

Hints and Tips -

Colour Guide - Soviet Army

By Michael Farnworth

March 2008, Revised May 2010

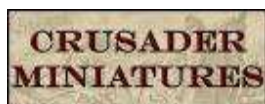
U.S. Infantry



Crusader figures painted by Mick Farnworth

Artizan and Crusader figures are fully compatible and can be mixed in the same unit. Figures may be selected from both ranges can be used for the major campaigns.

Item	Colour	Vallejo Model Colour
Helmet	Dark Green	Russian Green 70.894
Greatcoat	Khaki	US Field Drab 70.973, English Uniform 70.921, Flat Earth 70.983
Uniform	Khaki Green	Russian Uniform 70.924
Uniform (variant)	Khaki	US Field Drab 70.973, English Uniform 70.921, Flat Earth 70.983
Uniform (variant)	Tan	US Tan Earth 70.874
Uniform (faded)	Beige	German Camo Beige 70.821, Dark Sand 70.847
Belt	Brown	Mahogany Brown 70.846, Flat Brown 70.984
Blanket	Grey Beige	Sky Grey 70.989, Light Grey 70.990
Webbing	Beige	German Camo Beige 70.821
Pistol Holster	Brown	Mahogany Brown 70.846, Flat Brown 70.984
Boots - Soldiers	Black	Black 70.950



Introduction

This guide will help you to quickly paint units of soldiers to look good on a war games table. Uniform notes, paint references and painting tips are included.

Historical Notes

The Russians call the period from 1941 to 1945 the Great Patriotic War. The German's invaded in June 1941 and advanced quickly, almost reaching Moscow. Almost 80% of the army was lost to the German's during Operation Barbarossa. Between 1941 and 1943, the Russians adopted desperate measures to hold back the Germans. The bloody battle of Stalingrad (Nov 1942- Jan 1943) stopped the advance. The battle of Kursk in July 1943 tipped the balance. From 1943 onwards, the Russian army took back ground lost to the Germans.

Intro

At the start of the war, the Soviet Red Army was nearly five million strong. It was mostly made up of Russian speakers from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. The officer class had suffered heavily in Stalin's purges of the late 1930's. When the German's invaded in 1941, the army was large but had poor leadership. Nearly a million men were killed and three million captured. Of those captured, few survived to return to their homeland.

After the huge losses of 1941 and 1942, the army was rebuilt. It included also ethnic minorities including Georgians, Cossacks, Uzbeks, Lithuanians and Armenians. In the later war years, almost 10% of the armed forces were women.

Uniform

Uniforms were basic and colours variable. There is a common misconception that Russian uniforms were yellow brown. The standard colour was an olive shade of khaki, similar to the colour used by Canadian and British forces. In practice the colours varied extensively from olive green through to pale brown.

Winter uniforms were made of woollen cloth and coloured in an olive green khaki. Padded winter jackets (telogreika) and trousers were widely used. Shade differences between jackets and trousers were common.

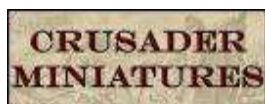
Summer uniforms were made of cotton and faded to a cream colour.

Greatcoats were in theory a dark brown colour, but various shades from brown through khaki to mid grey were used. The classic image of a Russian soldier shows the greatcoat rolled into a bedroll and carried diagonally over the shoulders.

In the early war years, soldiers were equipped with black or brown ankle boots and khaki puttees. In later years, the standard boots were black jackboots. In winter, grey sealskin over-boots were issued to the lucky few.

Helmets were mostly green but the colour varied from a dark olive to a lighter yellowy green. Metal objects such as ammo boxes were usually olive green.

Pouches and belts were often brown leather or khaki canvas. The main belt was fastened with an aluminium buckle.



Equipment

The shortage of materials was a huge impediment. Many vehicles and heavy weapons had been lost during Barbarossa. The Americans and British provided huge amounts of equipment through the Lend Lease scheme. The Soviets took delivery of 7,000 tanks, 375,000 trucks, 50,000 Jeeps, 15 million pairs of boots and many more items.

The Soviets concentrated on producing huge quantities of standardised items. The T34 tank was made in vast quantities. From late 1941, 35,000 of the 76 mm version were made and 22,000 of the improved 85mm were produced.

Mortars were used extensively as they were quicker to produce than artillery.

The Maxim heavy machine gun with its characteristic wheeled trolley was extensively used as company support. Squad support was via the DP light machine gun.

At the start of the war, most soldiers were equipped with Mosin Nagant rifles. By 1944, almost a third of the army was equipped with PPSH (or PP43) submachine guns as they were easier to produce than rifles and needed less training.

In the early years of the war, PTRD and PTRS anti tank rifles were commonly used. After 1943, these were no longer effective against the increased armour on German tanks. Panzerfaust were captured in huge quantities from the retreating Germans and widely used by Soviet forces.

Painting Tips

Bases

It is worth deciding on the rules that you are going to use before you start to base and paint the figures. For WW2 skirmish games, most rules suggest individual bases. Some rules suggest 25mm diameter bases and some suggest 20mm diameter bases. Mass battle games often specify multiple bases to represent regiments.

Plastic bases (e.g. Slottabases), wooden bases, washers or coins are all suitable. 20mm steel washers can be used with magnetic bases so that the figures can be adapted to many different sets of rules.

With heavy weapons, it is nice to make the base into a small diorama. Dependant on the size and shape of the weapon, you can use circular bases, rectangles or irregularly shaped bases. Large plastic and wooden base are available from many wargame suppliers. For circles, you can use such as mini CDs and CDs. With CDs, the flat side is the one with writing. Build some ground onto the base using epoxy putty, and then cover with sand and grass.



To make casualty removal during game play easy, this base has a removable figure. The loader is mounted on a 20mm steel washer. The base has a 19mm self adhesive magnet from Litko. When the

large base was made, the washer was held in place on the magnet whilst the putty was built up to the edge. Then the washer was “wiggled” and removed before the putty set, leaving a circular hole. Similarly, the gunner was “wiggled” and removed for painting.

Painting Step by Step

There are many ways to paint 28mm figures. Many people paint the clothing with a dark shade then the main colour and then a highlight colour. For wargaming, where you want to get reasonably good results quickly, it is easier to paint only the main colours and then add shade with a wash of dark transparent stain.

Here is a basic assembly and painting sequence for typical world war 2 soldiers. This method is designed for painting about 20 figures at a time. It is always a good idea to do a practice run on 5 figures first. The painting sequence is designed so that minor mistakes can be corrected at the highlight stage. There is no need to correct minor mistakes as you go along.

1. Remove mould risers, mismatch, and flash. Mould risers are typically found on hands, elbows, feet and weapons. Sometimes they can be flicked off with a fingernail but usually tweezers or needle nosed pliers are needed. Occasionally they must be filed away with a needle file.

TIP - With Crusader French, check the area between the left arm and torso for flash.

2. Sand the base flat. Easiest way is to place a sheet of coarse sandpaper on a workbench. Hold the figure firmly and vertically in your right hand and push it over the sand paper. Two or three strokes should be enough to give a flat base. The base is flat when the underside is covered in scratches from the sandpaper.
3. Glue the figure to a base. If you are going to use individual bases, this will be the final base. Use cyanacrylate adhesive (superglue) for a permanent bond. If you are going to use multiple bases, use a coin as temporary base so that you can hold the figure for painting. For temporary bases, use PVA glue, as it is easy to remove later.
4. If you are using slotted bases, glue on some small squares of thin plastic card to cover the slot.
5. Using epoxy putty (e.g. Milliput), blend the figure base into the base.



6. Prime and undercoat the figure. This can be done with brush on enamel paint (e.g. Humbrol Matt Black) or with a spray paint (e.g. GW Chaos Black Spray). For plastic figures spray undercoat usually works well. Metal figures often need touching up afterwards as the spray rarely reaches into the recesses. A black undercoat is usually easiest as it also acts as the darkest shade. I used GW Chaos Black Spray.

TIP - It can be difficult to get the spray paint on the under surfaces of the figure. A simple method is to lay the figures on their side on a paper and spray. When the paper has dried to matt black, turn the figures over and spray again. Then stand the figures upright and spray from all sides.

7. To get a good base to work from, I damp brushed (i.e. a heavy dry-brush using damp paint) the figures with khaki green mixed with black. Next, I did this again with the khaki green. This gives a

very quick shading effect. For the last coat, vary the shade by adding light brown or yellow beige so that some are more brownish and others greenish.

8. Paint the hands and face with a basic flesh colour (GW Tallarn Flesh or a mix of GW Dwarf Flesh and Elf Flesh is a good base coat for flesh). Highlight with a quick damp brush of a lighter flesh tone (e.g. GW Elf Flesh).



9. Paint the base in brown

10. Paint the boots, rifle stock, boots, ammo pouches and belt in brown. I found it easiest to also paint the backpack, gasmask bag and small pack brown and then pick out the canvas.

11. Paint the backpack, canteen and gasmask bag in khaki green. The gasmask bag is square with two small side pockets. Leave the straps brown. Here, you can vary the shade (lighter) so that it stands out from the uniform. Russian Uniform 70.924 would give a highlight shade.

12. Paint the small pack (same size as the gasmask bag but with two front pockets) a paler colour than the other items, so I suggest a beige khaki tone. Note - the diagonal strap on the infantry in the picture below should be beige rather than brown.

13. Paint the metal parts of the weapons and the canteen with a mix of black and steel.



14. Shade the whole figure a dark wash applied with a brush (Army Painter Strong Tone or Vallejo Transparent Smoke 70.939 or GW Devlan Mud Wash).

TIP - Army Painter Strong Tone worked very well. Be careful not to let it pool too much. I prefer the result from a brush as the results from a dip is rather dark. Dipping is also very messy. Note that Army Painter is also an oil based gloss varnish and needs at least 24 hours to dry.



15. Using a fine brush and dilute paint, paint the eyes as a horizontal white dash.
16. Dot the eyes with black or dark blue. A cocktail stick can be used instead of a brush. You can also do this with a fine gel pen.
17. Varnish with a spray of gloss varnish to protect the figure. This is not necessary if you have used Army Painter Strong Tone. After this has dried overspray with matt varnish.
18. Decorate the base. The easiest way is to paint on PVA glue and dip the base in sand. I glued on the sand in two stages. The first time, I covered the upper surface of the base with PVA and dipped it in sand. Once the first stage was dry, I added more glue and sand to make sure that the step left by the plastic base was hidden. Once the glue is dry, shade the base with a brown wash mixed with a little PVA glue. This also fixes the sand.
19. Highlight with a pale sand colour (GW Bleached Bone 61.17) lightly dry-brushed onto the sand. Painting sand will destroy an artist's brush in minutes, so use a cheap pig bristle brush.
20. Touch up any mistakes and add highlights as desired. The collars were painted with white = signs to simulate Wehrmacht insignia.
21. Add static grass if you want to.



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Soviet Scouts

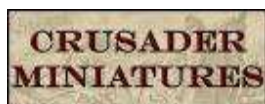


Artizan figures painted by Mick Farnworth

Item	Colour	Vallejo Model Colour
"Amoebas"	Dark Brown	German Camo Black Brown 70.882 (GW Scorched Earth)
"Background"	Khaki Green	Russian Uniform 70.924
"Background" autumn	Tan	US Tan Earth 70.874, (GW Snakebite Leather)

Notes

Scouts (razvedchiki) wore camouflage over suits. The Amoeba pattern was commonly used. This was produced in green with dark brown disruptive print. Amoeba pattern was also made in other colours including tan with dark brown print. Another pattern was the Leaf pattern which was a three colour mimetic design of green and brown leaves on a beige or grey cloth.



Further Reading

Books

General

Andrew Mollo: **The Armed Forces of World War 2** (Little, Brown and Company)

This book is a very useful overview of uniforms and insignia. There are 250 colour drawings and 100 photographs which cover every nation involved in WW2. The original 1981 version is a large format book. There is an A5 reprint that does not include the Eastern front.

Andrew Mollo et al: **Army Uniforms of World War 2** (Blandford)

This book is similar to the one above but with a completely different set of illustrations. This was originally published by Blandford in 1973. This one is also available as a combined 1981 volume called "World Army Uniforms Since 1939". It is worth investing in both Mollo books.

Chris McNab: **20th Century Military Uniforms: 300 Uniforms from Around the World** (Grange Books PLC)

This book is similar in style to Andrew Mollo's books and has many of the same illustrations.

Russia

Laszlo Bekesi, **Stalin's War: Soviet Uniforms and Militaria 1941-45**, (The Crowood Press Ltd)

A good book with colour photographs showing original uniforms and equipment. Unfortunately, many of the examples are of faded and battered uniforms and there are no camouflage items.

Steven Zolaga ; **Osprey Men at Arms 216 - The Red Army of the Great Patriotic War** (Osprey Publishing).

Osprey has many titles dealing with the Russian Army. This is probably the most relevant for miniatures collectors and painters.

Websites

TMP The Miniatures Page

<http://theminaturespage.com>

TMP is a news forum and discussion site for miniature wargaming of all types. It has a large and active membership and good trade support. It is probably the first site with industry news and new product releases. The forums (Message Boards) are superb and most questions will get useful answers within an hour or two. The Message Boards can also be searched so that you can look up previous threads on a subject.

www.rkka.ru

The rkka website shows original uniforms from the Soviet Army museum.

<http://www.tridentmilitary.com/Reproduction.uniforms.html>

Trader in reproduction Soviet WW2 Uniforms