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Beginner Painting tips for Memoir 44 Infantry

I'm not a great painter, so the paint job on these Infantry units I did for Memoir 44 are an attempt to capture some of the colours and effects that I had in mind when I designed the custom pieces.

In this guide I will show how to paint the British Infantry with Grassy Bases (also available with just plain bases if you prefer), but you can use the same techniques on any of the units I have designed. You just need to use appropriate colours.

There are lots of paint ranges made specifically for painting miniatures but they are basically acrylic paints. I used some old citadel paints.

The basic steps I follow are as follows

- 1- Grey, Black or White Primer
- 2- Plan your colours
- 3- Base coat (main colours of the parts of the model)
- 4- Ink Wash (to add the shadows)
- 5- Highlight (Dry brush raised areas)



If you would like further inspiration then you can find many other examples of painted models on our website — <https://www.meepleforge.com/gallery-index/>

Also there are other paint guides available here — <https://www.meepleforge.com/painting-guides/>

1 – Primer

I prime my models using a black automotive spray primer which you can pick up from most car parts shops. Black is good as it can stay black primer in hard to reach areas and it just looks like shadows on the final paint job. A full can will be enough to spray maybe 50 models. When using a spray primer like this don't do it indoors as you should not be breathing in the fumes/paint from the paint can.

2 – Plan your colours

Before you start painting it helps to have an example of what you are painting to help plan your colours. For the British Infantry have a look at the computer render that I did to see what colours I have used there. This computer render shows the model with a plain base not the grassy one that I ended up actually painting.



You can see the basic colours are as follows (my paint choices are in brackets)

- Chaos Black for the boots, and base coat of the rifle bayonet and grenade
- Brown (Swamp Brown) for the wooden parts of the rifle and leather straps
- Light brown (Snake Bite Leather) mixed with the green to make a basic Khaki colour for the uniform
- Yellow (Badmoon Yellow) to make lighter greens for the final drybrush on the grass
- White (White Scar) to lighten the base colours when drybrushing
- Silver (Chainmail) for all the metal parts
- Light Green (Striking Scorpion Green) for highlights and drybrushing the grass.
- Dark Green (Ork Flesh) for base coat of the grass.
- Skin Colour (Eldar Flesh) for the skin colour and to mix with a little snakebite leather to use for the backpack and other webbing



I used a couple of brushes – Size 2 for the most large areas, Size 1 for smaller areas and an old Size 2 for drybrushing.

I also use a plastic takeaway lid to mix my paints on when I want a lighter or darker version of the colour. I also use the pallet to thin my paint before applying. It can be a bit of trial and error before you know how much water to add, but I will sometimes only want a little water and will shake most of it off the brush onto the paper towel before I use the wet brush to thin the paint.

2 – Base Coat

Here's my photo after applying the base coat



Applying the base coat is probably the hardest bit. As you are trying to stick within the edges of the items you are painting.

I suggest starting with the largest areas and using a medium brush so for these infantry I started painting using the Green and painted the grassy base all around trying not to get any paint on the other areas.

Repeat the base coat technique for the other main colours. If you accidentally get colour on the wrong part then you can try wiping it off with a paper towel while its still wet, or more likely just over paint it with the correct colour once its dried.

Next I painted the uniform with a Khaki mix made from about 4 parts Snakebite leather and 1 part Ork Flesh. Make sure to mix this thoroughly on the pallet and thin using water if needed.

Next I painted the Swamp Brown onto the wooden parts of the guns and leather straps.

Then I mixed a nice light colour for the backpack and webbing straps using about 2 parts Eldar Flesh and 1 part Snakebite Leather.

Paint the hands and face with Eldar Flesh – you will need a small brush for this.

Again using a small brush use black to paint the boots and metal parts of the guns, bayonet and grenades. Then the hair can be whatever colour you want, but I found it easy to just use black.

3 – Ink Wash

The ink wash is the part of the process that adds shadows and depth to the base coat. Its so easy to do and gives great results on these models. Before you do the ink wash you should let your base coat dry for a couple of hours (if you don't let it dry thoroughly you might find that the ink wash mixes with the base coat below and simply merges into a dark version of the underlying colour which will then spread across the model as you move the brush).



This is what I refer to as an ink wash. Its like very thinned down paint that you use to add shadows and pick out detail on your models.

The Ink wash that I have used is called Nuln Oil and is part of the Citadel paints.



To add your ink wash just grab a brush 2 or 3 size and apply the wash liberally to over all parts of the base coat. Put plenty on, it should run off the highest parts of the models and run into the lower parts of the model. Have a look at the uniform on the left, you can clearly see where the nuln oil has settled in the recesses to provide convincing shadows under the belt and just below the jacket.

Then let this dry for a few hours.

4 – Highlight

Then the final job is to highlight the raised parts of the model. This will then give you 3 versions of each colour which range from dark in the lower sections to a mid range colour in the mid sections and a light version of the colour on the highest areas of the model.



To highlight I use a technique called Dry Brushing. To Dry Brush you need an old brush (as this process will damage your brush over time). The technique is to load the brush with a little bit of paint and then to wipe off the paint onto the paper towel until hardly any paint is left on the brush. Until the brush is almost dry. Then you drag the brush across the raised areas of the model that you want to highlight.

So to highlight the grass on the base I used Striking Scorpion Green to highlight 60% of the raised surface leaving some of the earlier Ork Flesh green and the shadows from the ink wash. I then lightened my green using a 50/50 yellow and green mix which I used to highlight only the very raised parts of the grass.

When Drybrushing I load the brush and then wipe most of the colour off onto the paper towel until the time when I dragged the brush over the paper towel and hardly any of the paint was left on the brush. This is something you will get a feel for over time.

Once most of the paint is removed from the brush then I dragged the brush over the raised areas. In this case I start around the back in case I still have too much paint as it doesn't matter so much around the back. Then drag the brush over the raised areas. The effect you are looking for is to have a light colour on the raised parts of the model only – you are not trying to colour the entire section with this lighter paint. While you are painting it you might think that the shade you have chosen is too light but in my experience that's what you need at this final stage of the paint job.

Use the same dry brush technique to highlight the uniform (a light mix of Snakebite Leather and Eldar Flesh), the wooden rifle (mix of Swamp brown, Snakebite Leather and white) and the backpack and webbing (a mix of Snakebite Leather and Eldar Flesh).

Note : if you can't reach some sections of the webbing straps, that probably because those sections should be in the shadows anyway so just don't highlight those sections :-)

I sincerely hope that you like these Infantry models and armed with this painting guide feel able to try painting them for use in your games of Memoir 44.

If you would like any samples to test your painting techniques on then I'm more than happy to include a couple of mis-prints / chipped models so that you can try out the painting techniques discussed above. Just message me via ETSY when you place an order and ask for a couple of models to test paint. :-)

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Thanks

Andy

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