

SOVIET ARMY



Even before Germany launched Operation Barbarossa in 1941, the Red Army had been fighting for years - in the East against Japan and in the West against Finland. Recent purges of the army's leadership by Stalin before the German invasion had, however, left it floundering and initially unable to deal with the modern organization, strategies, and tactics of the Blitzkrieg style of warfare. Without strong and creative leaders, the Soviet army could only rely on three things to slow, and eventually stop, the advancing Germans: the vast size of Russia, the massive amount of weapons and ammunition the Russians could produce, and the incredible size of the Russian population - millions of whom held a rifle in defence of their Motherland.

This Painting Guide will provide you with a step-by-step guide to painting the basic rifleman of the Soviet Red Army and perhaps one of the most innovatively designed tanks of the war - the T-34. In most circumstances, the colour schemes presented here were used by the standard infantry from 1941 through to the end of the war in 1945. This scheme can also give you a good starting point for many of the other specialist infantry units the Soviets deployed.

Following the step-by-step painting guides, you'll find a collection of other units from the Soviet 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 SOVIET 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 Grey over the uniform tunic and trousers. This was followed by VMC Russian Green for the helmet. We then painted the face and hands with AP Tanned Flesh, a good base colour for Caucasian skin.

3



We painted the webbing and pouches with VMC Khaki, and the bag on his back with VMC Tan Earth (bedrolls use the same base color). Then we moved on to the wooden stock of the rifle, painting it with VMC Beige 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 Khaki Grey, then the helmet with VMC Russian Green. The hands and face were highlighted with AP Tanned Flesh.

6



In order to help it stand out a little more from the equipment, the uniform was highlighted again with a 70/30 mix of VMC Khaki Grey/VMC Pale Sand. The webbing and pouches were highlighted with VMC Khaki and the bag was highlighted with VMC Tan Earth. Finally, the skin was highlighted with a 50/50 mix of AP Tanned Flesh/VMC Basic Skintone.

7



The next step was to paint the boots, helmet strap, and metal areas with AP Matt Black. Not only does this create a great base for any metallics you will use, but it also helps to tidy up the model.

8



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 tip of the rifle barrel, were given a little dab of AP Gun Metal. At this point we painted the eyes and gave the boots and helmet strap a quick highlight with VMC German Grey.

PADDED UNIFORMS



Quite a few of the models on the Soviet Infantry sprues are wearing the telogreika - the quilted jacket and trousers worn by many Russian soldiers. They paint up in the same way as the uniform in this guide, and the quilted 'ribs' will stand out as great places for your highlighting.

LOADERS



There are quite a few squads in the Soviet army list that can field light machine guns, along with their loaders. Don't forget to make sure that for each DP-28 LMG in your squads you have a rifleman with the oversized pouch to carry the ammo drum. These pouches can be painted just like the rest of the webbing.

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 LIGHT MACHINE GUN SQUAD



This completed Soviet Light Machine Gun Squad (using the squad listing on page 24 of Armies of the Soviet Union), has the minimum five men, including an NCO with a submachine gun and a soldier with a light machine gun.

VARIANTS OF SOVIET UNIFORMS



◀ These models are part of a Soviet command group and they are primarily uniformed much like our infantryman. The sniper on the right, however, is wearing a two tone, dark green camouflage coverall.

▼ The only thing these Soviet engineers have in common with our infantryman, uniform-wise, are the helmets and boots. Trained to get up close to destroy enemy fortifications, these engineers are wearing camouflage coveralls and steel body armour, painted in the same green as their helmets.



◀ This Scout squad is very lightly-equipped and ready to blend in to their surroundings in these camouflage coveralls. It seems that these forerunners to the Spetsnaz had a bit of freedom in choosing their uniforms.

▶ As the German army advanced into Russia, the Soviet fleets were trapped in various harbours. This freed up many Red Navy sailors to fight on land. Their distinctive black/dark blue uniforms and caps helped them stand out from the rest of the Red Army, earning them the nickname of 'the black death'.

▼ Throughout Eastern Europe, behind German frontlines, partisans supported by the Soviet Army kept German security battalions on their toes. This partisans unit exemplifies the rag-tag look that a lack of uniformity brings.



PAINTING YOUR SOVIET TANKS



1 We assembled the T-34/85 as per the instructions. Much like the infantry, once everything was ready, we undercoated it with AP Uniform Grey. Once the undercoat was dry, we used a large brush to apply the basecoat - VMC Russian Green. 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 certainly spray on your basecoat.

2 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.



3 We let the wash dry thoroughly and then drybrushed the entire tank with VMC Russian Green.

4 We then followed up with a light drybrush of a 50/50 mix of VMC Russian Green/VMC Dark Sand, concentrating on picking up 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 has dried and were fully secured in place, we applied a coat of VMC Satin Varnish over them, to cut back the glossy appearance.

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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 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.



8 Any metallic areas were highlighted with a 50/50 mix of AP Matt Black/AP Gun Metal. In several of the chipped areas we added some small dabs of AP Gun Metal, to simulate additional wear. The rubber on the road wheels was highlighted with VMC German Grey. We then went over the tanks with some thinned VMC Red Leather, painting thinned streaks here and there, as well as giving the tow cables a wash, all to add to the weathered feel.

9 We wanted to go for a "Spring" look, with much of the Winter camouflage washed or worn off, so we applied thin washes of VMC Pale Grey to the appropriate areas - towards the bottom of the armour panels and on the underside of the turret, fuel tanks and so on.



THE COMPLETED SOVIET T-34/85

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 SOVIET VEHICLES

► This massive KV-2 tank has been given a thorough whitewash for fighting in snowy conditions. With such a large, blocky turret, the tank would certainly benefit from blending into the winter's sky, or snow-covered fields.



◀ This IS-2 has a fairly standard paintjob, with the exception of the large aerial recognition cross on top of the turret and the broad white band around the side of the turret.



► Here's a T-34/85 like the one we painted for this guide, but still in its winter whitewash. As was quite typical for Soviet tanks, the tank markings and patriotic slogans are not whitewashed over.



▼ The Soviet Army made great use of Lend Lease vehicles from the U.S. (a modified M17 haltrack shown left) and Britain (a repainted Universal Carrier shown right) and unless they were forced into combat early, the Soviets would repaint the vehicles. Many crews also took the time to adorn their new vehicles with patriotic slogans.



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