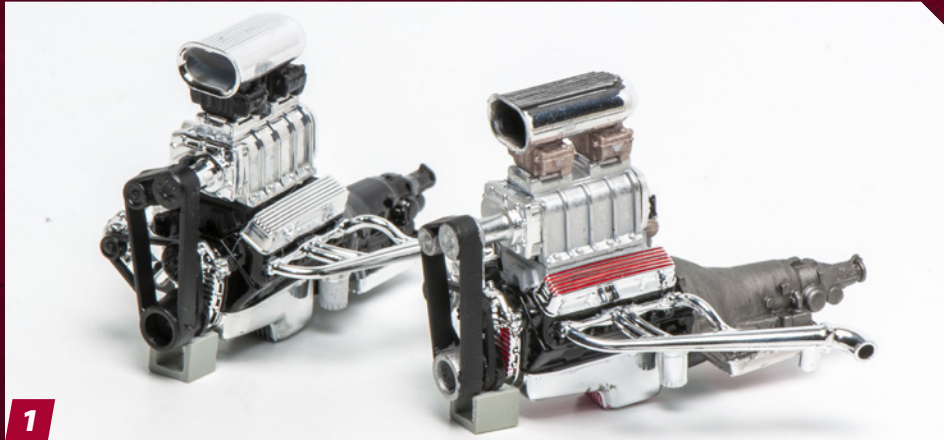


SNAPSHOT

DETAIL PAINT A MODEL CAR ENGINE

DETAIL-PAINTING A SCALE MODEL CAR OR PICKUP ENGINE makes a quick and straightforward way to add visual authenticity under the hood. Even without plumbing or wires, painting your engine will improve your model's overall appeal. Here are some helpful tips!

By Tim Boyd



Automobile engines are not generic in appearance, nor are they only chrome and black like this engine on the left. Comparing these model kit engines, note the wider range of colors and finishes on the one on the right. Which one looks more accurate to you?

1



2

Many automobiles up to the late 1970s wore specific brand and engine family colors (front row). Research the correct colors for your specific engine (via the internet, books, and magazines) and cross-reference to make sure your information is correct. Some paint companies provide colors close to the most popular engine colors.



3

For accuracy, nothing beats engine paint aerosols for 1/1 vehicles. You can find them at your local auto-parts store, car dealer, or, yes, on the internet. Warning: Automotive paint is not cheap, but a can could easily last for a lifetime of model car building.



4

The clear, vibrant chrome plating in modern kits often appears unrealistic on scale engines (left). You can use Tamiya Semigloss Clear (No. TS-79), center, or Flat Clear (No. TS-80), right, to tone down parts like these supercharger blower cases.



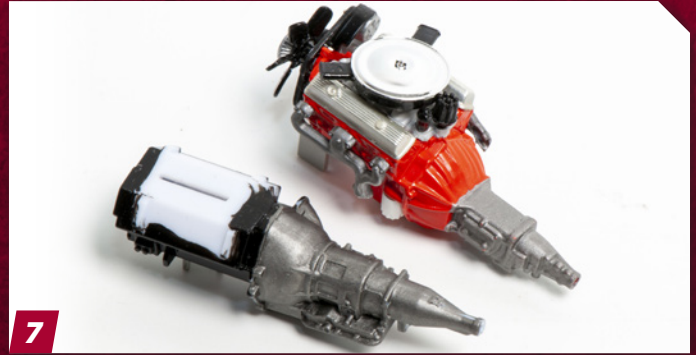
5

Engine accessories wear a wide range of colors and finishes. To expedite painting, keep several jars of slightly different pre-mixed paints in shades of silver, gray, and gold. I paint the lids with each color and add a big C (for custom mix) to easily reference and distinguish them from my regular paint colors.



6

Engine fan belts are always flat black, but fan-belt pulleys can be semigloss or gloss black, silver, chrome, or the same color as the engine block. Carburetors typically appear golden; starters, semigloss black; oil filters, white; and alternators, silver. Ignition coils are often black, but sometimes yellow on certain older Ford engines.



7

Instead of just one color for both the engine and transmission, you can provide more interest by painting the transmission silver or metallic gray. Sometimes you'll see a manual transmission bellhousing painted the same color as the engine block (right) or it might have a slight overspray of the engine color (not shown).



8

Even silver-painted engine parts can be individualized by using topcoats of (from left to right) flat, semigloss, or gloss. While the effects appear subtle in the photo, the difference can add considerable visual interest to a finished scale engine.



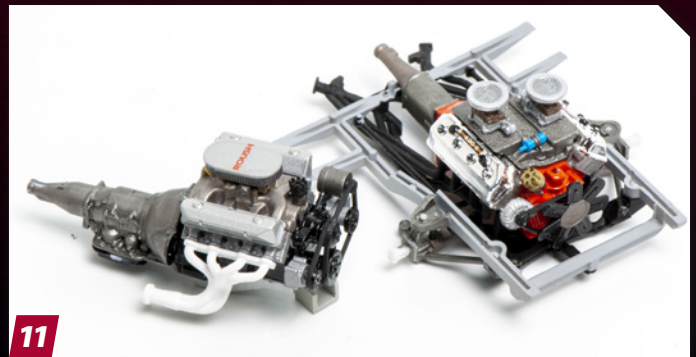
9

Factory-stock intake manifolds are often the same color as the engine block, while racing or aftermarket manifolds are usually aluminum. Simulate the latter with silver paint followed by flat clear; Vallejo Dark Grey (No. 70.994), right, works well, too. Exhaust manifolds are usually iron or metallic gray. You can add a mist spray of the engine block color for overspray (as shown here) or specks of rust-colored paint. Conversely, racing and hot-rod engine headers are most often flat white, flat black, or silver.



10

Hot rod and street machine engines often include aftermarket valve covers, front covers, oil pans, and transmission pans with finned surfaces. Builders add paint to the recessed surfaces between the fins. Flow thinned enamel or acrylic paint between fins to replicate this effect. Remove excess paint with a toothpick or soft cloth.



11

While American factory-stock and racing engines from the mid-20th century are typically colorful and chromed (right), modern 21st-century engines tend toward monochromatic colors, little or no chrome, and varied sheens of gloss like the Pro-Touring/G-Machine engine (left). **FSM**