**Aircraft Canopy Masking Techniques**

**Masking - (verb) to cover or shield a part of a model to protect the surface from colors used, as in working with an airbrush or in painting or weathering. Can be applied to any subject, including figures.**

**Recommend**

* Polishing the plastic canopy before painting.
* Buff lightly with a rotary tool or microfiber cloth.
* Wash with warm soapy water to remove any debris.

**Considerations for masking material:**

* Adhesive quality
* Thickness
* Flexibility

**Masking Materials:**

* Aluminum Foil/Bare Metal
* Liquid Masks
* Pre-cut vinyl masks
* Masking Tape

**Aluminum Foil/Bare Metal**

* Use Micro Scale Micro Metal Foil Adhesive
* Canopy frame must be trimmed with a sharp blade.

**Liquid Masks**

* + Best for area coverage and sealing gaps.
  + Difficult to achieve a straight line but can be trimmed with a sharp blade.

**Pre-cut Vinyl Canopy Masks**

* Dip in mild soapy water to help slide into position.
* Easily stretched out of shape.

**Masking Tape**

* Adhesive quality vs. glue residue. Some tapes are made specifically for modelers (Tamiya, Bare Metal foil) and some are made for general household use and DIY projects (low tack tape, 3M painter's tape, Scotch tape).
* To work well, masking tape may need to be rubbed down, particularly along the edges. Using a round toothpick works very well, especially if you have sanded it down to provide a sharp edge.
* However, rubbing masking tape down increases the risk of damaging primer or previous coats of paint when the tape is removed.
* The longer you leave masking tape in place, the more difficult it will be to remove.
  + Lay a strip of masking tape on a trouser leg or other piece of fabric to reduce the amount of adhesion. Sticking tape to your hand also works.
  + A roll of masking tape will attract dust and debris which will stick to the edges. Use a metal ruler and a sharp blade to cut away the old edge to get a perfectly straight and clean new edge. Cut on an old CD, cutting mat, glass, or tile.
  + Narrow tape is especially useful for curves.
  + Wide tape is best for long lines.
  + Use a sharp pencil or fine tipped pen to mark canopy frame lines. Trim with a sharp blade
  + Use your cell phone's flashlight feature to backlight canopies so you can clearly see the canopy frame lines under masking tape. Trim with a sharp blade.

**Aircraft Canopy Painting**

* Spray directly over mask (90-degree angle) or at a slight angle to the edge.
* Spraying on an angle minimizes overspray.
* When painting aircraft canopies, paint the interior color first than the external color.

**Correcting Mistakes**

* Use a toothpick sanded into a chisel shape.
* Harder to accomplish on canopies dipped in Future.