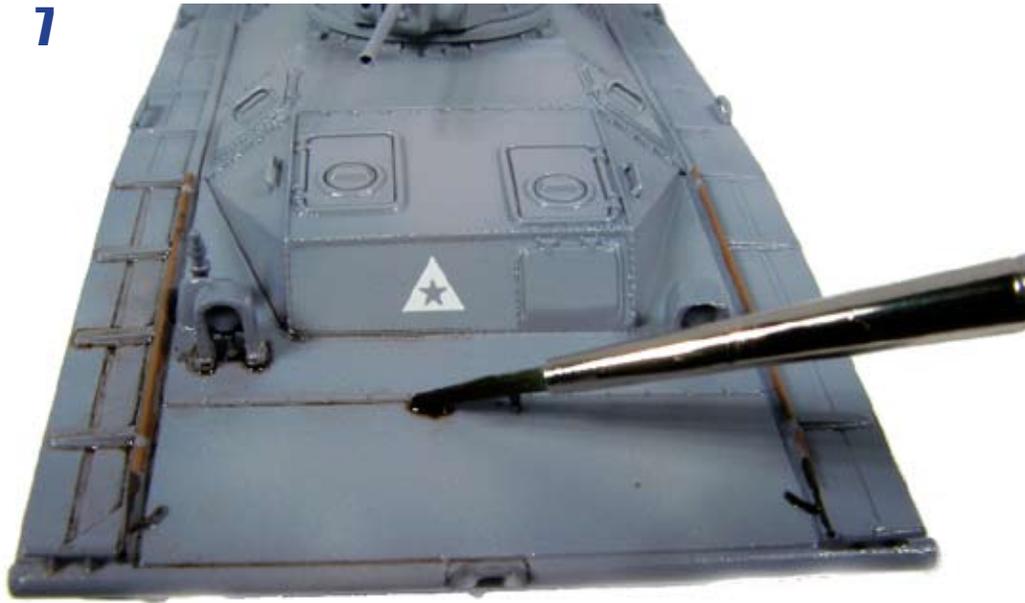
6



6. Next step in the painting process are the **tools and details**. I paint all tools and equipment on the LVT before final weathering. The machine guns are paint Testors Gun metal.



7



7. Next step is the **wash**.

First I brush the area of the LVT that will receive the wash with clean turpentine. I put a dab of raw umber oil paint on a pallet, the **oil paint is thinned with turpentine on the pallet and then applied to the model** with a small brush. I do not want the wash to coat the entire model, it is controlled just where I want it. This is sometimes 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 before drying. I streak it down the sides like it would naturally in some areas, but care should be taken not to overdo this. Since this model is 1/72 scale the wash must be kept to a minimum and subdued.



Once the top surface wash has dried it is turned on its side and 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 only.

8



8. The tracks are painted using Burnt Sienna artist oil paint thinned with turpentine. Mix the paint so it is just thin enough to flow onto the tracks but not so thin as to run all over the near by parts. Get as close as possible on all the tracks but don't worry if a small amount gets on the wheels. The final sand weathering will cover this up.

9



I use a file to grind them into powder.



The powder is then thinned heavily with turpentine and then applied to the model with a small brush.

9. 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 LVT sides and wheels get a light sand color thinned heavily with turpentine. **Make sure you thin the powder heavily because if not it will dry and cover to much of the area applied, a little goes a long way!**

Apply a very thin mixture on the LVT's tracks to show where sand has accumulated.



Finished Model



Finished Model



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Armor Models
by Glenn Bartolotti



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Stay Tuned!

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