

Hints and Tips -

Colour Guide - US Infantry

By Michael Farnworth

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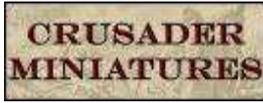
U.S. Infantry



Crusader figures painted by Mick Farnworth

Artizan and Crusader figures are fully compatible and can be mixed in the same unit. Figures may be selected from both ranges can be used for the major campaigns.

Item	Colour	Vallejo Model Colour
Helmet	Brown Olive	Brown Violet 70.887 (or see notes - US Dark Green 70.893)
Helmet Front Strap	Brown	Mahogany Brown 70.846
Helmet Cover	Brown Olive	Brown Violet 70.887
Wool Hat	Khaki	US Field Drab 70.973
Scarf	Khaki	US Field Drab 70.973
Greatcoat	Khaki	US Field Drab 70.973
Jacket M1941 Blouson	Beige	German Camo Beige 70.821
Jacket M1943 4 pocket	Brown Olive	Brown Violet 70.887
Jacket Mackinaw	Beige	German Camo Beige 70.821
Shirt	Khaki	US Field Drab 70.973, English Uniform 70.921, Flat Earth 70.983
Webbing	Sand	Iraqi Sand 70.819, Dark Sand 70.847
Webbing (variant)	Beige	German Camo Beige 70.821
Webbing (variant)	Pale Green	Deck Tan 70.912, Pastel Green 70.885
Pistol Holster	Brown	Mahogany Brown 70.846, Flat Brown 70.984
Trousers Wool	Khaki	US Field Drab 70.973, English Uniform 70.921, Flat Earth 70.983
Trousers Wool (variant)	Tan	US Tan Earth 70.874, (GW Snakebite Leather)
Trousers HBT	Dark Green	US Dark Green 70.893
Trousers HBT (faded)	Pale Green	Deck Tan 70.912, Pastel Green 70.885
Anklets / Gaiters	Beige	German Camo Beige 70.821
Boots	Brown	Mahogany Brown 70.846, Flat Brown 70.984



Introduction

This guide will help you to quickly paint units of soldiers to look good on a war games table. Uniform notes, paint references and painting tips are included.

Historical Notes

Uniform

American forces were issued with a wide variety of garments. Jackets can be very confusing. The M1941 jacket was a waist length blouson with two diagonal welted pockets. The M1943 jacket was a thigh length jacket with four cargo pockets. The Mackinaw Jacket was a thigh length winter jacket with two diagonal welted pockets.

Colours for items made from Herringbone Twill HBT are very difficult to describe. These cotton garments started out as dark green but faded to pale grey green.

Metal items were painted in Olive Green Drab. In the early years of the war, this was a brown shade (Vallejo Brown Violet 70.887) but from about 1943, the colour became more dark green (US Dark Green 70.893). My personal preference is to paint helmets, ammo tins and bazookas with US Dark Green 70.893.

Squad Organisation and Equipment

Insignia

Many units wore the US flag on their right shoulder and their unit badge on the left shoulder. Company B make waterslide transfers for these badges and symbols.

NCOs had a horizontal white stripe on the back of the helmet. Officers had a vertical white stripe on the back of the helmet.

Painting Tips

Bases

It is worth deciding on the rules that you are going to use before you start to base and paint the figures. For WW2 skirmish games, most rules suggest individual bases. Some rules suggest 25mm diameter bases and some suggest 20mm diameter bases. Mass battle games often specify multiple bases to represent regiments.

Plastic bases (e.g. Slottabases), wooden bases, washers or coins are all suitable. 20mm steel washers can be used with magnetic bases so that the figures can be adapted to many different sets of rules.

With heavy weapons, it is nice to make the base into a small diorama. Dependant on the size and shape of the weapon, you can use circular bases, rectangles or irregularly shaped bases. Large plastic and wooden base are available from many wargame suppliers. For circles, you can use such as mini CDs and CDs. With CDs, the flat side is the one with writing. Build some ground onto the base using epoxy putty, and then cover with sand and grass.



To make casualty removal during game play easy, this base has a removable figure. The loader is mounted on a 20mm steel washer. The base has a 19mm self adhesive magnet from Litko. When the large base was made, the washer was held in place on the magnet whilst the putty was built up to the edge. Then the washer was “wiggled” and removed before the putty set, leaving a circular hole. Similarly, the gunner was “wiggled” and removed for painting.

Painting Step by Step

There are many ways to paint 28mm figures. Many people paint the clothing with a dark shade then the main colour and then a highlight colour. For wargaming, where you want to get reasonably good results quickly, it is easier to paint only the main colours and then add shade with a wash of dark transparent stain.

Here is a basic assembly and painting sequence for typical world war 2 soldiers. This method is designed for painting about 20 figures at a time. It is always a good idea to do a practice run on 5 figures first. The painting sequence is designed so that minor mistakes can be corrected at the highlight stage. There is no need to correct minor mistakes as you go along.

1. Remove mould risers, mismatch, and flash. Mould risers are typically found on hands, elbows, feet and weapons. Sometimes they can be flicked off with a fingernail but usually tweezers or needle nosed pliers are needed. Occasionally they must be filed away with a needle file.
2. Sand the base flat. Easiest way is to place a sheet of coarse sandpaper on a workbench. Hold the figure firmly and vertically in your right hand and push it over the sand paper. Two or three strokes should be enough to give a flat base. The base is flat when the underside is covered in scratches from the sandpaper.
3. Glue the figure to a base. If you are going to use individual bases, this will be the final base. Use cyanacrylate adhesive (superglue) for a permanent bond. If you are going to use multiple bases, use a coin as temporary base so that you can hold the figure for painting. For temporary bases, use PVA glue, as it is easy to remove later.
4. If you are using slotted bases, glue on some small squares of thin plastic card to cover the slot.
5. Using epoxy putty (e.g. Milliput), blend the figure base into the base.
6. Prime and undercoat the figure. This can be done with brush on enamel paint (e.g. Humbrol Matt Black) or with a spray paint (e.g. GW Chaos Black Spray). For plastic figures spray undercoat usually works well. Metal figures often need touching up afterwards as the spray rarely reaches into the recesses. A black undercoat is usually easiest as it also acts as the darkest shade. I used GW Chaos Black Spray.



TIP - It can be difficult to get the spray paint on the under surfaces of the figure. A simple method is to lay the figures on their side on a paper and spray. When the paper has dried to matt black, turn the figures over and spray again. Then stand the figures upright and spray from all sides.

7. To get a good base to work from, I damp brushed (i.e. a heavy dry-brush using damp paint) the figures with khaki mixed with black. Next, I did this again with the khaki. This gives a very quick shading effect.
8. Paint the hands and face with a basic flesh colour (GW Tallarn Flesh or a mix of GW Dwarf Flesh and



Elf Flesh is a good base coat for flesh). Highlight with a quick damp brush of a lighter flesh tone (e.g. GW Elf Flesh).

9. Paint the jacket according to the colour in the list. (If in doubt look at the uniform notes)
10. Paint the base in brown
11. Paint the boots and rifle stock in brown.
12. Paint the backpack, canteen and gasmask bag in khaki green.
13. Paint the metal parts of the weapons with a mix of black and steel.



14. Shade the whole figure a dark wash applied with a brush (Army Painter Strong Tone or Vallejo Transparent Smoke 70.939 or GW Devlan Mud Wash).

TIP - Army Painter Strong Tone worked very well. Be careful not to let it pool too much. I prefer the result from a brush as the results from a dip is rather dark. Dipping is also very messy. Note that Army Painter is also an oil based gloss varnish and needs at least 24 hours to dry.



15. Using a fine brush and dilute paint, paint the eyes as a horizontal white dash.
16. Dot the eyes with black or dark blue. A cocktail stick can be used instead of a brush. You can also do this with a fine gel pen.
17. Varnish with a spray of gloss varnish to protect the figure. This is not necessary if you have used Army Painter Strong Tone. After this has dried overspray with matt varnish.

18. Decorate the base. The easiest way is to paint on PVA glue and dip the base in sand. I glued on the sand in two stages. The first time, I covered the upper surface of the base with PVA and dipped it in sand. Once the first stage was dry, I added more glue and sand to make sure that the step left by the plastic base was hidden. Once the glue is dry, shade the base with a brown wash mixed with a little PVA glue. This also fixes the sand.
19. Highlight with a pale sand colour (GW Bleached Bone 61.17) lightly dry-brushed onto the sand. Painting sand will destroy an artist's brush in minutes, so use a cheap pig bristle brush.
20. Touch up any mistakes and add highlights as desired. The collars were painted with white = signs to simulate Wehrmacht insignia.
21. Add static grass if you want to.

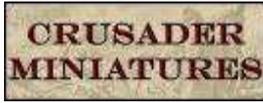


Crusader figures painted by Mick Farnworth



Artizan figures painted by Mick Farnworth





Further Reading

Books

General

Andrew Mollo: **The Armed Forces of World War 2** (Little, Brown and Company)

This book is a very useful overview of uniforms and insignia. There are 250 colour drawings and 100 photographs which cover every nation involved in WW2. The original 1981 version is a large format book. There is an A5 reprint that does not include the Eastern front.

Andrew Mollo et al: **Army Uniforms of World War 2** (Blandford)

This book is similar to the one above but with a completely different set of illustrations. This was originally published by Blandford in 1973. This one is also available as a combined 1981 volume called "World Army Uniforms Since 1939". It is worth investing in both Mollo books.

Chris McNab: **20th Century Military Uniforms: 300 Uniforms from Around the World** (Grange Books PLC)

This book is similar in style to Andrew Mollo's books and has many of the same illustrations.

Osprey books are also very good but there are several which touch the subject, so it is difficult to recommend one item.

Osprey **Men at Arms 350 US Army in WW2 Part 3 North West Europe** is possibly the most relevant.

America

Richard Windrow & Tim Hawkins: **World War II GI: US Army Uniforms, 1941-45** (The Crowood Press Ltd)

A very useful book with colour photographs showing original uniforms and equipment.

Websites

TMP The Miniatures Page

<http://theminaturespage.com>

TMP is a news forum and discussion site for miniature wargaming of all types. It has a large and active membership and good trade support. It is probably the first site with industry news and new product releases. The forums (Message Boards) are superb and most questions will get useful answers within an hour or two. The Message Boards can also be searched so that you can look up previous threads on a subject.