

Demonstration: Texturing Gels from Liquitex

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It can be a challenge to simulate the earth, dust and mud that accumulates on a tank and translating that to your models. Alex recently tried a method that is simple and fast but has decent results. He first read about the technique from author Steve Zaloga in his book “Modelling US Armor of World War 2.”

The technique Steve described uses a material off the shelves of any arts & crafts store, made by Liquitex and called Texture Gel. It comes in a bottle and is pre-mixed and ready to go. Different formulas exist for your texture needs:

- Black Lava
- Blended Fibers
- Ceramic Stucco
- Glass Beads
- Natural Sand
- Resin Sand
- White Opaque Flakes

Materials list:

- Paintbrushes (medium to stiff)
- Disposable cups
- Earth-colored paint or pigments
- Static grass (optional)

Begin by transferring a small amount to a disposable cup and mix in pigments or paint (acrylic) to your choice and consistency. If applied without colors it dries clear. While this is certainly a possible method, painting is a bit more challenging than adding paint to the gel first.

If you want to increase the texture you can add static grass or sand. You can also thin the mixture if needed using water. Out of the bottle it has body and will stick and hold to the surface you apply it to. If you thin it too much this quality will be diminished.

Use a paintbrush in a stippling action to apply the gel to the underside of fenders and the lower hull areas. A soft brush will not work well here, so use a brush with medium or heavy stiffness.

It dries in about 30 minutes and will be stuck to the model without worry of it coming off. It can be painted over at this point if desired.

When using this technique be sure to thoroughly coat the model, because if you don't it looks “painted” on and artificial. It might be useful to do it in several stages—waiting for each application to dry—to cover all areas.

Remember, parts in motion will throw off loose debris, so mind your wheels and tracks if you want it to look realistic.

Clean up is simple using water but do so soon after you are done.

