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HOW TO PAINT: Night Lords Praetor for Horus Heresy



In this guide you will be shown how to paint a Night Lords Praetor in terminator armour, from the Horus Heresy.

The following paints were used:

Games Workshop: Night Lords Blue, Kantor Blue, Macragge Blue, Calgar Blue (optional), Mephiston Red, Evil Sunz Scarlet, Wild Rider Red, Firedragon Bright, Baneblade Brown, Cadian Flestone, Kislev Flesh, Flayed One Flesh, Balor Brown, Mournfang Brown, Morghast Bone, Screaming Skull, Forge World Weathering Powder Dark Sand.

Winsor and Newton oil paints: Burnt Siena, Black, Sansodor mineral spirit

Vallejo: Mecha Varnish Gloss, Mecha Varnish Matt, Metal Colour Burnt Iron

Scale 75: Elven Gold (optional)

P3: Morrow White (Any White will do)



The entire model is cleaned, built and primed black. There are no sub-assemblies. Even the head is glued on.

Note that this is a Forge World resin model so it will need to be washed with warm, soapy water before priming. You may also need to fill small bubbles with modelling putty.



On your wet palette you will need Night Lords Blue, Kantor Blue and Macragge Blue. They should be watered down roughly 1:1 water to paint.



First of all, an Artis Opus small drybrush was used to stipple Night Lords Blue all over the model. Load the brush from the palette, dab off the excess and then give the model a strong covering but gently tapping the brush against the model all over. This is not drybrushing, you still want the paint to be wet. It's important to use a dabbing motion and not dragging the brush backwards and forwards as you are trying to achieve a textured, stippled effect.

You can also use makeup brushes to get a similar result.



Here you can see the model after the Night Lords Blue has dried. It will look much darker and less messy than when the paint was wet.

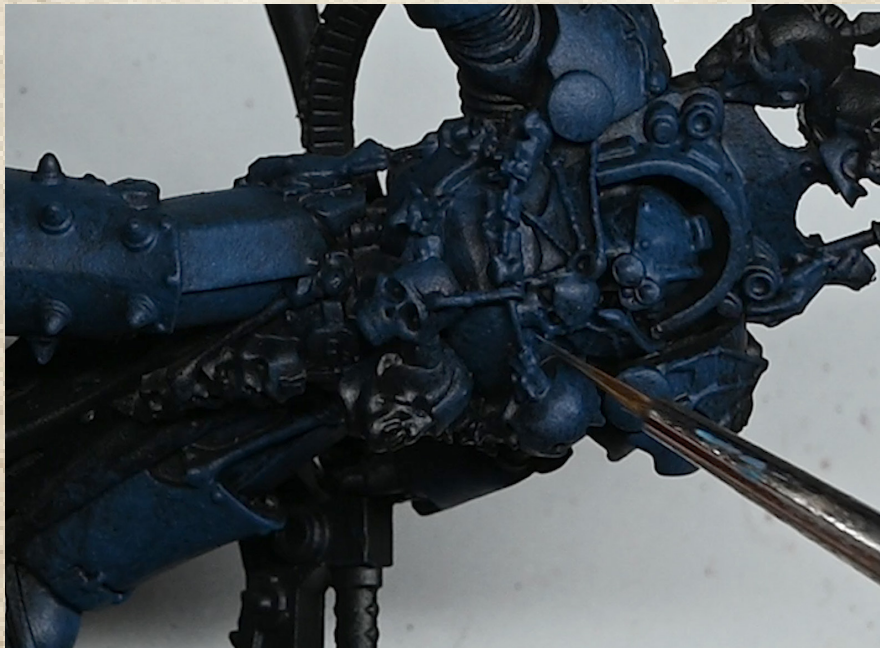


The next step is repeating the stippling process but this time using Kantor Blue. The colour will look brighter and more vivid while wet, but will dry darker.

Try to focus on the areas where light will naturally fall on the model, paying less attention to the shadowed areas.

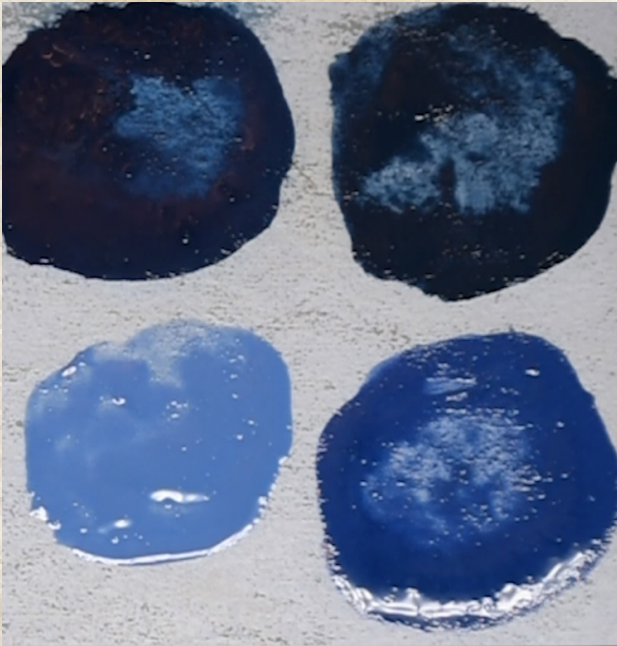


Again, the paint dries darker and looks neater. It's important to note this as it can look like you are making a mess with the large brush while the paint is wet.



In this photograph a further layer of paint has been added, this time Macragge Blue. The process was exactly the same as before.

You will note in the photograph that a small brush is being used to get some of the Macragge Blue into the small gaps between the details on the armour. The light would naturally fall onto these areas as highlight points, but the large size of the brush meant that it was difficult to get the paint onto the recesses. The small brush allows you to get the paint into these gaps.



The next step will be painting on lighter highlights using a normal brush. To that end, Calgar Blue has been added to the wet palette. During the process I found that Calgar Blue was a little too translucent and so later switched to using Macragge Blue with a small amount of white added instead.



Here you can see the stippling process. An Artis Opus size 00 brush was used, but any brush with a good point should be suitable.

Hold the model under a lamp to see where the light naturally falls and use this as a guide for placing the highlights using Calgar Blue. It is important to also pay more attention to the focal points on the model, which will be the head, chest and shoulders.

Place a small amount of paint on the tip of your brush, rub the excess off on your thumb or palette and then stippling the paint quickly onto the areas you want to highlight. There is no need to spend a lot of time on this process as the later oil wash will dull everything down.



In this photograph you can see all of the highlight placement using the stippling process. This will work as a guide and help with transitions when painting the highlights after the oil wash.

It may be that the model still looks messy at this stage. Do not worry, the oil wash will fix this!



After all of the blue armour highlights have been applied it is time to block in the colours on the rest of the model.

Mephiston Red is used as a base colour for wings and lenses and the eye.

Balor Brown is used as a base for anything bone.

*Note: The paint is still thinned 1:1 water to paint. The reason the paint looks so strange on the wet palette is that the paper has been used a great many times and scrubbed with a toothbrush, damaging the top layer, which then allows the paint to bleed into that rough area.



On the wet palette you can see Balor Brown for the bones, Baneblade Brown for any flesh (severed heads!) and Mourfang Brown for any leather areas (weapon handle grip)



Here you can see all of the flesh and bone areas painted with Balor Brown and Baneblade Brown.

There are no highlights placed on these areas, but the paint is fairly translucent so will require two or more coats. Do not worry about getting a perfectly opaque (solid) finish. If it looks a bit patchy it will just add to the texture.



Finally on the pre-wash stage all of the steel metallics are painted using Vallejo Metal Colour Burnt Iron. This can be applied very roughly. Do not worry about getting paint in the crevices as these can stay black, just make sure you catch all of the raised details.

The spikes on the leg are painted using Scale 75 Elven Gold, but any metallic colour should be fine. You do not need to paint them gold, or could even just use the Burnt Iron colour.

At this stage you have a perfectly viable painted model that can be used on the tabletop! All steps beyond this are more advanced and intended to add grime while elevating the model to show that it is a leader of your army, and show off a bit!



Here the model has been given a coat of Vallejo Mecha Varnish Gloss. The model will now look terrible! The gloss is needed for helping the oil wash run into the recesses while not pooling on the raised areas. It will also help to protect the model from paint chipping.

Note* Other gloss varnishes will be fine to use



In the photograph on the top left you can see the oil paints mixed for the wash. It's 50:50 Black and Burnt Sienna. To that Sansodor mineral spirit is added until it becomes almost as thin as water. Leave some of the oil paint mix a little thicker as this can be used for extra grime on the chainsaw blade.

Mix the paint on a glass palette or ceramic tile so that it is easy to clean off.



Once you have finished covering the model in the oil wash you can run some Sansodor mineral spirit over the face and chest area using a brush, to thin the paint even more allowing the face to still be brighter than the rest of the model. After this leave the model to dry over night. It is really, really important that you leave the oil wash to dry completely!



Once the model has dried overnight you can then give it a coat of matt varnish. In this case Vallejo Mecha Matt Varnish was used, but others would also be fine.

As you can see in the photograph, the oil wash and matt varnish has had a massive impact on the look of the model, making it dark and grimy while also adding shading.

At this stage the model would look fantastic on the tabletop. Do not feel any pressure to take the model further than this if you like how it looks.



You may remember the blue colours used before the oil wash. We are going back to the lighter colours, although here I have made a slight change.

In the top right is Macragge Blue, this colour is minor for this stage, it might even be the case that you do not use it.

The top left colour is the most important. It is Macragge Blue mixed with white. This gives a slightly more opaque colour than the previously used Calgar Blue. Make sure the paint is watered down 1:1 water to paint.

The bottom right is Macragge Blue with even more white added.

The bottom left is P3 Morrow White



Starting with the top left Macragge Blue and white mix, use a small brush (I used an Artis Opus size 00) and start stippling dots onto the areas of the armour where the light naturally hits. If you spent some time putting highlights on the armour before the oil wash then it will be very easy to just carry on the process on top of them.

For any edges do not stipple but use a normal edge highlight. The easiest method is to load the brush, rub off the excess and then using the side of the tip of the brush, drag it along the sharp edge of the armour panel. It's best to only do the upwards facing edges that the light naturally hits, but a few lower edges, like on the shoulder and head protection area, can help with definition.



Continue adding stipple highlights all over the model, focusing on the areas where the light naturally falls. Remember, if you need a guide you can hold the model under a lamp to show you the size and shape of the highlight placement.

If you wish you can use the second stage highlight to boost the brightness on focal points such as the head and shoulders. It also works well on the most prominent edges of the armour. Be careful not to overdo it as the highlights can become overpowering.

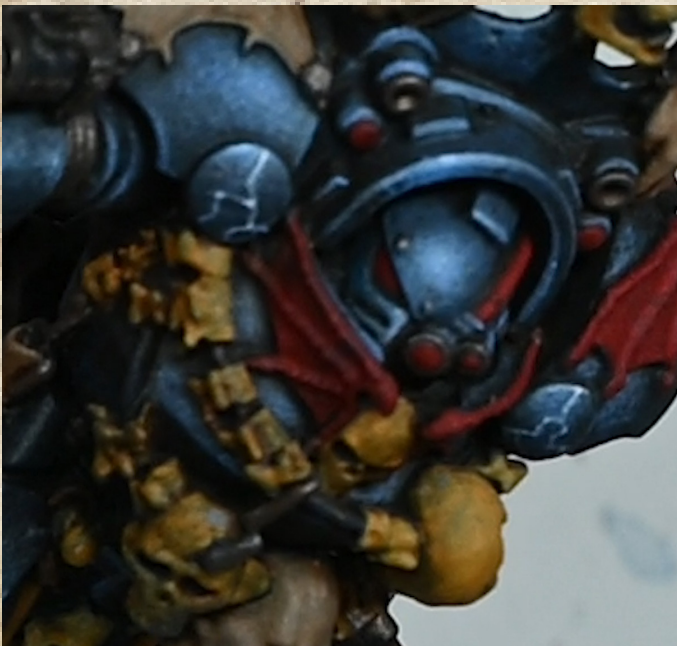
If you find that you have gone too high with the highlights then you can knock them back a bit with the base Macragge Blue. This will add to the saturation and risk is looking like an Ultramarine, but you can then work the highlights in on top again, being more careful. If the worse happens you can go back to the base Night Lords Blue and work up from the beginning again.

Don't forget to paint the feet!



The lightning is very simple. Start with the Macragge Blue mixed with white and draw a random zigzag line. It's important that the lines are hard direction zigzag lines and not soft "S" shape curves.

After the first lines are painted on, add more white to the mix and go over the line again. If you can then try and make the line thinner so some of the previous line can be seen. Finally use white and place small dots, generally on the change of direction points, to give the lightning more "pop".



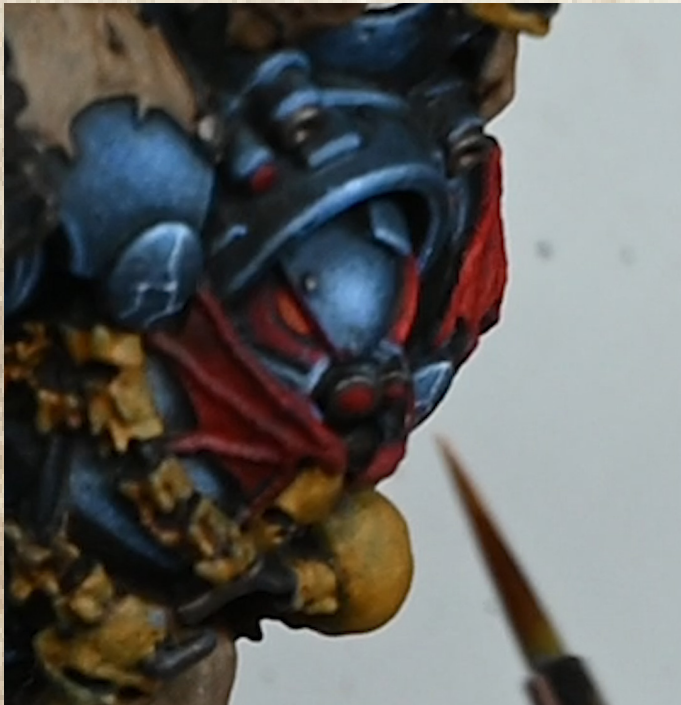
Finally pure white dots are placed on the lightning, preferably on the change of direction on the zigzags. I also added a white dot at the very top of the lightning where it touches the edge of the armour panel.



Next up is highlighting the red areas.

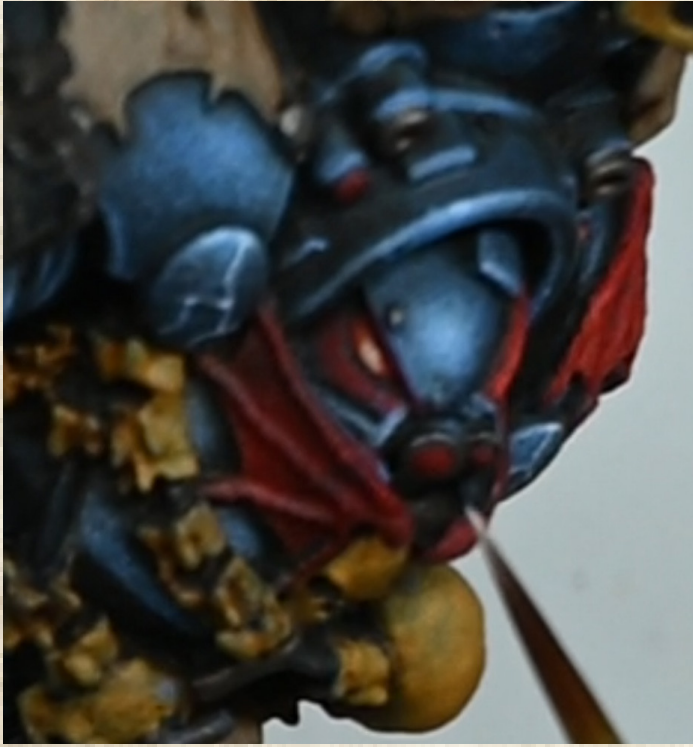
You will need Mephiston Red (top right)
Evil Sunz Scarlet (bottom right)
Wild Rider Red (bottom left)
Firedragon Bright (middle right)
Firedragon Bright mixed with white (middle far left)

*ignore the other colours

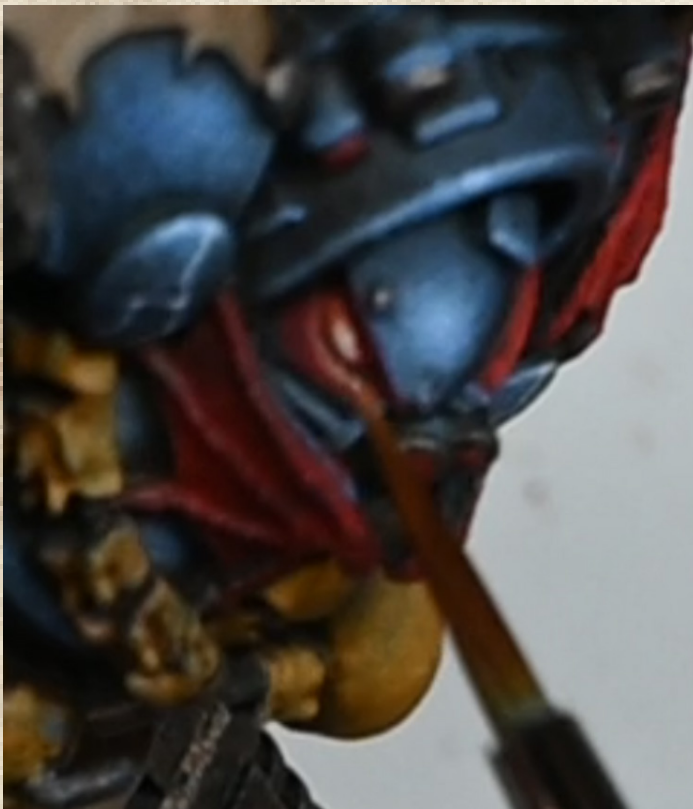


Starting with the eye, paint in the underside of the eye Mephiston Red (the blue armour under the eye). Use small strokes and paint them upwards towards the eye. This will help give a transition.

Paint the eye Evil Sunz Scarlet. You can also paint the red cable now too.



Next go over the eye with layers of Wild Rider Red, Firedragon Bright and finally Firedragon Bright mixed with white, with each layer being smaller in area than the last so that you can still see the lower layer colours at the edges.



Using the same colours you just used on the eye, paint highlight layers just on the upper edge of the armour that sits just underneath the eye.

Be careful not to make the highlights too large as then the glow will no longer look red, but more like a pinky orange.



Next up are the lenses. Starting with Wild Rider Red paint a small circle in the top left and then paint a line 3/4 of the way around the lower edge. This line can be quite chunky.

You can also add the final layer of highlight to the red cable with Wild Rider Red.



Add a thin layer of Firedragon Bright to the lower edge. Try and make it thinner than the previous Wild Rider Red Layer.

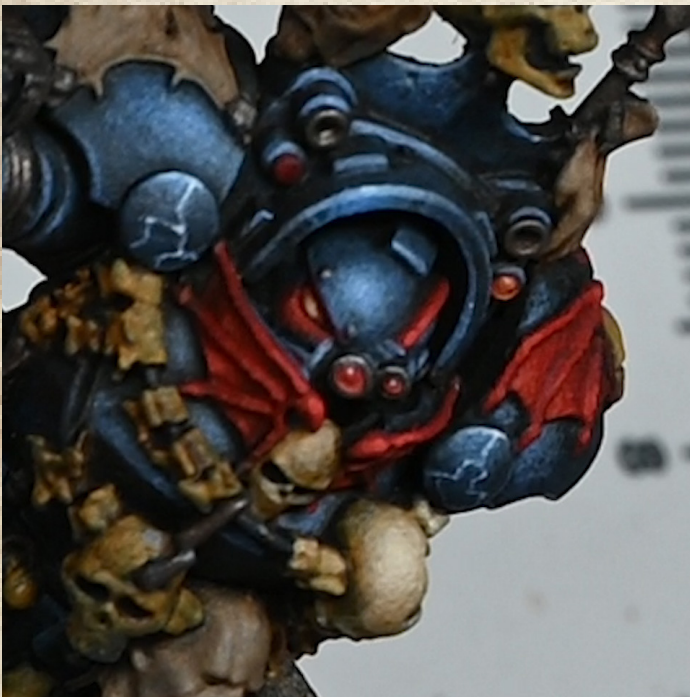
Go over the dot in the top left with the same colour.

Mix a small amount of white into the Firedragon Bright and do a small highlight on the bottom of the lens. Finally add a small dot of white in the middle of the circular spot highlights in the top left.



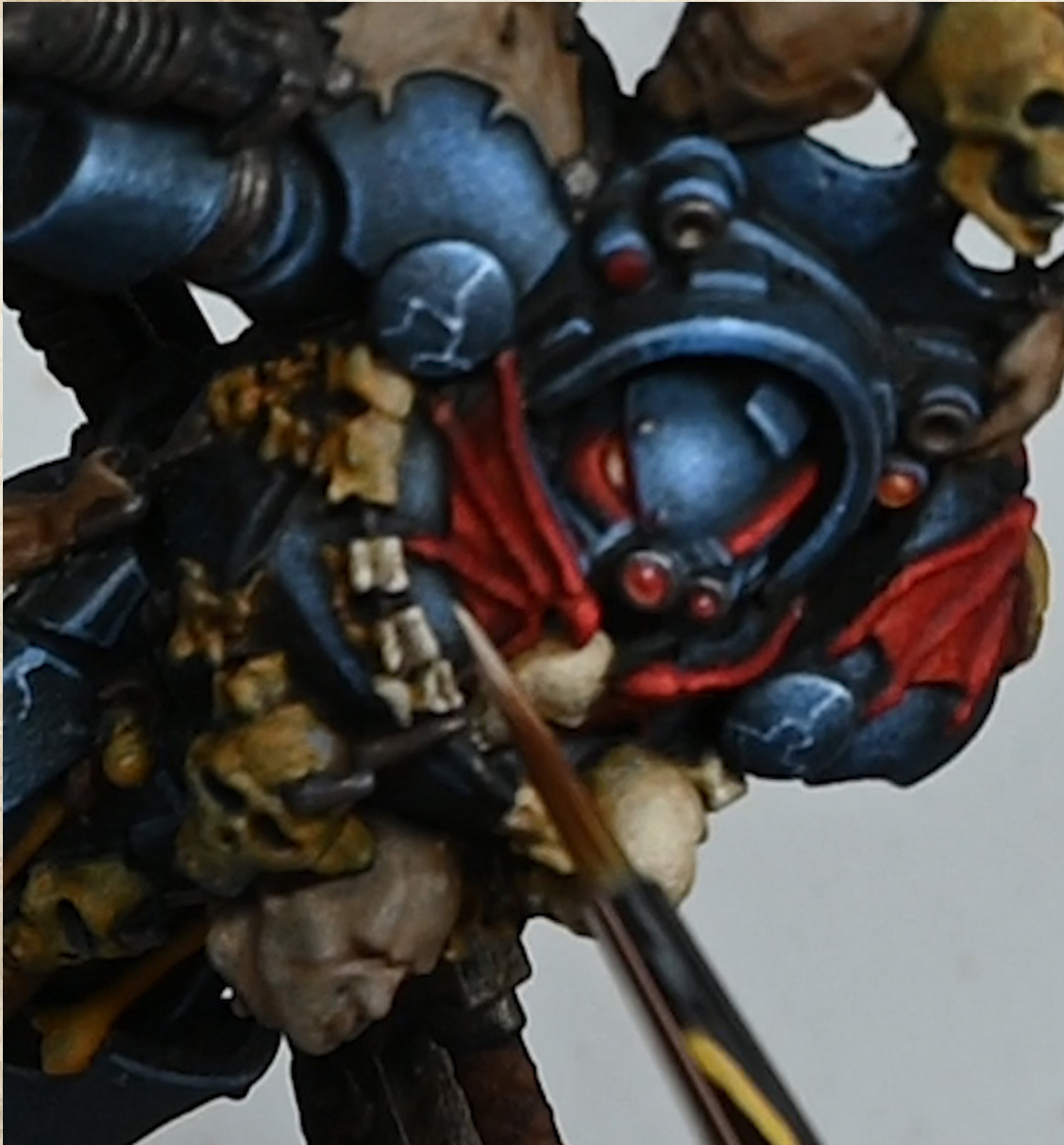
The red wings on the Night Lords Symbol are very simple. Using the same red paints from the eye and lenses, layer on Evil Sunz Scarlet and Wild Rider Red. Do not take the highlights any lighter than this or they will no longer look red. Focus on the areas closer to the front of the model and leave them darker. Pick out the raised areas and details but leave the recessed dark.

If you take the highlights too bright then go over them again with Mephiston Red.

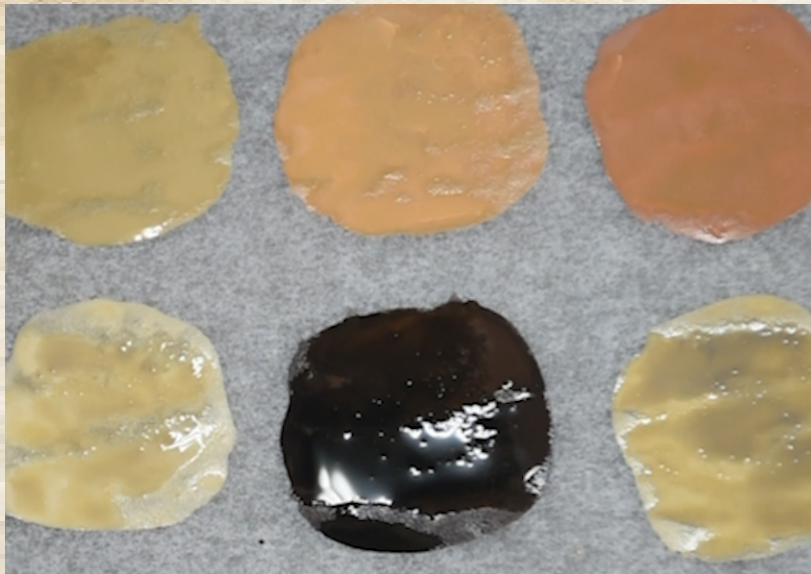


For all of the bone areas (skulls and spine) use Morghast Bone as a first layer highlight. Apply it in a stippling motion to give the bone a nice textured effect.

If you look at the skull, the shape of the highlights match the shape of the skull. Again, holding the model under a lamp will also help when sorting out the shape of the highlights.



The final stage of highlight on the bone areas is with Screaming Skull. You may find this highlight looks a bit bright, in which case water it down a little to make it more translucent. You can also go back the Morghast Bone to help blend it in.



Here you can see the colours for the flesh areas. The two colours on the far left are the Morghast Bone (top left) and Screaming Skull (bottom left) which were used for the bone areas.

The flesh areas were originally covered in Baneblade Brown (bottom centre) before being covered with an oil wash. The colour looks dark on the wet palette but is actually quite light when applied. Cadian Fleshtone (top right), Kislev Flesh (top centre), Flayed One Flesh (bottom right)

*Note Flayed One Flesh is very close to the bone colours so feel free to use those as a highlight instead.



The first layer of highlight on the skin areas (severed heads and shoulder face, plus hands) is done with Cadian Fleshtone. If you find that the Highlight looks too bright then you can mix in a little of the Baneblade Brown.

When applying the highlights, again look where the light naturally falls. When painting the highlights paint the brush strokes towards the brightest part of the highlight. This will help to build up a transition and will leave a more opaque finish at the brightest point of the high-



The second and third stages are quite straight forward. First with Kislev Flesh and then with Flayed One Flesh, layer the highlights on top of the Cadian Flestone, getting smaller with each successive layer.

If you look at the severed head on the spike, the bright highlight is just at the top of the forehead. Do not go overboard on the highlights and remember to paint the brush strokes towards the brightest highlight point.



By now the model should look something similar to this. Everything has been painted apart from the metals.

You should note (you can just about see in the photograph!) that the model has now been glued to the base and sand had also been applied using PVA glue.

A quick tip is once the sand has been glued to the base, water down the PVA and then apply a second coat on top of the sand. This will stop the sand from rubbing off.



The final thing to highlight is the chain-glaive weapon and all of the metal surfaces. The leather handle grip with first highlighted with Mourfang Brown and then the diamond shapes were further picked out with XV-88

The metals were highlighted using Metal Colour Burnt Iron. Remember this was also applied before the oil wash. It will now be much darker and more matt after the oil wash and matt varnish, so when you apply it again it will look much brighter.

The aim is to pick out the areas that catch the most light (using the lamp as a guide). This will mean the large curves and edge highlights need picking out. You can also put a few scratch marks onto the weapon too.

If you want extra gore then feel free to use Blood for the Blood God technical paint dabbed onto the chain areas.



The painting on the model should now be complete apart from the base.



Forge World Dark Sand weathering powder is now applied to the base.

A large, old brush is dipped into the pot and then tapped to remove the excess. It is then gently rubbed all over the base and lower legs, making sure to get into the recesses.

If you apply too much then a bit of gentle scrubbing should remove most of the excess.

Any colour or brand of weathering powder can be used, depending on the base you want for your army.

The powder will adhere quite well, but will activate with water. You can seal the powder with matt varnish, best applied with an airbrush and only aimed at the base. If you cover the whole model with matt varnish then the metals will dull down again.



Also note that the matt varnish will make the powder look less vibrant so you may need to do multiple layers of both varnish and powder.



The final result should look something like this!

I hope you enjoyed the tutorial... There will be more Horus Heresy tutorials to come!



