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# 5 steps to paint FANTASTIC FACES

Finish figures like a pro – in minutes!

BY JIM WECHSLER

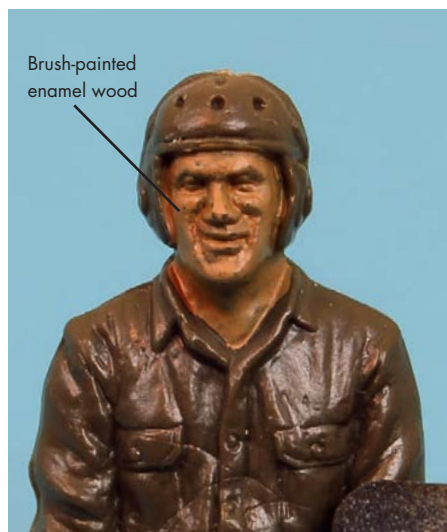
Jim added crew to AFV Club's 1/35 scale M5A1 Stuart with Verlinden, Alpine, and S&T figures – all precisely painted with Jim's quick-and-easy face-painting technique.



**T**hough I don't consider myself a figure painter, I love to put figures on my armor models. A finely painted figure provides armor with a sense of life, historical context, and, in some cases, scale. Conversely, a poorly painted figure can mar the best of models.

I've never had a problem painting military clothing, which is often captured with the same colors as armor. It's the figure's face, vital to the success of a model, that's trickier to depict.

I've tried a lot of face-painting techniques, many of them complicated and time-consuming. So I came up with a five-step technique of my own: It's easy to learn, quick to use, and works on all types of figures. I'll walk you through the steps with a 1/35 scale Tamiya plastic figure. Then, pull out those unwanted kits and practice – you'll be painting like a pro in minutes!



### STEP 1: Base coat

After you've painted the rest of the figure, brush-paint (don't use an airbrush!) the face with Model Master enamel wood. Flesh-tone colors work well on civilians, but they're usually too pink for war-weary soldiers. Don't worry about completely covering the face.



### STEP 2: Dry-brushing

Next, I pick out highlights with Model Master enamel tan, which contains a hue of pink perfect for this application. With very little paint on the brush, drag it over the high spots: lips, brow, cheeks, jaw line, and the bridge of the nose.



### STEP 3: Detail painting

Using Model Master enamel Italian dark brown, I draw a fine line along the brow to represent the eyebrows, then mark a tiny dot on the eyes. A word of caution: You're better off without a dot than with a pupil that's too big! Don't use any white on the eyes – it's much too stark and creates bug eyes.



### STEP 4: Flat coat

I give the entire figure a flat coat by airbrushing Testors Dullcote. To get the most mileage out of the airbrushing session, I flat-coat my latest armor project at the same time.

### Figures & armor online

At [www.FineScale.com](http://www.FineScale.com), you can purchase "Paint modern military figures" (click on "Downloadable articles") and view a gallery of Jim's models (click on "How-to Articles").



### STEP 5: Pinwash

Finally, I apply a pinwash, using a mix of about 20 percent Winsor & Newton raw umber oil paint and 80 percent Mona Lisa odorless paint thinner. I'm not a stickler about ratios, as long as the mixture is really thin and runs well. After dipping the brush in the wash, I lightly touch crevices and recesses; the wash naturally runs in and adds depth to the face. If I apply too much, I use a tissue to lightly dry the brush, then touch the puddle with the end of the brush to soak up excess wash. **FSM**