

Hints and Tips –

Step by Step – The Pacific War

By Mick Farnworth

May 2010

Unites States Marine Corps



Brigade Games Miniatures figures painted by Mick Farnworth

<u>Item</u>	<u>Colour</u>	<u>Vallejo Model Colour</u>
Helmet	Brown Olive	US Dark Green 70.893
Helmet Front Strap	Brown	Mahogany Brown 70.846
Helmet Cover Brown	Sand Khaki Spots Brown Spots	Iraqi Sand 70.819, Dark Sand 70.847 English Uniform 70.921 Flat Brown 70.984
Helmet Cover Green	Pale Green Khaki Spots Brown Spots Green Spots	Deck Tan 70.912, Pastel Green 70.885 English Uniform 70.921 Flat Brown 70.984 Luftwaffe Camo Green 70.823 or Russian Green 70.894
Webbing (variant)	Beige	German Camo Beige 70.821
Pistol Holster Uniform HBT	Brown Grey Green	Mahogany Brown 70.846, Flat Brown 70.984 Green Grey 70.886 (or 33% US Dark Green 70.893 and 67% Pastel Green 70.885)
Anklelets / Gaiters Boots	Beige Brown	German Camo Beige 70.821 Mahogany Brown 70.846, Flat Brown 70.984

Notes

Uniforms

The Brigade Games figures are wearing utilities which were first issued in 1941 as a work uniform. These were made from Herringbone Twill HBT are very difficult to describe. These cotton garments started out as dark sage green but faded to pale grey green. When I asked for paint recommendations on TMP, Meryl Rutz (Sundance), suggested Green Grey 70.886, which works well.

Metal items were painted in Olive Green Drab. Army helmets were a brown shade (Vallejo Brown Violet 70.887) but the Marines had a dark green. My personal preference is to paint helmets, ammo tins and bazookas with US Dark Green 70.893.

The Brigade Games figures are wearing USMC camouflage M-1 helmet covers. Adopted in 1942 this cotton reversible helmet cover was used by the Marine Corps in the Pacific. These two-sided reversible covers have three colours of tan/brown on one side and a four colour pattern of green/brown on the other.



In theory, Marines wore sand coloured leggings (gaiters), but photographs show that most simply wore their trousers loose.

Insignia

Rank insignia was seldom worn in combat situations in the Pacific. Utility uniforms had "USMC" stenciled in black above the Eagle, Globe and Anchor emblem on the left shirt pocket.



Brigade Games Miniatures figures painted by Mick Farnworth

Hints & Tips –Pacific USMC Step by Step Guide

Copyright Mick Farnworth - farnworth@bluewin.ch

February – May 2010

Painting Step by Step

There are many ways to paint 28mm figures. Many people paint the clothing with a dark shade then the main colour and then a highlight colour. For wargaming, where you want to get reasonably good results quickly, it is easier to paint only the main colours and then add shade with a wash of dark transparent stain.

Here is a basic assembly and painting sequence for typical World War 2 soldiers. This method is designed for painting about 20 figures at a time. It is always a good idea to do a practice run on 5 figures first. The painting sequence is designed so that minor mistakes can be corrected at the highlight stage. There is no need to correct minor mistakes as you go along.

1. Remove mould risers, mismatch, and flash. Mould risers are typically found on hands, elbows, feet and weapons. Sometimes they can be flicked off with a fingernail but usually tweezers or needle nosed pliers are needed. Occasionally they must be filed away with a needle file.

TIP – With TAG USMC, check the area between the left arm and torso for flash. Also check the back of the neck.

2. Sand the base flat. Easiest way is to place a sheet of coarse sandpaper on a workbench. Hold the figure firmly and vertically in your right hand and push it over the sand paper. Two or three strokes should be enough to give a flat base. The base is flat when the underside is covered in scratches from the sandpaper.
3. Glue the figure to a base. If you are going to use individual bases, this will be the final base. Use cyanacrylate adhesive (superglue) for a permanent bond. If you are going to use multiple bases, use a coin as temporary base so that you can hold the figure for painting. For temporary bases, use PVA glue, as it is easy to remove later.
4. If you are using slotted bases, glue on some small squares of thin plastic card to cover the slot.



5. Using epoxy putty (e.g. Milliput), blend the figure base into the base.
6. Prime and undercoat the figure. This can be done with brush on enamel paint (e.g. Humbrol Matt Black) or with a spray paint (e.g. GW Chaos Black Spray). Metal figures often need touching up afterwards as the spray rarely reaches into the recesses. A black undercoat is usually easiest as it also acts as the darkest shade. I used GW Chaos Black Spray.

TIP - It can be difficult to get the spray paint on the under surfaces of the figure. A simple method is to lay the figures on their side on a paper and spray. When the paper has dried to matt black, turn the figures over and spray again. Then stand the figures upright and spray from all sides.

7. To get a good base to work from, I damp brushed (i.e. a heavy dry-brush using damp paint) the figures with dark green. Next, I did this again with 50% dark green, 50% grey green. For the last coat, I used grey green.

8. Paint the hands and face with a basic flesh colour (GW Tallarn Flesh or a mix of GW Dwarf Flesh and Elf Flesh is a good base coat for flesh). Highlight with a quick damp brush of a lighter flesh tone (e.g. GW Elf Flesh).
9. Paint the helmet either sand or pale green. Add spots as described in the list.
10. Paint the base in brown. Then paint the boots, rifle stock, and holster in brown.
11. Paint the backpack, canteen, scabbard and ammo pouches in beige.
12. Paint the metal parts of the weapons with a mix of black and steel.
13. Shade the whole figure a dark wash applied with a brush (Army Painter Strong Tone or Vallejo Transparent Smoke 70.939 or GW Devlan Mud Wash).

TIP - Army Painter Strong Tone worked very well. Be careful not to let it pool too much. I prefer the result from a brush as the results from a dip is rather dark. Dipping is also very messy. Note that Army Painter is also an oil based gloss varnish and needs at least 24 hours to dry.



14. Using a fine brush and dilute paint, paint the eyes as a horizontal white dash.
15. Dot the eyes with black or dark blue. A cocktail stick can be used instead of a brush. You can also do this with a fine gel pen.
16. Varnish with a spray of gloss varnish to protect the figure. This is not necessary if you have used Army Painter Strong Tone. After this has dried overspray with matt varnish.
17. Decorate the base. The easiest way is to paint on PVA glue and dip the base in sand. I glued on the sand in two stages. The first time, I covered the upper surface of the base with PVA and dipped it in sand. Once the first stage was dry, I added more glue and sand to make sure that the step left by the plastic base was hidden. Once the glue is dry, shade the base with a brown wash mixed with a little PVA glue. This also fixes the sand.
18. Highlight with a pale sand colour (GW Bleached Bone 61.17) lightly dry-brushed onto the sand. Painting sand will destroy an artist's brush in minutes, so use a cheap pig bristle brush.
19. Add static grass if you want to.



Books

General

Andrew Mollo: **The Armed Forces of World War 2** (Little, Brown and Company)

This book is a very useful overview of uniforms and insignia. There are 250 colour drawings and 100 photographs which cover every nation involved in WW2. The original 1981 version is a large format book. There is an A5 reprint that does not include the Eastern front.

Andrew Mollo et al: **Army Uniforms of World War 2** (Blandford)

This book is similar to the one above but with a completely different set of illustrations. This was originally published by Blandford in 1973. This one is also available as a combined 1981 volume called "**World Army Uniforms Since 1939**". It is worth investing in both Mollo books.

Chris McNab: **20th Century Military Uniforms: 300 Uniforms from Around the World** (Grange Books PLC)

This book is similar in style to Andrew Mollo's books and has many of the same illustrations.

Richard Windrow & Tim Hawkins: **World War II GI: US Army Uniforms, 1941-45** (The Crowood Press Ltd)

A very useful book with colour photographs showing original uniforms and equipment.

Osprey Books

Osprey books are also very good but there are several which touch the subject, so it is difficult to recommend one item. There are at least 20 Osprey titles covering the ground war in the Pacific.

Osprey Elite 059 The US Marine Corps 1941-1945

Elite 059 is very good.

Osprey Warrior 112 US Marine Rifleman 1939 45 Pacific

Osprey Warrior 109 US Marine Corps Raider 1942 43

Osprey Men at Arms 342 The US Army In World_War II Part 1 The Pacific

MAA 342 is probably the best general book as it deals with army and USMC uniforms in the Pacific from 1942 -1945

The campaign books are generally very good.

Osprey Campaign 018 Guadalcanal 1942

Osprey Campaign 077 Tarawa 1943

Osprey Campaign 110 Peleliu 1944

Osprey Campaign 146 Marshall Islands 1944

Osprey Campaign 137 Saipan Tinian 1944

Osprey Campaign 139 Guam 1941 1944

Osprey Campaign 081 Iwo Jima 1945

Osprey Campaign 096 Okinawa 1945

Films

Flags of Our Fathers

Letters from Iwo Jima

The Thin Red Line

Windtalkers

Sands of Iwo Jima

The Pacific - HBO Series



Appendix

This post from The Miniatures Page (TMP) by Steve Green (Seattle Gamer) is quite a good overview of USMC uniforms.

<http://theminaturespage.com/boards/msg.mv?id=67883>

Since I promised to come back with a quick bit about USMC uniforms (no helpful painting guide info, but still...) here it is:

Opening Rounds (Philippines, Guam and Wake Island): Prior to the introduction of the uniform that known as utilities, the USMC had wool forest green winter and cotton khaki summer service uniforms which served as field uniforms as well. The Marines who fought during the opening phases of the war in the pacific wore khakis. The uniform was khaki, the canvas leggings were tan or khaki, the leather boots were light brown with black soles, and the web gear, pack, straps and all that were all khaki in colour. Brown leather was evident with pistol holsters and knife scabbards. They wore the M1917A1 helmet, called the "dishpan" which was typically painted forest green.

Early Assaults (Guadalcanal): By Guadalcanal the USMC had adopted both a one and two-piece cotton herringbone twill (HBT) utility uniform. These were sage green in colour. The leggings were still tan or khaki, the leather boots were tan with black soles, and the web gear, pack, straps and all that were still khaki in colour. The helmet had been replaced by the M1 steel helmet used throughout the rest of the war. This helmet was painted olive drab. Burlap and utility cloth helmet covers started to make their appearance at this time.

Next Steps (Bougainville, Tarawa): The USMC adopted a two-piece reversible camouflage HBT in 1943. Known as the "frog" pattern, the green side was dark and light green spots, and dark and light brown spots, on a pale green background. The brown side was dark, medium and light brown and tan, on a khaki background. By the time of the Bougainville and Tarawa assaults, these were in widespread use. It was not uncommon for units to wear a combination of camouflage and sage green utilities, or for individual soldiers to wear mixed components. The reversible camouflage helmet cover became widely used at this time as well. The leggings were now gone, and the boots were khaki with black soles. All of the web gear remained khaki in colour.

Later Assaults (Roi-Namur, Eniwetok, Saipan, Guam, Tinian, Peleliu, Iwo Jima, Okinawa): By this time, it appears the full camouflage look had run its course. Soldiers were mostly wearing the sage green HBTs, with the only camouflage present being the widespread use of the camouflage helmet cover and the camouflage poncho typically seen rolled up and stored over the top of the pack. Most of the web gear remained khaki in colour, though there are colour plates in a few Osprey books that show olive drab packs and the occasional olive drab pouch hanging off the web belting.

Other than the early khaki field uniforms, the rest had the words "USMC" stencilled in black above the Eagle, Globe and Anchor emblem on the left shirt pocket.

Primary source: US Marine Corps 1941-45 by Gordon Rottman (Osprey). Additional source: 20th Century Military Uniforms by Chris McNab (Barnes & Noble).