

## **PAINTING MINIATURE FIGURES in 7mm**

*By Ray Hensher*

### **Simple things first**

The size of brushes is important. I use for this task size 2 or 3 for just about everything; don't go down to silly sizes like 0, 00, or 000 unless you have to for eyebrows or lips. Sometimes a sharpened matchstick will be useful. If the brushes are fairly new they will come to a fine point.



I painted all the braid on the postman's uniform with a size 2. A use nylon brush all the time, the Artist Acrylic brush is a special type which is very good, but more expensive. I get my brushes from "The Works" (<http://www.theworks.co.uk/>): they seem to have branches all over the country. Keep the brushes upright in water as soon as you finish a section, and wash thoroughly using soap and water after painting, squeezing the brush gently to form a point.

You rarely have to paint with the tip of a brush except for fine details like a gents tie or eyes etc. Paint with the side of the brush near the point most of the time.

### **Paint**

I prefer Acrylic artist paint for these Figures, and I use "The Works" paint as it's cheap and quite good. Not as good as the Artists Quality from art shops, which is £5 or so for a tube, but we are not painting landscapes etc. I haven't used the Acrylics available from model shops, it would be expensive to get all the colours I would need, and I don't know how well they would mix together. Humbrol enamels are good, I used to use them all the time but the acrylic colours seem to be stronger, they dry quicker and I like the finish more.

When painting with Acrylic you have to let each coat get fairly dry before painting over it, you cannot use the "wet into wet" technique successfully. Don't aim to paint the whole figure at once; it is useful to paint more than one figure at a time so you can do them in stages. You do get a slight "satin" sheen with these paints, but if you want a flat matt finish a coat of Humbrol "Mattcoat" applied when the figure is totally dry, say after two days, will do the trick.

### **Colour mixing**

It's not possible to teach this in just a few paragraphs, but I will describe some principles. Don't paint the figure with the colour as it comes out of the tube, mix the colour you want on the palette. For example, you need to paint a black coat on the figure. This will never be just black in real life, it will pick up reflections, light etc. So I pick some black and will add, say, a tiny bit of ultramarine blue, or a little brown or even red to the mix, and before painting with it add a miniscule amount of white. This will make it more opaque and will also show the true colour of the mix. This is easier to demonstrate than explain!



## Some mixes

When mixing colours, start with the shade colour that you want. If you want a bright yellowish green, start with yellow first and add small amounts of blue until you get the right shade. If it's too bright you can add a little white to reduce the power, or you could add a tiny bit of red to change the colour.

These are just a few suggestions of basic mixes.

<u>Green</u>	Yellow + Blue, tone down with Red or Brown
<u>Grey</u>	Black + White, tone down with Red or Blue or Yellow
<u>Mauves</u>	Blue + Red, tone down with Yellow or Brown
<u>Dark Colours</u>	Ultra Blue + Burnt Siena (Brown), tone with anything Black + Brown + Blue, tone with anything.
<u>Skin</u>	Skin tones are often quite brown. Start with White and add a little Red, then Brown in tiny quantities.

Finally, only add water if the paint gets "sticky" otherwise paint from the palette colours direct into the mix.

Wash out the brush and dry it before adding a different colour to the mix.

***Ray Hensher***