

CHRIS PARENT METHOD OF CANOPY FRAMING

By Mike Nassise

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Here's how local clubster Chris Parent does the canopy framing on many of his beautiful models. It's a low tech approach, but one that yields fantastic results. The nice thing about the method is that the framing blends in with the rest of the model and does not have that "stuck on" appearance.

The first thing that has to be done is to prepare a supply of tissue with the proper color. If you are chalking the color onto the tissue it will be a snap, but if you're using paint on the model it will take a little more effort. Chris recommends that you first pre-shrink the tissue you'll use for the canopy on a frame, then spray or brush on the matching color. After everything has dried, spray clear Krylon #1301 over it and it will be ready to go in short order.

The next step is the critical one. Coat the back side of the colored tissue with permanent glue stick adhesive and let it dry thoroughly before proceeding. When the glue is dry, cut the tissue into strips of the desired size. Take your time and try for uniform widths. Uniformity in size plays a big part in how well the framing job turns out. Care and patience while working is the difference between a "museum" quality model and just an ordinary ship.

Now for the application of the strips. Moisten them with drug store rubbing alcohol or water, and position them on the canopy. While wet they are easy to move around on acetate or plastic canopy material. If needed, you can remoisten a strip if it starts to dry out, and slide it about until it's perfectly positioned. The water soluble glue stick adhesive, Chris prefers the UHU brand, allows this to be done easily. Chris also suggests that an ordinary toothpick makes a great tool for moving tissue strips around when applying them to a canopy. When the canopy framing is to your liking, allow it to dry before moving to the final step. *(PFFT Ed. Note: If you've used Floral Spray to color the tissue, you can't use alcohol for this because it will attack the color. You'd best use either Future Floor Finish or canopy glue.)*

Sealing the tissue to the canopy is the last thing to be done in your framing job. Chris says there are two ways to do this.

- (1) Spray a little of the Krylon Acrylic #1301 mentioned earlier into a Dixie cup, and use a small pointed brush to apply it to the tissue framing. Overlap the edges slightly to assure a good seal.
- (2) Using a large flat brush, paint a couple of coats of Future Floor Finish (that's right, the stuff your wife uses on the kitchen floor) over the entire canopy. Work quickly and apply light coats, being careful not to disturb the tissue framing. I've never used the stuff for this particular application, but if Chris suggests that it be used I'm sure it works well.

That's it, sticksters. Chris uses this approach frequently and the results are just great. If you've ever seen any of his models you know what I'm talking about. Give it a try and let us know how it worked out for you.