

## Weathering and detailing

**Weathering**, or the “dirtying” of vehicles requires as much thought and research as time spent on the model itself.

The main point to remember when weathering a model is that more “dirt” can be added but is more difficult to take off.

If you have completed a vehicle using layers of matt paint and Klear, you should have a model that looks in as new on the road condition.

The first stage is to decide what you want to achieve and photos of an actual vehicle in a working environment are essential for this.

Until the mid-‘70’s, vehicle washing equipment, even in the larger fleets, usually amounted to a hose pipe attached to a tap and at best, a commercial size wash brush. Pressure washing equipment was virtually unknown so vehicles gradually acquired a patina of traffic film, which would be consistent with its working environment, so think about where your model would have operated.

For example, a cement bulker or petrol tanker will have traces of the load on top; a quarry vehicle may be covered in mud from the wheels down, flour mills and cement works coat everything in white dust, whilst spray from trunk roads and motorways is thrown up from the wheels at speed.

The leading edges of fuel tanks, rear mudguards, tool/equipment boxes would usually have the body colour obliterated by road dirt and the rear end of box vans and tankers attracted dirt that would swirl up at the rear as would the rear cab panel on articulated vehicles.

### **Paint; materials and method of application**

Various methods have been suggested by the contributors to this sheet, including airbrushing, water based acrylic paint and oil based with thinners. I have seen good examples of airbrushing using a thinned light grey sprayed from the bottom upwards which effectively simulates road dirt.

Personally, I have tried thinning water-based acrylics but have found they puddle rather than spread thinly over the required surface. I obviously need further instruction with this method because I have seen very effective examples applied by other modellers.

I use a mix of Humbrol matt black, red and yellow thinned to an almost transparent wash and apply to the vehicle especially to wheels, chassis frame and lower cab and body panels, before allowing to dry. This will dull the paint to achieve a patina and enhance the detail of door shuts, chassis and body detail, spring hangers, etc.

Next, a slightly less diluted mix of the same colours should be applied to the leading edges of fuel tank, rear wings, etc. When the first dilute mix has dried, apply a second equally dilute mix to the rear panels of the vehicle and the rear cab panel of an artic tractor unit. I believe cab windows should be left relatively untouched because even drivers with little regard for their vehicle’s appearance tended to keep windows clean, if only for self-preservation to see where they are going.

### **Tamiya Weathering Master**

These weathering aids are quite effective for localised staining. There are a number of packs available each with three shades in each pack. For example, sand, mud, rust, oil, soot, etc. and come with their own dry brush and sponge. I currently use sets A, B and D, each with three different tones, plus brush and sponge for dry application.

**Detailing** can make all the difference to a model. Here are a few tips, in no particular order.

**Entry steps:** The step on top of the mudguard by the driver's door, or on some vehicle the separate step, gets worn. Using a soft lead pencil, rub along the ridges, which would become worn due to wear and tear. Then buff with a cotton bud. This method can also be used on ladder steps on tankers and rear door handles of box wagons, tailboard pins, etc.

**Diesel stains:** Vehicles were usually filled to the top until overflowing, when the fuel started running down the outside of the tank. This leaves a shiny dark stain below the filler cap.

**Exhausts:** A patch of black was quite often seen behind the exhaust pipe – this should be painted using a matt black paint but quite sparingly, or Tamiya Weathering Master.

**Cab roof:** These were used for all manner of things and were subject to wear, especially at the rear of the roof where the graphite treatment with the soft lead pencil again becomes effective.

**Timber:** Most general goods vehicles had timber somewhere on them for chocking of loads. Kitchen matches can represent this. Cut off the head and apply suitable material to age them.

#### **Reference:**

Best material I have found is from Military Model Makers but the techniques apply equally to civilian vehicles. These books may be out of print now but it is always possible to find copies at fairs or even on websites.

Military Modelling.

Stan Catchpol's Modelling Workshop.

This may now be available from the publishers again.

Kalmbach Books. Modelling Tanks and Military Vehicles also How to Build Dioramas.

Both by Shepherd Payne.

Published in the USA but were available in the UK.

Many thanks to both Reg Davis and Mike Wedgwood-Benn, whose valuable contributions have assisted in compiling this advice sheet.