

Modeling Guide for Mortarion's Wings

by Richard Gray



This is just a simple guide for preparing the wings on Mortarion by removing all of the veins so that freehand can be easily painted on.

If you don't want to paint on freehand details, or like the existing details then skip this guide and go straight to the painting videos!

First of all I will cover the tools I used. I'll explain a little about each tool as well. Don't feel that you need the exact same equipment.

*I used an airbrush to apply the base colours, this is optional.



First of all you will need some clippers! I've used Tamiya Sharp Pointed Slim Jaw Side Cutters. Note, these are for plastic only, don't use them on metal wires etc. as you will blunt the fantastic cutting ability. Games Workshop do their own version of the plastic cutter, but it is slightly offset to prevent parts from springing away. The downside of this is that it doesn't give you a flush finish. These are perfectly flat on one side, so when you cut with them you get a smooth cut very close to the model, making cleanup much easier.

Various manufacturers do variations of both types of clippers, but for the purposes of this guide the flat side clippers are much better as you get much closer to the surface of the wings, and cutting off the detail is the whole point here!



Next up is a scalpel. I have used a Swann-Morton version, I think Games Workshop use a custom design with the same blades as these. This version is a lot cheaper though!

Feel free to use any scalpel you want. A thinner blade is better as it will allow you to get easier access to the details. As the model is plastic you don't need a big, chunky blade. A new blade will cut better and require you to exert less pressure, meaning you are less likely to slip and cut yourself.



Next is Tamiya Extra Thin Cement. This stuff is magic! It is good for sticking models together and softening join lines or even completely hiding them. I'll go over the use on the wings later, but for general modeling this is a fantastic product.



You will need some fine grain sand paper. The make doesn't matter but I just happened to have this one. You can also use some heavier grain paper for the first rub down. Fine grain sand paper is a great addition to files as it allows you to get into hard to reach areas and concave surfaces that files would struggle with.

Very fine grain sand paper is also extremely useful for sanding water effect resin before giving it a gloss coat so that it gives a crystal clear finish.

Next on the list is primer (see below). I have used Vallejo Surface Primer Grey, which is actually very pale grey. I didn't want a dark primer as the wing is going to be flesh coloured and I wanted the option to make the colours vibrant. The grey would allow a strong, bright colour that could be easily shaded if needed.

I use Vallejo Surface Primer as it is easy to get hold of and goes nicely through an airbrush. It isn't an ideal primer though as you can't sand it, if you have the option I would strongly recommend Halfords car primer (UK only).



Finally, below are shown the paints I will use to get the wing ready for freehand. They will be airbrushed on. Three of the paints will also be the main colours used on the freehand, to keep that fleshy theme consistent.



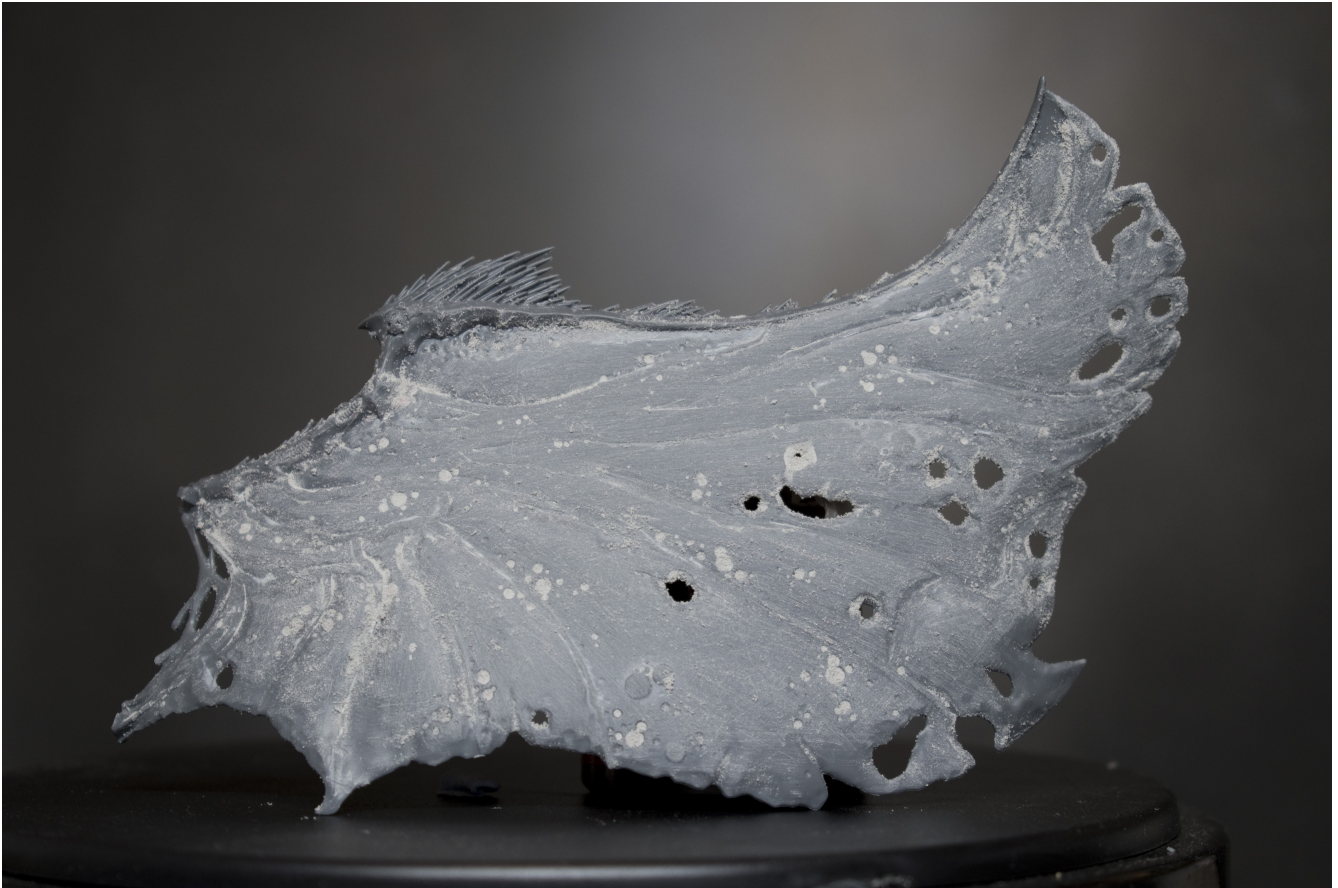
Above you can see the wing after it has been clipped from the sprue and had mould lines removed. You should note all of the detail that will need to be removed, this also applies to the back of the wing as well!



This photograph shows the rear of the wing and also the first stage of the detail removal. I have used the clippers and scalpel to cut off all of the veins. It is quite a long and laborious process, but it is much better to cut these details off than just try and sand them flat with sand paper, which would be both messy and very time consuming. The reason I didn't use an electric tool like a dremel is that it risks destroying areas, removing too much plastic and even melting the plastic due to heat generated from friction.

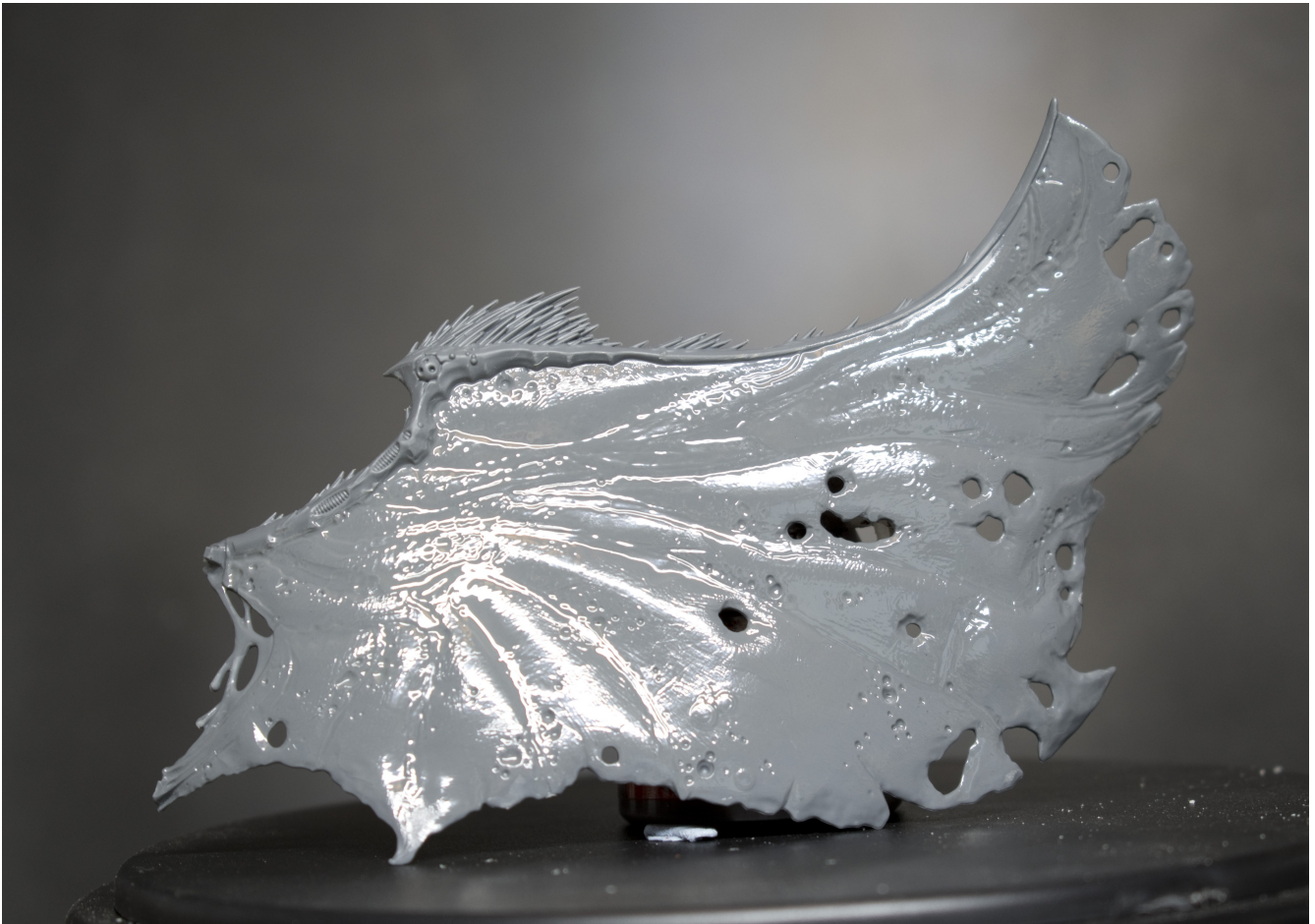
First use the clippers (flat side against the wing) to cut off the veins and then use the scalpel using the whole length of the blade (not the tip) to cut down against the vein sections that are too deep for the clippers to reach. Don't worry about details that are too awkward to cut as they will be small and so easy enough to sand down.

You can see that even though the veins have been cut off that the wing shapes still indent around the areas they were originally in. This is not an issue as veins will be painted back on. The hard details needed to be removed to allow for a flow and clarity of the freehand. Having soft details that can still be smoothly painted over is not an issue as they will be incorporated into the freehand.



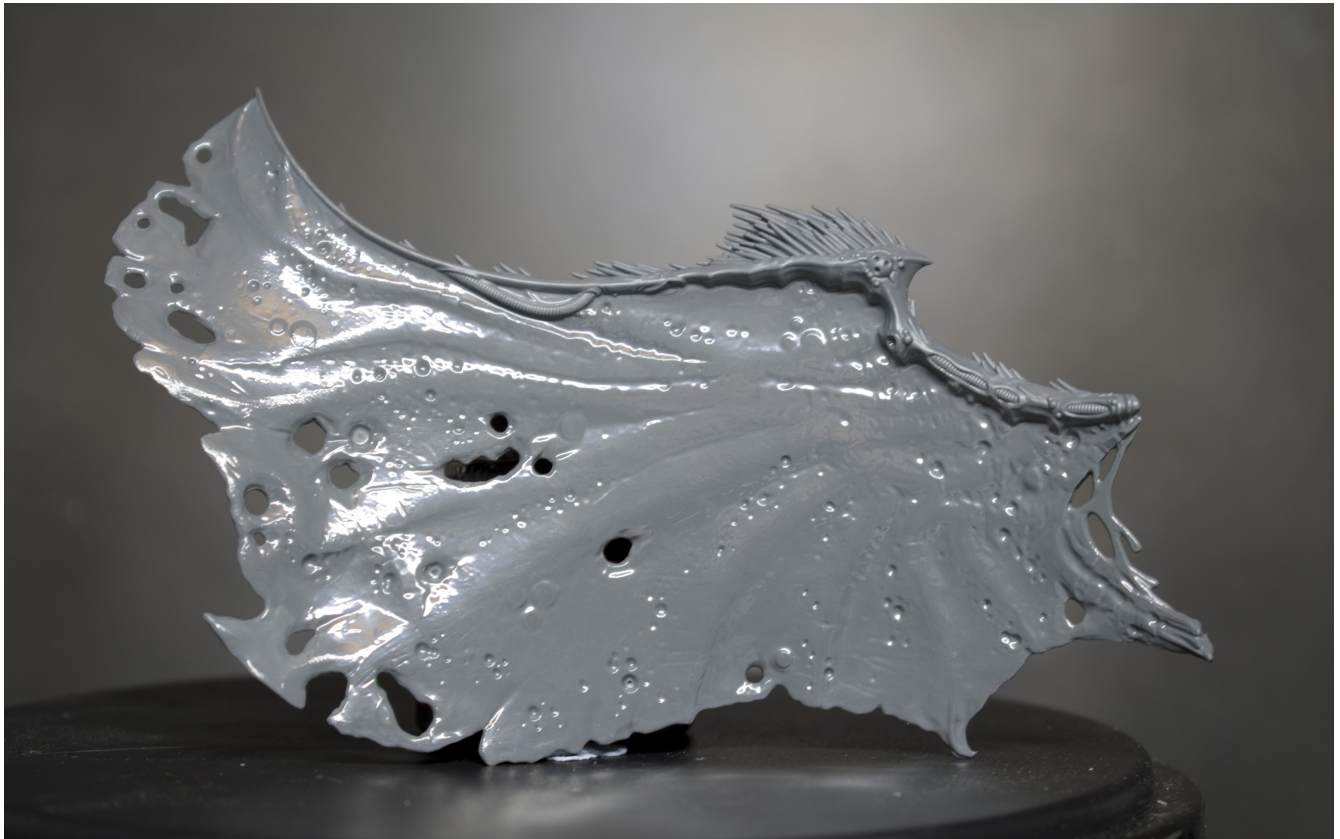
Here is the wing after being sanded, but before I cleaned it off. Be very careful while using the sand paper and getting too close to the thick “arm” section that goes along the top of the wing as those details are supposed to be kept so that they contrast against the soft freehand of the fleshy wing.

This is actually the second stage of sanding. I used some P400 to start with, washed it under a tap with a toothbrush to get the dust off and see the result and then used P1200 to get a smooth finish. I wasn't worried about making it perfectly smooth and shiny as that will be covered in the next step. Don't use too low a number grit sand paper as it will actually leave heavy scratches in the plastic which will be hard to get out.



The fun stage! I covered the whole of the wing area with Tamiya Extra Thin Cement. You may want to use a larger brush than the one that comes in the jar, just to speed up the process. The glue will soften all of the details and help to melt down any small bits of vein that you couldn't cut or sand off as they were in tricky areas. It will also soften the sections on the “arm” of the wing where the veins thickened and joined to it. This is important as you do not want those sections to look hard, it would take away from the organic look. The great thing about doing this is that it actually enhances the organic feel of the wing and makes it look more fleshy than when the veins were on it!

IMPORTANT NOTE make sure you do this in a ventilated room. The glue evaporates very quickly and there will be fumes which could leave you light headed.



Here is the inside of the wing. This has had a second coat of Tamiya glue to really make sure that all of the details are softened. Due to the nature of this glue it dries very quickly so you will be ready to prime the wing withing about 30 minutes. This isn't necessarily true when gluing models together, but here you are putting a thin coat on a large surface area, so it is very easy for it to set due to contact with the air.

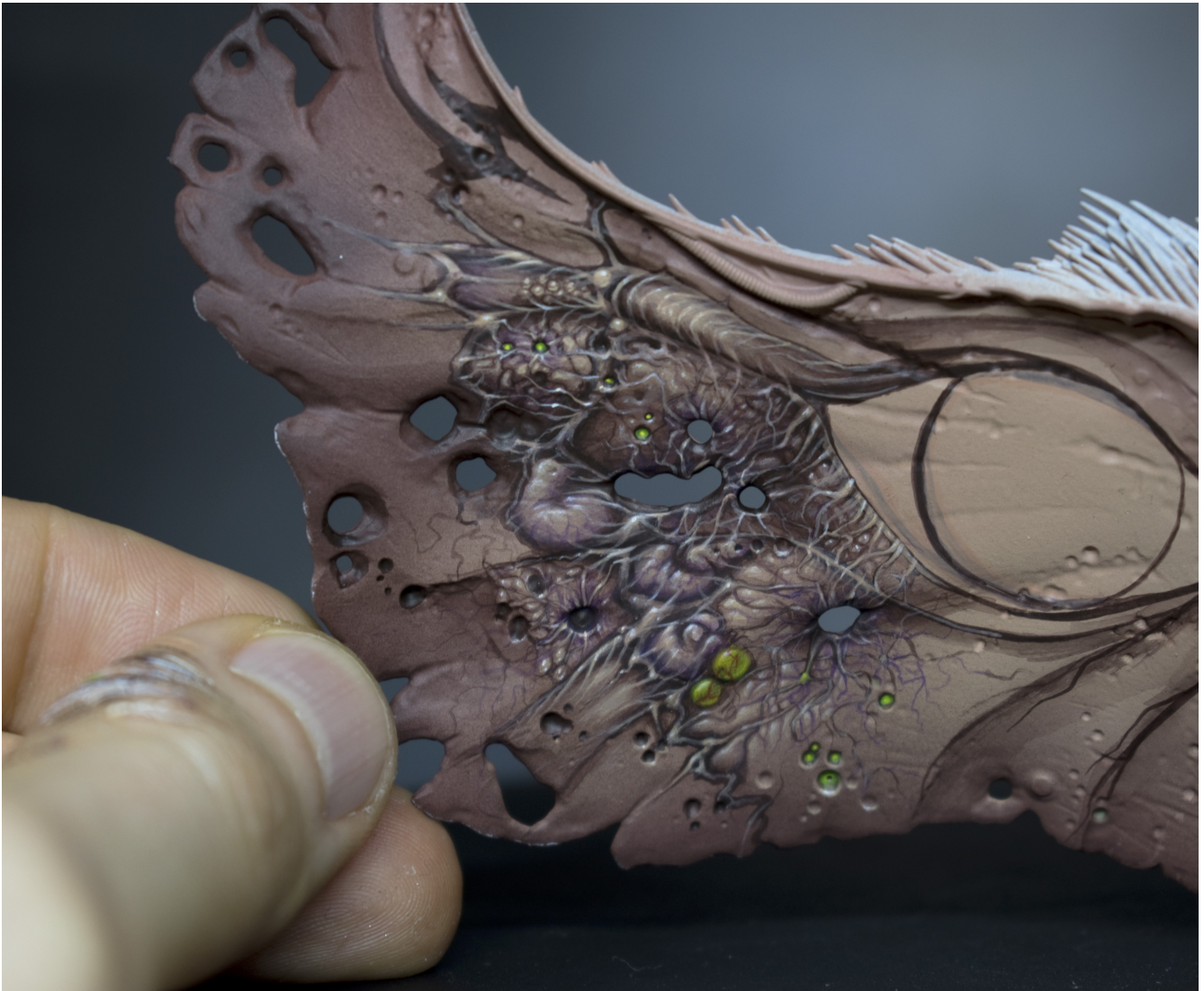


Above you can see the wing has been primed with Vallejo surface primer. Leave it to dry for 24 hours so that the primer has time to set properly. It will feel touch dry in about 20 minutes, but the primer will still be easily damaged at this stage and needs time to cure.



*As mentioned at the beginning of the guide, I used an airbrush to apply these colours quickly. You do not need to use an airbrush as I just use the colours as a guide. If you just give the wing a few thin coats of Cadian Fleshtone you will be able to start the freehand from there as the whole of the wing will eventually be covered in freehand anyway. Shading can be done with glazing later.

Here you can see the final stage of preparation before the freehand is applied. I used the colours shown earlier. Start with a covering the wing with Cadian Fleshtone, then use Bugman's Glow towards the tips of the wings. I used Kislev Flesh in the large central area to create a light point where the large eye will eventually go. I finally used Rhinox Hide on the tips of the wings and on the holes to signify where I want darker elements of the wing to be. All of these areas will have freehand on top of them.



Finally here is a quick shot of the wing where I have already added a lot of freehand. Please see the video and PDF guides for how this was achieved!

I hope you find this useful!