

GERMAN ARMY



Over the course of World War II, the German army at large underwent many changes. Changes in structure, changes in equipment, and changes in appearance. As the German war machine strove to stay on the cutting edge of strategy, training, and technology, these changes were often introduced in fits and starts and so, over the years, the German forces began to look less and less uniform.

This Painting Guide, however, will provide you with a step-by-step guide to painting the basic infantryman of the German Heer (Army) and one of the most ubiquitous German tanks of the war - the Panzer IV. In most circumstances, the colour schemes presented here were used by the Heer from approximately 1942 through to the end of the war in 1945. If you are collecting a German Heer force for this period, the bulk of your forces will look like these models.

Following the step-by-step painting guides, you'll find a collection of other units from the German forces that display the wide 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



PAINTING YOUR GERMAN 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 German Fieldgrey over the uniform tunic and trousers. This was followed by VMC German Camo Dark Green for the helmet and gas mask canister on the back (wrapped in an anti-gas cape pouch on this model). We then painted the face and hands with AP Tanned Flesh, a good base colour for Caucasian skin. Then we moved on to the wooden stock of the rifle and entrenching tool, painting them with VMC Beige Brown.

3



The next step was to paint the bread bag and anklets with VMC German Camo Beige. We then painted the boots and canteen with AP Oak Brown.

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 look quite dark and not quite as nice as they could 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 with VMC German Fieldgrey WWII, then the helmet and gas mask canister with VMC German Camo Dark Green. The bread bag and anklets were highlighted with VMC German Camo Beige.

6



In order to help them stand out a little more from the equipment, the uniform was highlighted again with a 60/40 mix of VMC German Fieldgrey WWII/VMC Pale Sand, and the bread bag and anklets were highlighted with a 50/50 mix of VMC German Camo Beige/VMC Pale Sand. Finally, the skin was highlighted with a 50/50 mix of AP Tanned Flesh/VMC Basic Skintone.

7



For the next stage of highlighting, we touched up the highlights on the face with VMC Basic Skintone. We then highlighted the boots and canteen cover with a 60/40 mix of AP Oak Brown/VMC Basic Skintone. This trick (mixing a light flesh color into the base leather colour) is great for simulating cracking and scuffing on any leather work.

8



The next step was to paint all the webbing and metal areas with AP Matt Black. Then we highlighted the areas with a 50/50 mix of AP Matt Black/AP Gun Metal. Some areas, such as the rim of the helmet and the edges of the gas mask canister, were given a little dab of AP Gun Metal, to simulate wear and tear. The webbing was given a quick highlight with VMC German Grey.

DECALS

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



TOP TIP



If you've decided your German force will be from 1944-45, you might want to add a few extra points of interest, like painting a couple of their helmets differently. Known later as the Normandy helmet, these were painted in the same way as the Panzer IV in this painting guide.

BASING



Basing is the thing that really helps tie your army together. There are many, many ways you can do your 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 GERMAN HEER SQUAD



This completed Heer Infantry Squad (using the squad listing on page 20 of Armies of Germany), has the minimum five men, including an NCO with a submachine gun and a soldier with a light machine gun.

VARIANTS OF GERMAN UNIFORMS



◀ These soldiers of the German Heer are dressed in early war uniforms, similar to those of the late war troops painted for this guide, but with grey trousers and black leather jackboots.

▶ These German Fallschirmjäger (paratroopers) were issued camouflage uniforms and a wider variety of weapons and equipment than the standard Heer soldier. Some of these models feature a great Splinter camouflage paintjob.



◀ The troops of the Waffen-SS were well-trained, well-equipped, and rightly feared as dangerous adversaries. This squad wears a patchwork of standard uniforms and various pieces of detailed camouflage. Pea-dot and Oak-leaf camouflage, in particular, present a great challenge for the painter.

▶ By 1944, the Allies had bottled up most of the German Navy. In 1945 the first Kriegsmarine troops fought against the approaching Allied armies, many still wearing their naval uniforms and blue-grey leathers.



◀ In the desperate days of April, 1945, the Germans pressed the old and the young into service in defense of Berlin. Scrounged Heer and SS uniforms mixed with Hitler Youth and civilian clothing, giving the Volksturm its rag-tag appearance.



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PAINING YOUR GERMAN TANKS



1 Much like the infantry, once the tank was assembled we undercoated it with AP Uniform Grey. Once the undercoat was dry, we used a large brush to apply the basecoat - VMC Middlestone. We thinned the paint a little to ensure it went on smoothly, so we had to apply two coats for a solid coverage. If you have an airbrush and are painting quite a few vehicles, you could spray on your basecoat.

2 The next step was to apply the green camouflage pattern. There are many, many variation of patterns for the German 'three-colour camo', as the camouflage was applied by crews in the field. We chose a striped pattern for our tank.

If you have an airbrush, you could apply the camo stripes with it, but we chose to use a technique called 'stippling'. Using an old brush with a blunt end, repeatedly jab the bristles at the tank to create a soft edge to the colour you are applying.



3 Here's how our tank looked once we'd applied both the green and brown camouflage stripes. For the green we used VMC Reflective Green and for the brown we used VMC Chocolate Brown.

4 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.

When you are applying decals to complex rounded surfaces - like the hatches on the sides of the turret of this Panzer IV - we recommend you use a decal softener (such as Micro Sol).



5 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.

Once the varnish 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.



6 Once the wash was completely dry, we noticed that some of the yellow areas were too dark (a side effect of the wash) so we went back and highlighted them with VMC Middlestone. We then gave the entire tank a light drybrush of VMC Middlestone, to tie the colours together, followed by a very light drybrush of a 50/50 mix of VMC Middlestone/VMC Pale Sand.

7 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 Hull Red 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 this step.



8 Almost there! We then painted everything that wasn't going to remain in 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.

Any metallic areas were highlighted with a 50/50 mix of AP Matt Black/AP Gun Metal. The axe handle was painted with VMC Beige Brown, and the rubber on the road wheels was highlighted with VMC German Grey.

9 If you want to take your German tanks one step further, you can do as we did, by applying a thin wash of VMC Red Leather over the tracks to give them a worn and rusty look, well used in the field, with little time for thorough maintenance.



THE COMPLETED PANZER IV AUSF G

And finally...

To give it the 'slogging around Europe, seeing lots of action' look we drybrushed a mixture of browns onto the tracks and undercarriage of the tank, simulating a coating of mud.

VARIANTS OF GERMAN TANKS



◀ In the early stages of World War II, as the Germans unleashed their Blitzkrieg across Poland and France, the German tanks (such as the Panzer II shown here) and support vehicles were painted in a dark, utilitarian grey. Later in the war the Panzer divisions were required to repaint their tanks in the field.

▶ Some camouflage patterns were painted on with brushes, some with mops, and others were sprayed on. The Hetzer Tank Destroyer pictured here has been given a soft edge "sprayed-on" camo paintjob, and would certainly fit right in prowling the fields in summer on the Eastern Front.



◀ The camouflage on this King Tiger has been deliberately toned down to focus on the zimmerit (anti-magnetic coating) that has been applied to prevent the enemy from placing mines on the tank. The rough texture also makes it great for using techniques like washes and drybrushing.

▶ When the weather turns cold and the snow starts to fall, different approaches were taken to deal with the changing camo needs of tanks. This Panther's crew has added zig-zag lines of whitewash directly over their standard camo scheme, to help break up the outline of the vehicle.

