

Peter's Metal Painting Tips

Construction

- Keep major components like wings separate until after painting if possible, complex shapes are harder to spray uniformly.
- Avoid solvent based fillers (Tamiya putty, Squadron putty, Bondo, Mr. Surfacer 500, etc) and use CA glue or epoxy putty.
- Check for ghost seams and scratches with primer before painting.
- Don't use sandpaper below 600 grit, polish and finish with 4000-8000.

Painting the base coat

- For flat base coats, lightly polish with 4000 grit for an eggshell finish
- For gloss base coats, can use gloss paint or flat paint + gloss clear
- Apply gloss coats at low PSI (15-20), with a thick, wet application
- Paint retarder and slow drying thinners work great, but watch out for dripping on slow drying coats.
- Can use 8000-12000 grit or polishing compound to help
- Avoid "orange peel" finishes: PSI too high, coat too light, sharp angles on the model, can all create problems.
- Enamels make great, slow-drying and even gloss coats but will prevent you from using oil panel line washes or weathering later.
- Check your finished base coat in good lighting for ANY flaws, mistakes - now is the time to fix them! It's a lot harder later.
- Use a spare kit from the shelf of doom as a paint mule to test all techniques, drying time, and reaction to chemicals (oil washes, decal softening solution, etc) before you commit to them on your kit!

After Construction

- Using clear coats over the metal will make the model more durable and easier to handle, but will reduce the metallic shine.
- Carrier film on decals is very visible, trim them before application. Even better, use transfers or paint masks.
- Masking tape (even Tamiya tape) can pull off metal colors. Reduce tape adhesion by pulling it off your hand a few times, or use sticky notes or wet paper masks. Test before committing to masking up your painted model!
- Use gloves when handling your model, your fingers will rub off the color and leave fingerprints. Gloss base coats and metal colors can be very slow to dry.
- Test weathering products on your paint mule before use.

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<p>Tamiya AS-12/LP-11 Good coverage, like primer Durable "Painted" finish Low shine</p>	<p>Recommended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replicating painted silver - Primer for other metals - Easiest, safest for beginners 	
<p>Vallejo Metal Color Wide variety Good shine Requires flat primer coat Dries slow and can pool & run Poor adhesion</p>	<p>Recommended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoiding paint fumes - Combining with other acrylic paints - Also easy for beginners 	
<p>AK Xtreme Metal Good durability Good shine, no flakes Pre-thinned, sprays well Dries slow, not always compatible with oils</p>	<p>Recommended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General purpose - About the best you can get without using gloss base coats 	
<p>Polishing Powder Very realistic shine Doesn't require airbrush Very revealing of flaws Emphasizes raised detail, difficult for exteriors Easy to break small parts while polishing</p>	<p>Recommended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Figures & miniatures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gundam - Highlighting individual panels - Engine blocks, wheel hubs 	
<p>Alclad (Regular) Many shades available Pre-thinned in bottle Lots of fumes Easy to spill the bottle</p>	<p>Recommended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multiple shades available for exhausts etc. - Non-polished jets - Weathered or oxidized aluminum finishes 	
<p>Alclad (High Shine) Fantastic shine Can replicate many shades of real metal Requires a flawless gloss base coat Can be inconsistent in finish due to unseen flaws Easy to rub off model by handling it</p>	<p>Recommended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Polished aluminum aircraft 	
<p>Molotow Liquid Chrome Highest, most "chrome" finish Can be brushed on Available in a pen for small details Long drying time (3+ days) Slightly "gummy" finish, will always be something you need to avoid touching</p>	<p>Recommended for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gear struts & oleos - Belt buckles, and other small character details - Chrome bumpers and trim on cars 	