

Weathering Demonstration

Introduction

These notes are particularly aimed at kit builders but you can do the same thing with ready-to-run models from the likes of Hornby or Bachmann, all you have to do is pluck up the courage to attack that pristine model that you have just brought home from your local model shop.

General

First build your chosen model and then paint and apply suitable decals; remember that often it is better to paint the model as you build it to make sure that all the partially hidden details will be correctly coloured when the model is viewed. Even at this stage you can make a real difference to your wagons by “thinking” about the paint job, wooden wagons often had a plank replaced and it is very likely that this plank will not be the same colour as the rest of the wagon; the same goes for plywood sided vans - a new ply panel in a slightly different shade of bauxite - but don't fall into the trap of making all your wagons the same - they won't be.

Next apply the decals, it is a common mistake for modellers to not apply decals to kit built wagons - I'm particularly guilty of this. A good source of decals for Parkside Dundas kits is Model Masters, they have a good range that covers almost all the Parkside range. Cambridge Custom Transfers also produce suitable transfers but these come as one sheet which covers one wagon of each type in the range. Some notes on decal application follow.

You are now in a position to start on the weathering. To get a realistic finish it is a good idea to build up the weathering in layers and remember - don't try to rush things. As an example, for a planked wagon it is a good idea to address things like the recesses between the planks before going on to overall weathering so that the dusty appearance is applied on top of the blackness between the planks; do it the other way round and you will have stark black lines on top of dust which will look wrong.

Finally, don't forget that unless the wagons live in a fixed rake they will all exhibit different amounts of dirt and grime; don't fall into the trap of adding exactly identical amounts and patterns of weathering to all your wagons - it may look gucci but is just plain wrong. Modern Image Modeller? That rake of freightliner flats can all have the same degree of “dust” applied because they are a fixed rake but you then mix in filthy, moderate and the odd pristine containers.

Want some inspiration? This site is well worth a visit: <http://paulbartlett.zenfolio.com>.

Specific notes about decal application

A common problem with decals is that they are applied on top of moulded body detail and don't “snug down” to follow the contour of the underlying body of the object to which they have been applied. A number of products are available to overcome this, probably the most easily obtainable is Humbrol Decalfix.

Put a little Decalfix into a tray, cut round the decal and place it and the backing sheet into the liquid. Once the liquid has soaked into the backing sheet and the decal moves freely paint decalfix onto the area where the decal is to sit; next apply the decal and once you are happy with its positioning leave it to dry overnight, this will allow the decal to draw itself down into the space between the planks and so on. If you get air bubbles under a decal once it has dried rewet it with decalfix and massage it with a cotton bud, this will allow you to free the trapped air.

Enamel Washes

Coat the completed and painted model in Humbrol Clear, this is an acrylic gloss varnish which will aid the enamel washes to flow more efficiently into the gaps between the planks. Spot the washes where you want them to run into the recesses between the planks and let them run, clean up afterwards with a cotton bud soaked in Enamel Thinners. On completion coat with appropriate varnish and allow to dry before moving on.

Applying Weathering Powders

1) **Adjustable Method.** Mix powders to suit with water and decal fix to make a paste, paint on. once painted on and dry this mixture can be reactivated with wet (water) brush to adjust degree of weathering (this is a function of using decal fix). Can use a moistened cotton bud to clean off the top of raised detail - c/f floor in back of landrover.

2) **Permanent Method.** Mix powders to suit with Matt Cote + Enamel Thinners to make a paste, paint on. This gives you a longer working time for the mixture but it can't be reactivated by a wet brush. It sometimes helps to coat the surface to be weathered is pre-coated with Matt Cote and enamel thinners, then the mixture of slightly more dilute Matt Cote and weathering powder is then spotted into the surface coating before it dries. These methods are particularly good for applying rust.

3) **Dry Method.** Brush dry powders on to model with a brush (separate brush for each powder used to avoid contamination of individual colours). White and smoke is a good combination. Once satisfied with overall effect use a wet brush (tap water) to introduce streaks to the dust colour, make them vertical, they run from any fixture on the top of the vehicle; this represents rain staining.

Use darker colours for the underframe and running gear.

Make oil streaks from Clear and Smoke/Dark Earth powders, mix to a translucent paste, apply in vertical streaks, this dries to gloss finish.

Fix down with a "mist coat" of dry acrylic spray varnish.

Distressing a mineral wagon - A practical project

Mineral wagons have a particularly tough and unpleasant life, they are subjected to all sorts of abuse as they are loaded and unloaded and as a result their paint was frequently damaged with rusty metal showing through. It is much easier than you think to achieve this appearance.

For small areas of rust

- Prepare a mixture of 50/50 Matt Cote and Enamel Thinners on a pallet and apply some of this as a base coat over the portion of the wagon to be treated.
- Next mix some Iron Oxide, Rust and Dark Earth into the remaining dilute Matt Cote – if you do it in three separate areas you can create a variety of effects.
- Tap small amounts of these mixtures into the still wet dilute matt cote on the wagon, the mixture will “run” or “blend” into the base coat.
- Painting Enamel Thinners over these spots will further “blend” the rust into the overall surface.
- When dry (but not cured) streaking can be introduced by dipping a brush in enamel thinners and drawing the rust spots vertically down. The thinners reactivate the Matt Cote and pull the rust spots in the direction of the brush strokes – hence vertical movements in the direction of gravity – downwards only.

This method is shown on the Humbrol YouTube channel film on weathering the Hornby Railroad 08 locomotive.

For larger areas of rust (and on 0 Gauge models where larger rust areas are needed)

- Apply a basecoat of 50/50 Matt Cote and Enamel Thinners in small sections to the wagon.
- Before each section dries stipple in powders of Iron Oxide, Rust and Dark Earth, clean away from data panel with cotton bud wetted with thinners.
- Mix up a grey from acrylic black and white, thin with Decalfix (to allow reactivation), paint 2 thin layers on to just cover the underlying “mess”. Set aside to dry.
- Next paint on water to weaken (reactivate) the Decalfix in the paint and then scratch the grey paint with a cocktail stick.
- Next paint enamel thinners over the scratches in the grey paint, the underlying rusty effect will start to bleed through the paint.
- Painting water over the now exposed areas will dilute the thinners and arrest the bleed-through process.
- Once happy with the effect you have created paint water over the whole model to arrest any further bleed-through and mist-spray with matt acrylic varnish when dry.

This method is shown in the Humbrol YouTube channel film on weathering rolling stock

You can now go on to go on to complete some more “standard” weathering. Once finished the whole can be fixed with a mist of acrylic matt varnish

Weathering a van - A practical project

Paint the completed wagon as desired, don't forget that odd planks (or ply panel) can be replaced and might not be the same colour as the rest of the van.

Coat with Humbrol Clear, spot some dark Enamel Wash into the spaces between the planks, make sure that the whole length of the plank is covered. Once dry clean up the points where the wash was applied with a cotton bud soaked in enamel thinners. Next coat with spray matt varnish to fix everything in place.

Also using Enamel Washes highlight any high points on the vehicle – look for pictures of PALVANs on Paul Bartlett's Zenfolio pages for examples.

Now apply some "dusty" weathering to represent brake dust and general grime, apply to both the body and the roof. Also dry brush some powders onto the chassis and highlight the high spots with washes. Fix again with spray matt varnish.

Chalk marks can now be applied on top of all the weathering, suitable ones available from Model Masters (including COND and the "don't turn the wheels" marks).

Mortar courses on Buildings

Paint bricks first, then coat with Humbrol Clear. Apply enamel washes into mortar lines, dust colour and dark brown allowed to run into each other. Apply black and/or dark green at base of wall to simulate rising damp. Fix with spray matt varnish.