

Airbrush Armour

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Leopard 1A3/A4 **BIG CAT COLOUR**

The Airbrush
Armour Series

AIRBRUSH ARMOUR

SCALE MILITARY
78
MODELLER



Model Master Light Grey
#1728



Model Master Olive Drab
#2147



Model Master Black #2740



Model Master Buff #4805



Using an Airbrush is one of the most effective methods of applying camouflage and weathering to your model. In this series, sponsored by

MODEL MASTER



KIT DATA

Leopard 1A3/A4

Manufacturer: Meng-Model

Scale: 1:35

Kit Type: Plastic injection moulded with etch

Kit Number: TS-007

Testors we hope to provide you with both inspiration and information on how to produce both simple and complex effects. In this feature Keith Forsyth adds a 'well worn' look to the recent Meng-Model Leopard 1A3/A4.

Meng-Model

The build begins in tried and trusted fashion with the lower hull, fitting all the suspension and return rollers on both sides. The suspension arms follow and these are designed in such a way that the actual suspension is flexible, which is great for those of us who want to eventually place the model on a base. The rear of the lower hull is a separate piece with a few smaller parts to be added, and here I found the sprue attachments for these smaller pieces were quite large so more than a little care was needed to remove them before gluing them into place.

With the lower hull now put to one side, work began on the upper hull. Included in the kit are a number of etched pieces that refine some of the detail, including the mesh for over the engine

intakes. In fact the kit in fact gives you two engine intake options depending if you are building the A3 or A4 variant. The back of the lower hull was then added and the upper hull glued into place. This was held together with masking tape until it had all dried in order to give a solid base for all of the coming details.

So beginning with the front the lights, various parts were added, and the driver's periscopes are in a clear plastic and are just glued in place along with their etched protective covers. Work then moves around one side of the hull adding the parts as you go, and with one side complete, the other side was tackled in a similar fashion with just a couple of items being added to the rear of the upper hull.

Putting the hull to one side, work began on the turret. The barrel has been produced using the 'split method' rather than as a single-piece, which means it needs a little bit of careful cleaning and joining so as not to produce a 'flattened look'. Luckily the barrel is covered with a heat jacket, making it a little easier that it could have been. With

the barrel complete, work moved onto the turret itself, which has quite a simple construction with just a top, bottom and rear section to put together. The details were then be added, with a couple of options available for the aerial arrays. The turret hatches can be either open or closed as options are given for both, and care is need with the instructions so that the correct details are added depending upon which version you are building.

With everything built it was time for painting. I left the wheels and tracks off, which meant I had to leave the side skirts off as well, and this was going to be a problem, as for some reason they have part of the front skirts moulded onto them, so adding them during the painting and weathering stage was going to be a pain! I b21471711, as this was a closest match to the colour I was trying to achieve. Once dry this was followed by a coat of satin varnish before the various decals were added.



The plastic arm for each suspension piece runs through the hull to a locating notch on the opposite side, allowing for movement

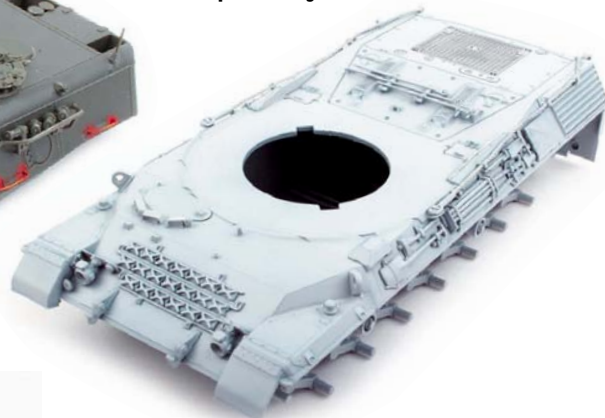


The upper and lower hulls were glued and taped together, and note the fine etch of the engine grilles

The 'split-moulded' barrel needs care when finishing



Model Master Light Grey #1728 provided a good base.....



The completed turret, and the smaller hand holds were added using copper wire

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....and this was followed by Model Master Black #2740 as a pre-shade



Model Master Olive Drab #1711 was a closest match to the colour I was trying to achieve



Pigments were used to create a worn, used look

Another coat of satin prepared the model for some weathering, and this began with a sepia oil wash to add more definition to the shadow areas, and also to give a nice 'dirty' look to the paint work. This was then left overnight to dry.

Model Master Buff #4805 was then sprayed over the lower hull to give a matt base for the weathering. Next a mix of various pigments was created in a pot and this was added to the lower hull over a coat of pigment fixer. This causes the pigments to dry in various shades of colour and gives them a natural look. The same mixture was then added to the wheels before they were pushed into place on the suspension arms. With the side skirts now in place some AK Interactive weathering products were

used to create a dirty look, these products were blended and then flicked and streaked to create a variation in dirt.

With the sides complete, work began on the top, and this was done using oil paints, with small dots of paint placed randomly around and then blended together to create a dusty dirty look. Using dark dusty colours helps in this respect. Pigments were then added in places where they would naturally appear, and these were

blended to create a tonal variation, and to break-up the overall olive drab scheme. The turret went through the same operation slowly building up the various colours and effects until a dirty used appearance was created to match the lower hull. Finally some of the finer details were picked out using various Model Master shades, and some carbon fibre aerials and headlight lenses completed the look. [SMM1](#)



The rear aspect showing what can be achieved with a little patience