

JAPANESE ARMY



By the time war broke out in Europe, the Japanese had been fighting the Chinese for close to a decade. Following crushing defeat at the hands of the Soviets at Nomonhan in 1939, they signed a non-aggression pact with the Russians and turned their sights on south-east Asia. Following the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the Japanese war machine proceeded to conquer many territories and force the Allies back to Australia and India. Although these gains were ultimately lost again, the Japanese remained determined and fierce warriors.

This Painting Guide will provide you with a step-by-step guide to painting the basic infantryman of the Imperial Japanese Army and the up-gunned version of the most produced Japanese tank - the Type 97 Chi-Ha ShinHoTo. These models are painted for any period of the war, and would have been seen like this in a wide range of battlefields across south-east Asia.

Following the step-by-step painting guides, you'll find a collection of other units from the Japanese forces that display the variety of painting possibilities when collecting these models.



There are many paint ranges available for painting up your miniatures, and it doesn't really matter which paints you use. That's completely up to you. We used a variety of paints in preparing this guide, and named them with abbreviations.

These can be deciphered below:

VMC = Vallejo Model Color

AP = Army Painter



PAINING YOUR JAPANESE INFANTRY

1



The first step is always to prepare your models for painting. After assembling a squad of five models, we applied a layer of fine basing grit and let the glue dry.

We chose to spray each model with AP Uniform Grey spray as sometimes a black undercoat can mean you have to apply multiple coats of your other paints, and white can leave the colours a bit too bright for the muted uniform colours of WWII.

2



The next step includes painting the basecoats over the largest areas. We started with VMC Khaki Grey over the uniform jacket, trousers, and puttees. This was followed by VMC Brown Violet for the helmet and canteen. We then painted the face and hands with a 50/50 mix of VMC German Camo Orange Ochre/VMC Flat Flesh, a good base colour for Asian skin.

3



The next step was to paint the webbing, boots, and rifle strap with VMC Flat Brown. Then we moved on to the wooden stock of the rifle and painted it with VMC Beige Brown.

If you are painting a lot of models at once and are on a tight timeframe, you might also choose to paint the black and silver areas (covered in Steps 7 & 8).

4



We followed up Step 3 by painting a layer of AP Strong Tone Wash over the entire model and let it dry thoroughly.

If you are painting a lot of models at once and chose to paint the black and silver areas before the wash, you could finish your painting here, although your models would look quite dark and not as nice as they could if you pushed on.

5



While the wash adds great shadows to your model, to make it really pop you need to go back and add some highlights. We started by highlighting the uniform jacket, trousers, and puttees with VMC Khaki Grey, then the helmet with VMC Brown Violet. The skin was highlighted with a 50/50 mix of VMC German Camo Orange Ochre/VMC Flat Flesh. We also painted the helmet strap with VMC German Camo Beige.

6



In order to help it stand out a little more from the equipment, the uniform was highlighted again with a 50/50 mix of VMC Khaki Grey/VMC Pale Sand. The leather was highlighted with a 70/30 mix of VMC Flat Brown/VMC Flat Flesh. Mixing "flesh" colours into a base leather colour for highlights is a great way to simulate wear and tear on the leather.

7



We then painted everything else with AP Matt Black, for a well-defined look.

8



The next step was to paint all the metal areas with a 50/50 mix of AP Matt Black/AP Gun Metal. Infantry tabs were painted on the collars in VMC Flat Red.

FLAGS

Flags and devotional banners played an important role in the morale of the Imperial Japanese Army. Not only were the flags effective rally points, but the devotional banners that hung from the barrels of many Japanese rifles were a reminder of the soldier's oath to the Emperor and their loved ones back home. You can find this sheet of full-colour, self-adhesive flags and banners in the box of plastic Japanese soldiers as well as separately in the Warlord Games website.



BREAD BAGS



The bread bags and larger pouches (above left) carried by our Japanese soldiers were painted with VMC Yellow Green. This can appear quite bright against the desaturated colours of the uniform and equipment. The image on the right shows the same bag after Step 4 of the painting. We decided not to highlight the bread bag after this stage.

BASING



Basing is the thing that really helps tie your army together. There are many, many ways you can do your basing, depending on where you want your troops to be fighting. For our purposes, we decided on a sandy look for our bases, mimicking a Pacific island.

We painted the base completely with VMC Beige Brown, drybrushed the grit with VMC Dark Sand, drybrushed again with VMC Pale Sand and painted the edge with VMC Beige Brown, and then glued down some bright tufted flocking material to give the base a "dunes" feel.

THE COMPLETED IJA INFANTRY SQUAD



This completed Imperial Japanese Army Infantry Squad (using the squad listing on page 20 of *Armies of Imperial Japan*), has the minimum seven men, including an NCO with a sword, and a soldier with a Type 99 light machine gun.

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VARIANTS OF JAPANESE UNIFORMS

▼ The HQ Section here is painted in much the same way as the regular infantry, with each member getting some special treatment. To paint the shirts we recommend starting with VMC Khaki and (after the AP Strong Tone wash) highlighting up by adding in VMC Pale Sand. The gloves worn by the officers and medic can be painted first with VMC Pale Grey and then highlighted up with VMC White. For the uniform worn by the mounted officer to the right, start with a base coat of VMC Brown Violet and highlight up by mixing in VMC German Fieldgrey WWII.



▲ These IJA Veterans start out in much the same way as their regular infantry counterparts. Paint the shirts with VMC Khaki and highlight by mixing in VMC Pale Sand. Select some more vibrant, saturated greens to paint the vegetation.



◀ The flamethrower and sniper teams here are painted like regular infantry, but have plenty of little details to pick out, like the headband on the spotter.



▲ The SNLF (Special Naval Land Force) were essentially the marines of the Japanese Navy. They were fierce and determined fighters, but often lacked heavy firepower or support. For their uniforms, start with VMC Olive Grey.

▶ The tank drivers and commanders shown here wear a few different uniforms. The yellow jacket matches our infantry, while the white jackets can be painted with VMC Pale Sand highlighted with VMC White. The green trim is in VMC German Fieldgrey WWII.



PAINTING YOUR JAPANESE TANKS



1 Much like the infantry, once the tank was assembled we undercoated it with AP Uniform Grey. Once the undercoat was dry, we used a large brush to apply the basecoat - VMC Green Brown. We thinned the paint a little to ensure it went on smoothly, and so had to apply two coats for a solid coverage. If you have an airbrush and are painting quite a few vehicles, you could spray on your basecoat.

2 The next step was to add patches of the dark brown camouflage. For this we used VMC Flat Brown, covering about 35% of the tank.



3 Our next step was to paint on the green camouflage patches with VMC Reflective Green. This covered about 20% of the tank.

4 We wanted to add a bit of depth to the paintjob so we gave the whole tank a wash of AP Strong Tone. A second thin coat was added to the sides and wheels when the first was dry.



5 The armour panels were then highlighted with their appropriate colours: VMC Green Brown, VMC Flat Brown, and VMC Reflective Green.





6 Many Japanese tanks included four wavy yellow lines radiating from the centre of the tank as part of their colour scheme. Bright yellow is tough to paint over darker colours, so we started with a layer of VMC German Camo Orange Ochre and highlighted it by mixing in AP Daemonic Yellow. The Imperial star on the front of the hull was painted the same way.

7 For this tank we chose this stage to affix the decals to ensure that any weathering we applied would be applied to the decals too. It would seem that the Japanese didn't really go in for too many markings. The character on the turret marks this tank as belonging to the 3rd Company of the 1st Tank Regiment, while the character on the hull denotes it as the 4th tank.



8 Tank exhausts must typically disperse a lot of heat (as well as exhaust gasses). This can mean that the original paint peels off and expose the metal underneath which then rusts, quite rapidly in tropical regions. To simulate these rusty exhausts we started with a basecoat of VMC German Camo Black Brown, followed by stippled layers of VMC Red Leather and VMC Bright Orange.

9 The next step was to paint the tracks and the rubber on the road wheels with AP Matt Black. We then drybrushed them with VMC Dark Grey.



THE COMPLETED CHI-HA SHINHOTO

And finally...

To give it the 'churning through the sand and jungles of the Pacific islands, seeing lots of action' look we drybrushed a mixture of browns onto the tracks and undercarriage of the tank, simulating a coating of mud and sand.

VARIANTS OF JAPANESE ARMOUR



◀The Type 97 Chi-Ha medium tank was the most numerous of all the Japanese tanks of World War Two. The camouflage scheme shown here is very similar to the ShinHoTo we painted for the guide, however the darker chocolate brown works just as well for an authentic look. The signature semi-circular piece around the turret is the radio antenna.

▶The Type 3 Ho-Ni III Tank Destroyer shown here was produced in the final stages of the war, and the camouflage has been hastily sprayed on (only two colours, no wavy yellow lines). It has been busy, however, as the chipping around the edges shows.



◀When the Imperial Japanese Army replaced the turrets on the Type 97 Chi-Ha medium tanks - creating the Type 97 ShinHoTo - the original turrets were retro-fitted to the obsolete Type 95 Ha-Go light tanks. These were designated the Type 4 Ke-Nu. This example here has a lighter ochre colour than ours, has been painted without the wavy yellow lines, and displays a very prominent Rising Sun on the turret.

▶This Type 95 Kurogane scout car was used throughout the war by the Japanese. This recon vehicle has seen quite a bit of service, scuff marks of dark silver paint have been brushed on to simulate wear and tear.



◀The Type 94 Tankette was used as early as 1937 at the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War. It was a slightly larger version of the British and French tankettes of the '30s, and is shown here in a three-colour, soft-edge camouflage scheme.

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