

'QUICK & DIRTY' PAINTING GUIDE

Number 3

FULL METAL PAINT JOB

These Quick & Dirty Guides are for gamers in a hurry; who want to spend more time using their figures than painting them. They are intended to demonstrate techniques that will get your miniatures painted to a reasonable standard in a reasonable amount of time. They may not win you any beauty contests, but you should get decent looking miniatures and still have the free time to actually use them.



INTRODUCTION

I bought a pack of Alternative Armies (www.15mm.co.uk) Automatons – Terminators to you and me. I knew I wasn't going to do anything particularly imaginative with the paint scheme, just give them a silver/metallic finish. (Alex from AA has said that he paints his tan, like the battledroids from Phantom Menace, which I think would look great for these, maybe next time...)

Anyhow I decided to try a decidedly Q&D method of painting them. Never used it before so the whole thing was a bit of an experiment, but experimenting is good, just strip 'em if you don't like 'em. Essentially I was going to let the metal miniature work for me. As I was going for a metal look why bother with an undercoat that would cover up something that already looks metal?

PREPARATION

As received, the pack of ten figures were incredibly clean, there was practically no flash at all and the detail nice and crisp. I pretty much just filed down the bases to be level and then let them soak for a day or so in white vinegar.

It is particularly important to let figures soak in this way if you want to try this technique. Because there will be no undercoating and the surface needs to be thoroughly prepared to take the ink. Ink?! Read on...

After they've had a chance to soak, I based them on 1-pence piece (my preferred choice for 15mm skirmish figures).



BLACK INK

The next stage was to simply 'paint' the figures with black ink. You are basically using the ink as the undercoat/basecoat. However because it is so thin it tends to not cover the figure very well allowing the base metal to show through – that's what we want! It also tends to pool into the nocks and crannies nicely giving these areas the shading they need.

I used quite a thick miniatures ink for this (more like thin paint). It isn't much good for subtle shading, which is one of the reasons I decided to try this technique - to get rid of the stuff! Obviously inks aren't paint; they do have a tendency to pool together and coagulate in blotches. If you are using thinner inks you may need to give them a couple of coats, but remember you aren't trying to cover up the base metal, you want the metal 'look', you just want the deeper areas to be shaded.



Alternatively just use a thinned down black paint instead of ink, as long as it is thin enough to allow the metal to show through.

DRYBRUSHING

Next I used a metal paint (in this case Revel Acrylics, which I have found to be nice and thick with good coverage) and gave them a light drybrush to further enhance the metal look I was going for.



DETAILING

I did give the guns an undercoat of white - as I intended to paint them a nice bright red - but you could just as easily paint straight onto the bare metal if you want to be even quicker. After that I just painted the guns (Coat'd Arms Blood Red) added some highlighting and that was the paintjob done.



BASING

Before texturing the base I gave the figure a coat of gloss wood varnish, just in case I had to wipe off any stray glue without fear of removing the paint. I then used my usual PVA/sand as basing material, painted it black and then a light drybrush of white. Another coat of varnish and they were ready to go.

Job done. Very quick, very dirty, but it enabled me to get the whole squad of ten done extremely quickly.



THE IMPORTANCE OF VARNISHING

Because there is almost bugga all paint on these figures, varnishing them is incredibly important as it is sooo easy to inadvertently rub the paint off with even gentle handling. On the plus side however is the fact that they are intended to be metallic looking, if you do rub the paint off it isn't going to be too noticeable. But still varnish - at least two coats!

OTHER THINGS TO TRY

Although I haven't tried this myself another technique that might work would be, rather than use black ink, instead use a stained varnish. I use stained wood varnish a lot, commonly referred to as 'dipping'. Varnish straight onto the bare metal, the stain will pool into the deeper parts of the miniature, then drybrush onto the varnish. Darker stains are probably the order of the day here, but if your inks just won't do the job then give it a try.

That's it. Hope you enjoyed it.

Cheers

agentofping