

# Tips on Masking

*by George White*

For those who have tried to use masking tape to “doll” up their models, the results have sometimes left them wondering why they bothered. Fuzzy edges, run-under and lifted paint have been this editor’s experience. I’ve used hardware store masking tap, green plastic automotive masking tape, blue plastic (3M#2080) automotive tape and the blue tape used by professional house painters. I learned long ago never to use any brand other than 3M for anything serious. Even so, the results varied, with the blue automotive tape and the blue house painter tape being slightly better, but both have a more aggressive tack to them than we need on delicate tissue. It wasn’t until I discovered Tamyra brand masking tape at the local Bobe’s Hobby House ([www.bobeshobbyhouse.com](http://www.bobeshobbyhouse.com)) that I got reasonably consistent results. Tamyra comes in a variety of widths from .25”(6mm) to 1.5” (40mm), is very thin, and has just enough tack to make clean lines and yet not pull the tissue when removed (provided you be sensible and pull it back over itself to remove it). If you need even finer tape for dealing with curves, Bobe’s carries a Pactra brand, which goes as small as 1/16”, is very thin and has a low tack. No sooner had I convinced myself that these two brands were the answer to a maiden’s prayer than I received two newsletters in which two additional types of masking tape were touted to be terrific. In the Southern California Ignition Flyers “Flight Plug,” editor Mike Myers talks about 3M #2070 masking tape, which allegedly is about as sticky as a “post-it” sticker. This tape is white in color and allegedly is less sticky than the blue 3M I mentioned above. This tape, however is considerably thicker than the Tamyra or Pactra tapes, and will almost certainly have to be special ordered from an auto paint store. I then received a copy of the May issue of the Arizona Cactus Squadron News, with an article by Bob Schlosberg on airbrushing. To say that Bob is a craftsman model builder would be an understatement. Bob swears by 3M #811 Scotch Removable Magic tape (BLUE box) which can be found in almost any office supply store in the 3/4” size. It also comes in 1/2” and 1”, but you’ll probably have to find that in artist supply stores. I tried it and it indeed is very thin, made beautifully sharp lines, peeled off extremely easily and didn’t lift paint. I did a very unscientific “stickiness” test, and much to my surprise it seemed less sticky even than Tamyra. There, you’ve got lots of choices — just don’t get cheap and use hardware store tan masking tape — I can assure you that you’ll regret it — ask me how I know!! GW