

Model Painting Tips with Humbrol Enamels

There's no hard and fast answer I'm afraid. It's taken the author over a year to get to the point where their brush painting doesn't make them want to throw the model away.

You'll get the usual responses, and they are worth remembering, as they are the foundations of good brush painting.:

1. Stir the paint like your life depends on it. Use thinner to break down the lumps.
 2. Multiple thin coats
 3. Wide Flat Sable brush
 4. Allow paint to cure between coats
1. Beyond this, I can offer these tips:
1. Don't bother with Gloss paint. It's almost impossible to brush. Find a Matt or Satin version, and use Klear to get a gloss finish.
 2. Thinning - I use Humbrol Enamel Thinners in the large round tin. Works perfectly for me. Thin your paint substantially. I find around 60/40 in favour of paint for most Humbrol enamels. This may be more than a lot of people advise, but it is key to getting a smooth finish. If the paint is too thick, you will end up overworking it and creating more brush marks. Most colours won't need more than 3 coats, even when thinned this much.
 3. Don't overload the brush. If you take too much off the brush, you can always go back for more. If you lay down too much, you end up overworking it.
 4. Don't go back!! Try not to brush over the same spot twice. It will only end in tears.
 5. Sand and buff between coats (This is important)- If you thin suitably, then the only brush marks you should worry about are streaks in the paint. These will go away as you build up the layers. In between coats, allow it to fully cure (some take longer when it comes to Humbrol i.e. I know that Hu65 takes 12 hours, but Hu155 takes up to 36 hrs. It's all down to experience, every paint is different.) Once fully cured, GENTLY sand with wet 1200. Use plenty of water and this will help avoid cutting into the paint. Be very very gentle with it, especially around leading edges and raised detail. Follow this by buffing with a piece of old denim or cotton cloth.
 6. Once you've buffed the last coat, it may not look 100% perfect. This is where I rely on Gloss coats, weathering, decals and the all important final Matt Coat. These things can hide a multitude of sins.
 7. The final Matt/Satin/Gloss Coat (Very important)- After trying every brushable Matt Coat under the sun, I have given up and use a Humbrol Rattle Can. Trust me, get this right and any final brush marks will vanish. If you can brush a Matt Coat, more power to you, but it's totally beyond me. Same goes for Satin. If you are going for a Gloss finish, then Klear brushes fine for me, but again, a Rattle Can Varnish would be best for the final Coat.
 8. Oh, and don't bother brush painting White, Yellow or NMF on large surface areas. These are the only times I use a rattle can for painting, much as I loath it. I try to avoid these as much as possible.