



General Kit & Detail Preparation

Many of our cost-effective detail parts and kits require a minimum of preparation before use. Several items retain support structures to help protect fragile parts while in storage and shipment. Here are a few tips to prepare your kits for painting and assembly:

- If the part has "strings" or "fine hairs" of plastic - use a lighter or hair dryer on high and quickly pass the part across the heat source.
- When the part has a "tree-like" support sprues - use a pair of fine cutters to cut the support about 1/8" from the part. Use tweezers or fine-pointed pliers to grasp the remaining support and rock it gently. These parts are not tightly fused to the part and will pop off with minimal effort. On some tiny detail parts, you can use the blade of a razor knife to slip behind the support and pry it loose.
- The part has a continuous base (raft) - these support delicate prints during the manufacturing process and like supports, barely make contact with the part. These can be removed by simply grasping the part and peeling the raft base back at a sharp angle. When a part (like our Ladder Cage) has both the raft base and tree supports, first peel the raft, then clip the tree support just above the raft. Remove the raft completely, then gently rock the support branches to remove them.
- Give your parts a rinse in warm (not hot!) soapy water and rinse, then allow to dry before painting. This will ensure that no skin oils from handling are present to affect paint from adhering.
- Use a good liquid solvent to glue parts together. CA is NOT an appropriate adhesive, especially for structural joints.
- If you can see layer lines – usually on rounded surfaces – you can minimize the appearance by spraying a gap-filling primer such as Rust-Oleum Filler Primer.

Other Information

Polylactic Acid plastic (PLA) used in our kits is an eco-friendly(er) product made from corn and other plant-based products and will eventually break down in landfills. It has properties similar to Styrene, which most of us have experience with.

PLA can be bonded with any good plastic cement. One thing that we suggest is when bonding structural joints (bridge sections, for example) is that you flood the joint with a good liquid solvent while the parts are clamped. Wait 5 minutes and repeat. A thicker liquid cement, such as Testors Model Master brand, is ideal for bonding small parts.

We personally use a 50-50 mix of Acetone and MEK, and thicken it by dissolving white styrene in it until we achieve the desired consistency. This can also be made very thick to fill joints on your models.

Unlike styrene, PLA type plastics will not "craze" or rapidly be attacked by solvents, so you can use a little more than you might with styrene. We don't recommend CA for PLA unless bonding to dissimilar materials.

PLA plastic is sensitive to heat and exposure to sunlight can cause parts to warp. This is particularly important for small details and kits that use fine scaled parts! You should not expose our kits or detail parts to temperatures above 55C or 130F.

We prime most of our parts with red or gray rattle-can primer to make it easier for other paints to adhere well. When painting models representing steel, we use red primer and then lightly overspray with the finish color to provide a "rust through" appearance.