



Although it wasn't until after the bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1941 that the United States officially entered the war, they had been supplying the Allies for some time. Once they were fully committed to stopping the Axis powers, the massive industrial capacity of the U.S. began to crank out vast amounts of material: uniforms, weapons, ammunition, tanks and other fighting vehicles. So much so that they were able to provide these things to the British and Soviets as part of the Lend-Lease programme.

This Painting Guide will provide you with a step-by-step guide to painting a GI (general infantryman) of the U.S. Army, and easily the most ubiquitous American tank of the war - the M4 Sherman. The basic colour schemes depicted here were used in the European Theatre, including actions in the Mediterranean and France through to the final push for Berlin. For the most part, it was the additional equipment and unit patches that helped distinguish different divisions of soldiers from one another.

Following the step-by-step painting guides, you'll find a collection of other units from the American forces that display the variety of painting possibilities when collecting these models.



There are many paint ranges available for painting up your miniatures, and it doesn't really matter which paints you use. That's completely up to you. We used a variety of paints in preparing this guide, and named them with abbreviations.

These can be deciphered below:

VMC = Vallejo Model Color

AP = Army Painter



PAINING YOUR AMERICAN INFANTRY

1



The first step is always to prepare your models for painting. After assembling a squad of five models, we applied a layer of fine basing grit and let the glue dry.

Many people undercoat their models with black or white sprays. We chose to spray each model with AP Uniform Grey spray as sometimes a black undercoat can mean you have to apply multiple coats of your other paints, and white can leave the colours a bit too bright for the muted uniform colours of WWII.

2



The next step includes painting the basecoats over the largest areas. We started with VMC Khaki over the uniform tunic and gaiters. This was followed by VMC Brown Violet for the helmet. We then painted his trousers with VMC US Dark Green, and his face and hands with AP Tanned Flesh, a good base colour for Caucasian skin.

3



The next step was painting the webbing (backpack included) with VMC Green Grey. We then painted the boots, rifle stock, bayonet handle and scabbard with AP Oak Brown. The entrenching tool handle and webbing trim were painted with VMC Beige Brown. The helmet strap was painted with VMC Red Leather.

If you are painting a lot of models at once and are on a tight timeframe, you might also choose to paint the black and silver areas (covered in Steps 8 & 9).

4



We followed up Step 3 by painting a layer of AP Strong Tone Wash over the entire model and let it dry thoroughly.

If you are painting a lot of models at once and chose to paint the black and silver areas before the wash, you could finish your painting here, although your models would like quite dark and not quite as nice as they could be if you decided to push on.

5



While the wash adds great shadows to your model, to make it really pop you need to go back and add some highlights. We started by highlighting the uniform tunic and gaiters with VMC Khaki, then the helmet with VMC Brown Violet. The uniform trousers were highlighted with VMC Dark Green and the skin was highlighted with AP Tanned Flesh.

6



For the next stage, we touched up the highlights on the face with VMC Basic Skintone, and highlighted the tunic and gaiters with a 70/30 mix of VMC Khaki/VMC Pale Sand. We then highlighted the boots with a 60/40 mix of AP Oak Brown/VMC Basic Skintone. This trick (mixing a light flesh colour into the base leather colour) is great for simulating cracking and scuffing on any leather work. We highlighted the webbing with VMC Green Grey.

7

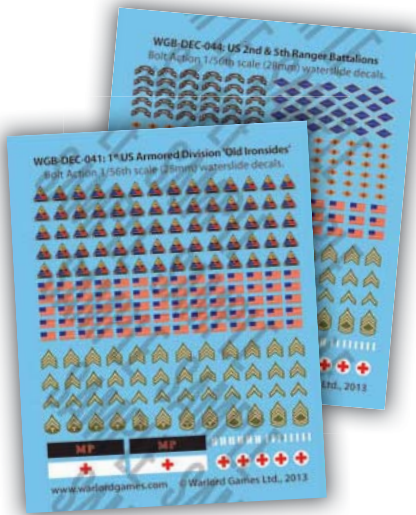


The next step was to paint all the metal areas with AP Matt Black. At this point, you can really start to see the finished product, as the black helps tidy up all the rough areas left by the previous painting.

The webbing was given a final highlight with a 50/50 mix of VMC Green Grey/VMC Pale Sand, and the entrenching tool handle was highlighted with VMC Beige Brown.

DECALS

If you feel like adding more detail to your American infantry models, we make a range of great waterslide decals covering a variety of the units that were part of the American armed forces.



8



The final step for painting this model was to paint the metallic areas. We highlighted the areas with a 50/50 mix of AP Matt Black/AP Gun Metal.

The helmet strap was given a quick highlight of VMC Red Leather.

TOP TIPS



US Infantrymen also wore brown coloured trousers. basecoat the trousers in VMC US Field Drab. Then shade with AP Strong Tone wash. We added a second thin coat of the wash for more depth. Some of the US helmets have netting over them, used to break up the outline of the helmet or as a basis for adding local foliage. We painted the netting with VMC Khaki.

BASING



Basing is the thing that really helps tie your army together. There are many, many ways you can do you basing, depending on where you want your troops to be fighting, and what your gaming table looks like. For our purposes, we painted the base completely



with VMC German Camo Brown-Black, drybrushed the grit and painted the edge with VMC Beige Brown, drybrushed again with VMC Dark Sand, and then glued down different flocking materials to give a variety of colours and textures.

THE COMPLETED AMERICAN RIFLE SQUAD



This completed Regular Infantry Squad (using the squad listing on page 23 of Armies of the United States), has the minimum six men, including an NCO with a Thompson submachine gun and a soldier with the ubiquitous BAR.

VARIANTS OF AMERICAN UNIFORMS



◀ The Rangers you see here wear the same basic uniform as the GI in our painting guide. The primary difference is the additional equipment they carry to better execute the special missions they've been trained for.



◀◀ Wearing ostensibly the same uniforms as the GIs, these paratroopers of the U.S. Airborne divisions carried a great deal of extra gear, knowing that by jumping behind enemy line they would not be able to be resupplied easily.

▼▶ The United States Marines shown here were active in the Pacific Theatre, where amphibious landings were commonplace. As they were fighting in a very different environment, their look is very different: a single-colour green uniform and camouflage helmet coverings in a mottled tan, green and brown.



◀◀ Continuing the theme of a 'uniform' appearance, the soldiers of segregated formations like the the 92nd (Colored) Infantry Division and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team wore the same uniforms as any other infantryman in the U.S. Army. It is therefore only skin colour and divisional patches that will mark them out on the tabletop.

PAINTING YOUR AMERICAN TANKS



1 We assembled the Sherman as per the instructions. At the front you'll find a small joint line, we filled this with a quick-drying putty and sanded it smooth once dry. Much like the infantry, once everything was ready, we undercoated it with AP Uniform Grey.

2 Once the undercoat was dry, we used a large brush to apply the basecoat - VMC Brown Violet. We thinned the paint a little to ensure it went on smoothly, so had to apply two coats for a solid coverage. If you have an airbrush and are painting quite a few vehicles, you could certainly spray on your basecoat.



3 Once the second coat was dry, we applied AP Strong Tone wash over the whole tank with a very large brush, paying particular attention to where the shadows would fall.



4 We let the wash dry thoroughly and then drybrushed the entire tank lightly with VMC Brown Violet, followed by a light drybrush of a 50/50 mix of VMC Brown Violet/VMC Dark Sand, concentrating on all the edges.



5 Many people wait until the end of painting their tanks to apply the decals, but we chose to do it at this stage in order to ensure that any shading and weathering we applied later would be applied to the decals too.

Once the decals had dried and were fully secured in place, we applied a coat of VMC Satin Varnish over them, to cut back the glossy appearance.





6 The next step was to apply a bit of 'chipping' - areas where the paint has been scratched or worn off and reveals the original primer coat underneath. For this we simply sponged on VMC German Camo Brown-Black using a folded piece of sponge from a Warlord Games blister pack. Be careful to apply the chipping in areas that would see the most wear and tear.

Of course, if you want your tanks to be factory-fresh, you can skip Steps 6-7.

7 In order to accentuate the chipping in the armour, we added lighter marks in and around the brown chips. This was done with a 50/50 mix of VMC Brown Violet/VMC Pale Sand, a fine brush, and a steady hand.



8 Almost there! We then painted everything that wasn't going to remain the camouflage colours with AP Matt Black. This included the tracks, the rubber edges of the road wheels, some of the tools on the deck and so on.

9 Any metallic areas were highlighted with a 50/50 mix of AP Matt Black/AP Gun Metal. The tool handles were painted with AP Oak Brown and highlighted with a 50/50 mix of AP Oak Brown/VMC Beige Brown.



THE COMPLETED M4 SHERMAN

And finally...

If you want to take your tanks one step further, you can apply several thin lines of VMC Red Leather down the panels as rust streaks, often seen on vehicles with little time for thorough maintenance. To give it the 'slogging around Europe, seeing lots of action' look we drybrushed brown onto the tracks and undercarriage of the tank, simulating a thick coating of road dust.

VARIANTS OF AMERICAN TANKS

► This Sherman has been given a whitewash camouflage to ensure it remains hidden in snowy conditions. Note that the Allied stars have not been covered by the whitewash. This look can be achieved by applying the whitewash in various ways: several thin washes of a white/light grey paint, sponging on the white paint, or even spraying it on carefully with an airbrush.



◀ Crews often did what they could to add armor to their tanks, in order to increase their survivability. This Sherman has had stowage racks fitted and dozens of sandbags layered over it. It's touches like this that can help add variety to the tanks in your American forces.



► In the Pacific Theatre it was reasonably common for tankers to add thick planks of wood to the side of their tanks, again for extra protection. This slab armour was made from freshly-cut local wood and so would generally appear quite light in color.



▲ This M3 Halftrack has had most of its winter whitewash removed, either deliberately or by the elements. It has certainly seen a lot of service, the bodywork is quite chipped and pitted with patches of rust.

► This M5 Stuart light tank has been painted with quite a bit of tonal modulation, giving it a great "pop" on the tabletop. The nicks and scratches along the edges have been done with a silver paint.

