

Body Painting Tips

by **PROTOform**

What You'll Need - Supplies



- Dish soap
- Clean cloth or paper towel
- Fine steel wool, or SOS pad
- High quality masking tape (3M)
- Permanent marker
- Straight and curved scissors
- Sharp hobby knife
- Pencil
- Lexan compatible paint
- Homemade wheelwell template
- Window masks, Decal sheet, wing mounting hardware

Step 1: Wash your body



To remove any residue left on the body after molding, you must wash it inside and out. Use warm soapy water in your sink, just as if you were washing the dishes after dinner! Pay special attention to the tight curved areas and corners. Dry the body with a clean towel or hair dryer. It must be completely dry before you paint it.

Step 2: Cut off the wing



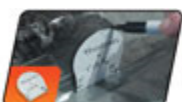
If your body came with a wing or spoiler molded into the excess material, you must cut it off. Some wings are molded in the opposite direction of the body. If this is the case you must remove the protective film, and paint the reverse side.

Step 3: Marking the Body Posts



Drop the body over your chassis, and use a permanent marker to mark the position of the body posts. Center the body over the chassis, checking the wheels in the wheel wells, and also the width.

Step 4: Marking the Wheels



While your body is over the chassis, you can also mark the wheel wells. Touring car and on-road bodies sometimes have no rear wheel well outlines, this give you freedom to make a perfect fit for your chassis. A great tip is to make a wheel well template, and use it to trace 4 identical wheel well shapes. They can be made from either scrap lexan, or cardboard. (See next page)

Step 5: Window Masks



Apply the window masks inside the body, and press down all the edges to keep paint from sneaking under. When the body is painted the masks will be removed to give you clear windows. Use the molded in window lines as a guide for placement of the masks.

Step 6: Scuff the Body



An optional step is to scuff the inside of the body with either fine steel wool or an SOS pad. This will help the paint to stick to the body. Be careful to not scuff to hard, and to also not scuff the areas you want to remain clear. Clean the body of any steel wool flakes.

Step 7: Draw Your Design



Use a permanent marker to draw your design on the outside of the body. Be creative, but keep it simple if you are a beginner.

Step 8: Mask Your Design



Apply masking tape to the inside of the body, covering the design you have drawn. Seal all the tape edges.

Step 9: Cut your Design



Using a sharp hobby knife cut the masking tape along the marker lines. If you cannot see the marker through the tape while cutting, hold the body up to the light, or use a pencil to retrace the design onto the inside of the tape. Take your time cutting, and be careful with the sharp blade!

Step 10: Finish Masking



Once you have the masking tape cut out to your design, peel away the excess. Again check that all the edges of the tape are firmly pressed down. Masking in a dark-to-light painting order will give you the best results, so that no dark paint will bleed through lighter or thinner paint.

Step 11: First Coat



The first coat is really important. Painting a light first coat will seal all the edges around the tape, and will give the rest of your paint a secure hold on the body. Once the paint is completely dry, apply second and, possibly, third coats. When your first color is painted, peel away the masked design, and paint the next color. Use a hair dryer to speed up drying time, and always work in a well ventilated area.

Step 12: Detail It



Now it's time to detail your finished paint job! Apply the decals, and use a permanent marker to outline the windows and other trim details. Cut closely around the headlights, grill, taillights, logos, etc. with a sharp blade or scissors. Also, now you can remove the window masks.

Mount the Body



Use a set of quality straight scissors to trim the lower body lines, and curved scissors to cut the wheel wells. This is where your template markings come in handy. Use a small amount of fine sand paper to smooth the wheel wells, or if you're pretty handy, you can also use a Dremel tool with a sanding drum. Cut the rear wing/spoiler, and mount it with the included screws and nuts.

Painting Tips from the Pros!

- Use lexan compatible paint only (Recommend brands: Faskolor, Pactra, Tamiya, Alclad II)
- when using spray cans, submerge can in warm tap water for a few minutes before painting. DO NOT heat the can in microwave or oven, and use only warm (not hot) water as paint is highly combustible.
- back light and flourescent colors with white paint, and candy or transparent paint with silver or gold.
- apply paint in 2-3 light thin coats, rather than 1 thick coat
- check all the masking tape and window masks before applying paint to make sure no paint will sneak under anywhere.
- use denatured alcohol or "body wash" products to remove any unwanted marker after you have finished painting. Be sure to not use paint thinner or acetone, as it is too harsh and can damage the lexan.
- take your time, rushing only slows things down in the end!