



Jerry Hawthorne's Painting Guide

Getting Started

Where to Paint

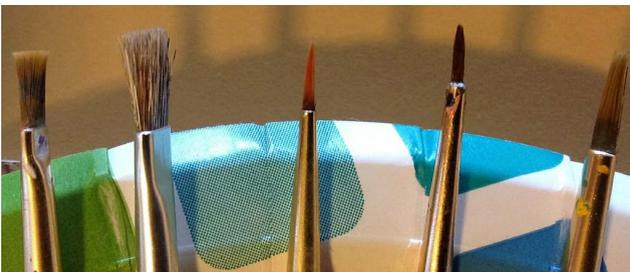
So if you have decided to paint your Mice & Mystics figures, the first thing you need to do is scope out an area of your home that has good lighting, comfortable seating, and a desk or table. I paint miniatures at my breakfast table during the day time so I can get that good daylight. You'll want a little room to spread out, and organize your supplies.

Supplies

In addition to paint, you're going to need some basic supplies for painting miniatures.

- A variety of brushes (see below)
- A hobby knife like an Xacto
- Paper plate to be used as a palette to mix paint
- Paper towel for wiping your brushes
- Plastic cup for water
- Future floor wax for making washes/inks
- Clip for holding figures
- Reading glasses for old man eyes like mine

Brushes



I use just 5 generic brushes when I paint. Some people will recommend expensive brushes, but I'm not some competition level painter, so I use cheap brushes that I throw away after a few uses. The five kinds I recommend are:

- A small flat stiff brush for detailed dry brushing
- A larger flat stiff brush for regular dry brushing
- A tiny pointed brush for details
- Another tiny pointed brush used only for metallics
- A slightly larger pointed brush for painting larger, less detailed areas and for mixing colors.

Paint

You're going to need a variety of paints. I recommend inexpensive craft paints, purchased from a local craft store. Folk Art is a good brand. More experienced painters will recommend more expensive paints. I agree the more pricey paints are much better, but if you are going to be purchasing an assortment to get started, you'll probably want to save money, and buy the craft paint. The paint colors I recommend are:

- White
- Black
- Flesh
- Dark Brown
- Lighter Brown
- Yellow
- Dark Green
- Dark Blue
- Dark Red
- Tan
- Silver
- Gold

From this assortment of paints, I mix every other color I need by combining 2 or more of the above colors. As an example, if I need a lighter blue, I put a bit of the dark blue on my paper plate palette, put a small drop of white near the blue and then use my color mixing brush to blend the two colors together, adjusting the proportions until I get the desired shade I am wanting. You should experiment with mixing your own colors. Just as an example, some of my formulas are:

- White + Black = Grey



- Dark Green + Yellow & White = Light Green
- Dark Red + Yellow = Orange
- Brown + Dark Red = Red brown
- Red brown + Flesh = Darker Flesh

You'll also need spray paint. I recommend Testors model paint in these colors:

- Flat White.
- Flat Black
- Clear Flat Lacquer

Making Inks

Sometimes, you will need to have a dark color that is very liquid and can quickly seep in and fill recesses on your figure, but do it in a translucent way to appear as a shadow. I use just 2 kinds of inks for this; a black ink and a brown ink. The process of creating these is the same. Mix equal parts water, Future floor wax, and either black or brown or a combination of both.

Prepping Your Figures

Before painting your figures, you will need to prepare them to accept the paint. First quickly wash the figures in warm soapy water to remove the oily mold release that could cause your paint to flake. Do not paint them until completely dry.

Next, use your hobby knife to trim off any bits of excess plastic that results from the molding process. Note, if you are uncomfortable with this part, just skip it. Make sure to use your large dry brush after to brush off any plastic scrapings that might be clinging to the figure.

Prime Time

Next you will want to prime your figures with a light but thorough coating of the Testors spray paint. I used white for the mice heroes and black for the minions. In hindsight, I could have put Filch and Nez in with the minions. The idea here, is that the darker colors used on the figure, the darker the primer. Since Filch, Nez and the minions are all fairly dark in color, the darker primer really helps save time.



Painting Roaches

I started my painting project by painting the roaches. These require the least amount of skill, and since it's been a while, allowed me to get the cobwebs out. I dry brushed them first with dark brown.

Dry Brushing

Dry brushing is a useful technique employed by most miniature painters looking for multidimensional results without having to employ advanced techniques. The idea is to use a dry stiff flat ended brush and with just a minimal amount of paint, you only paint the high areas of your miniature. Dip your brush in the paint, then run the brush back and forth across your paper towel until most of the paint is toweled off but enough remains that it shows on the paper towel and successfully shows the grain of the towel by only depositing on the high parts of the towel texture.

Dry brush all the roaches with dark brown by going back and forth across the figure, depositing brown paint only on the high areas of the figure. Then paint the bases in whatever desired color you choose. I chose grey. The results should look like this picture:



Finishing Touches

Next use black ink and your tiny brush to carefully darken the creases and other low areas of detail on the roaches. The ink should be quite runny allowing it to seep into the grooves.

Once the ink dries, use the lighter brown and a tiny brush to paint the outermost edges of the high spots, then mix a little tan with the light brown and just lightly paint the highest of the edges like the leg segments, antennae, and carapace edges.

I used yellow paint to put cartoonish eyes on my roaches, but you don't have to do this, and you certainly don't have to use yellow.

Finally, dry brush the edges of the bases with a lighter grey just to give texture and depth to the bases. I add a little tan to this light grey which gives the bases a dusty look.



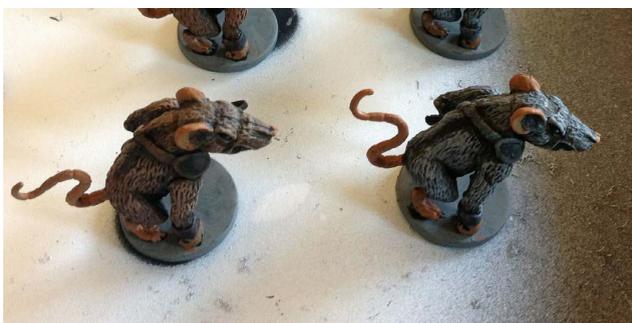
If you're satisfied with how your roaches look, spray them with the flat lacquer to seal and protect them. I applied a thin coat of Modge Podge to each roach after sealing just to give them a sheen.

Painting Rats

The process for painting rats is similar to painting roaches. I started by dry brushing 3 rats with dark brown, then again with a lighter brown, and again lightly with light brown mixed with a little tan. The other three rats were dry brushed with a dark grey followed by a lighter grey and then a light dry brushing of an even lighter grey. Having three brown rats and three grey rats really helps differentiate elite rats from regular rats while playing.



Next paint the ears, nose and tail with flesh, paint the leather straps with red brown and mix black and silver and use your metallic brush to paint the shoulder pad and cleaver with a dark metallic look, also paint the wrist band either gold or dark silver. Paint the teeth white making sure to paint each tooth using a tiny brush and leaving the dark areas between the teeth black.



Finally, use dark brown ink and a tiny brush to deepen the creases in the details. Paint the edges of the shoulder pad and cleaver using plain silver. I used an orange dot on each rat eyeball to make them look more menacing.

Finish up by painting the bases using the same colors and technique used on the roaches, and seal the figure with the flat lacquer.



Painting Large Minions

Ok, so with the smaller minions finished, it is a good time to move on to the larger minions. Before painting the large minions, I decided to look for pictures on the Internet to help me with a color scheme. I found these two pictures and used them as my inspiration:



Painting the Spider

For the spider I dry brushed the entire figure with dark grey, then again with a lighter grey. Using tan paint, I dry brushed just the top surface of the body. Then I mixed up a watery black ink and inked the entire figure except the spider's face. The ink should be thin enough to allow the previous dry brushing to show through as the thin ink just seeps into the deeper areas. I painted the eyes red using my tiny brush, added yellow to my red so I could paint bands on the legs orange. Using a clean tiny brush, I painted the fangs white.

Painting the Cave Centipede

The centipede I painted almost entirely with dry brushing and inking. First, dry brush the entire figure with dark brown. Add a little red to the brown to make red brown and dry brush again a couple of times. Mix up some orange paint using red and yellow then lightly dry brush the figure again with orange. Use black ink in the tiny brush to paint the creases between the segments on the centipede, and the joints of the legs. Use orange paint and your smaller dry



brush to dry brush the legs, feelers and the edges of the carapace. Use a tiny brush to pick out the ridges on the legs with a more yellow orange I used yellow to give the eyes a goofy evil look.

Finish the models by painting the bases using the same colors and technique employed on the other models. Then spray them with flat lacquer.



Painting Mice

So now it is time for the mouse heroes. Since I primed them in white, the technique is a little different.

Inking the Mice

The first thing I did was ink each white primed mouse. Take your tiny brush, and using black ink, outline the edges of just about every detail on the figure. Any areas that will eventually be painted black, metallic, or very dark, just go ahead and ink that whole area. Ink all the mice eyes with black ink as well. Your figures should look like this:



Note how Nez's fur is inked black and Filch is almost entirely inked.

Filling in Color

Ok, so now that the mice are inked, you can begin filling in color. Think of each figure as a 3D version of a picture in a coloring book. The outlining defines the area you should stay within. Paint each area starting with the fur and working outward. In general, it is a good idea to finish a figure's fur before continuing

outward with the color filling. When filling in the areas with color, use the darkest version of each color so that you can add highlights which we will talk about later. So if a mouse's fur will be grey, start with dark grey. Here is an example of what the figures look like during this stage:



Note how Tilda's robe was left white. Tilda's fur was painted a pale grey then lightly dry brushed with white.

Before I inked Collin with the black ink, I inked the edges of his fur with brown ink, then painted his fur tan:



Mixing tan with white and yellow, I gave Collin's fur a couple of dry brushings using the smaller dry brush.

Here we see that Nez, Filch and Lily have their fur painted and dry brushed, and some color filling started.



I like to paint the ears pink then paint the edges of the ear with flesh. I used the same technique on the tails and noses.



Highlighting and Lowlighting

Once the entire figure has had all of its areas painted in with color, it is time to add some depth. This is not very hard but really brings your figure to life. It is time consuming, but you don't need to do tons of it in order to get good results.

Lowlighting, also known as shading, is basically the art of adding a deeper darker color to a low or recessed area of the model. I use this technique to darken the folds in the figure's clothing or to define areas. As an example, I might use a darker brown to outline the edge of the flap on a brown leather pouch, or use black between Nez's fingers so you can see how he is gripping his hammer.

Highlighting is just the opposite of lowlighting. In this case, you create a lighter version of the base color and use it only on the high areas like on the outer folds in clothing.

Here's an example of the effects of highlighting and lowlighting. Note the cloaks on Lily, Collin, and Filch:



Painting the Metal

When you are done highlighting and lowlighting, you can use metallic paints to detail the weapons, tools, buckles and jewelry on the mice. I like to start by mixing black with the metallic, and painting the area first, then highlight the metallic area with the regular version of the metallic color.

Paint the Details

Next, use your tiny brush and paint the details you see that need to be picked out. As an example, Lily's arrow feathers or Maginos' pet ladybug Meeps.



If you are satisfied with them, paint the bases using the same colors and techniques used on all of the other bases, then spray your figures well with the flat lacquer.

Here is a pic of my entire finished set of Mice & Mystics figures:



I hope this tutorial helps inspire you to pick up a brush and paint your figures as well. Remember that any amount of painting, no matter the skill level, will look better than using just plain unpainted figures.

If you have any questions or comments regarding painting miniatures, join the Plaid Hat Games community forums and share tips and techniques with other players from around the web at plaidhatgames.com

