

# PAINTING YOUR FIRST TRIREME



The model Callum is working is a 3D printed *Thalassa* ship, but his painting techniques can be used on any 'wooden' models.

Callum France shares how to paint ancient ships quickly and effectively with this entry-level guide. Get a quality finish through simple brushwork and a few cunning tricks that use basic household and hobby materials.

## SPONGING THE WOOD



1. After priming the model with a basic grey coloured rattle can spray, basecoat the wood with a 2:1 mix of Citadel Rhinox Hide and Citadel Mournfang Brown.



2. Put your paint brush down now; find a piece of sponge to become your new painting tool! The backing padding found in blister packs is ideal, but household cleaning sponges will work too. Tear off a piece of sponge to form a small ball - you are going to use this to apply the paint.



3. Holding the sponge with tweezers will help you reach hard to access areas, but you can just hold it between your fingers. Dab the sponge in a small dot of Citadel Mournfang Brown then tap away the excess paint on a piece of paper just like you would if you were drybrushing.



4. When only a select few speckles of paint are being applied to the paper, start randomly stabbing at the model. Go heavy with this first layer as we're trying to add some tone and warmth to the flat brown wood. I find this stage quite therapeutic - don't think, just dab!



5. Repeat the process with Citadel Steel Legion Drab but apply a little more selectively; the speckles should be less concentrated for this stage. Try and catch the edges as this step will also apply a form of highlight.



6. Finally, apply Citadel Baneblade Brown in the same manner but even more gently. Focus on the sharpest points and only lightly touch the sponge to the darker wood areas. This final stage might look stark, but we're going to knock back these texture layers with a wash later.

### TOP TIP

Don't forget to paint the crew base squares (and any artillery pieces) and the mast at the same time as you paint your ship's other wood areas.

## ACCENTUATING DETAILS AND HARMONISING

1. When you're happy with the sponged wood, it's time for the details. Each of these received just one coat of paint for speed.

a. I applied Army Painter Dorado Skin on any exposed skin areas (oarsmen's arms and the man at the aft of the boat).

b. I dotted the rope with Citadel Baneblade Brown using a fine tipped brush, being careful to leave some of the brown between the threads.

I painted the spears and hafts with Citadel Rhinox Hide. The weapon tips and anchors were painted with Scale75 Thrash Metal and black mixed in a 2:1 ratio.



2. Everything will look a bit stark at this point: we're going to apply a wash all over the wood and details to blend the disparate colours together and shade the model all at once. Mix Citadel Nuln Oil and Citadel Agrax Earthshade in a 2:1 ratio. Thin this mix with water at a 1:1 ratio, then apply it all over the model, being careful it doesn't pool on the flat areas.



## THE CREW

You should have already painted the bases for your crew options; now it's time to finish them off. Use a fairly large brush with a good point to paint the skin with Army Painter Dorado Skin, the fabric with Citadel Baneblade Brown, and the hair and weapons with Citadel Rhinox Hide. Once dry, give the full stands a thinned brown wash, and your crew will be ready. Quick and easy!



*Base and trebuchet wood already painted.*



*Picking out the skin.*



*Colouring the fabric, hair, and weapons.*



*Wash application to finish.*



*The different crew stands on the Trireme.*

### TOP TIP

The same wash used on your ship (accentuating details and harmonising stage two) can be applied to your crew at the same time as you apply it to the ship. Organise your painting processes so you can wash the ship and crew at once to save even more time.

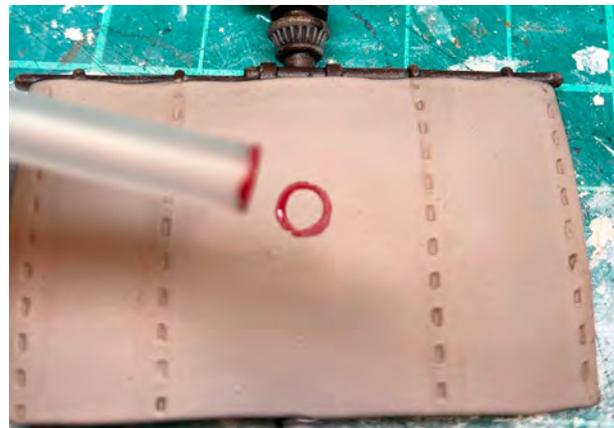




*Clean freehand details like this can be easily achieved with some cunningly simple painting hacks.*



1. With the mast painted in the same manner as the deck, basecoat the sail with Citadel Rakarth Flesh. I left a little darkness to the rear of the sail to add the illusion of depth and shadow.



2. Don't let the large, blank area intimidate you; we're going to use several shortcuts that will help even the most nervous of painters achieve a striking pattern with minimal effort.

First, grab one of the plastic tubes that protect the bristles on your paint brush. Gently dip one end of it into your chosen freehand colour so the entire ring has a thin and even layer of paint. You don't want it dripping with paint; this will deposit far too much onto the area. If this does happen, immediately wipe it off with a tissue, reapply your basecoat, and try again.

### TOP TIP

It's worth practicing the application on a piece of paper before you put it onto the sail.



3. Once you're confident the plastic tube is correctly loaded, firmly press the paint-end down on the centre of the sail, then remove it. You should have a near-perfect circle. Neaten any slips or splashes with your basecoat colour.



4. The four cardinal points begin with a full circle. Use the base side of the jib sail mast in much the same fashion as before. Don't worry about ruining your jib with paint, this part is hidden when the ship is fully built. Evenly load the mast base with paint, then firmly press it against the sail at the North point to the edge of your first circle. Repeat at East, South, and West after reloading with paint each time.

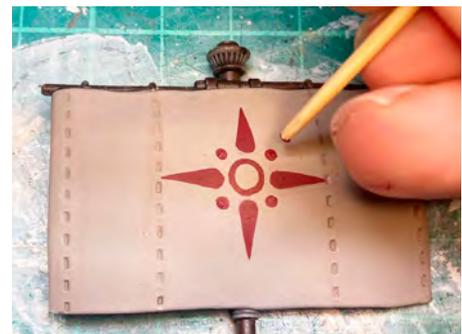


5. Tamiya masking tape is a god-send when you want to create sharp, crisp lines with confidence. Here it will help to make the points of the simple Spartan symbol. Apply two pieces to each circle as shown, creating a point at the tip. Make sure the tape is stuck down firmly, otherwise the new colour may bleed through. Once done, apply a coat of paint and allow it to dry, then gently peel off the tape, and voila, perfect edges.

**TOP TIP**

Don't 'brush' paint on when you have used masking as it increases the risk of paint flowing under the mask. Stipple it directly down. Don't over thin your paint when adding it over masks because of the same 'flowing under' potential.

6. Finally the shapes pointing North-East, South-East, South-West, and North-West need to be added. For these smaller circles, the humble cocktail stick is your friend. With your hobby knife, slice around half a centimetre off the end and use it to create smaller circles (as in step four) then repeat the masking process (in step five) to finish your design.



## ADDING INTEREST TO THE HULL

1. I sponged Citadel Mephiston Red onto the carved sections at the front and back of the ship; this is to make it look suitably Spartan even though basic wood would be more historically accurate.

2. The metal points all got a highlight with Scale75 Heavy Metal to make them sparkle.

### TOP TIP

You can change the colour choice depending on your chosen fleet, but I think subtlety is the best approach here. Don't use heavily saturated bright tones of your chosen colour; opt for a muted palette to give a hint of the nation's colours without making your ship look like a vibrant toy!



To take your painting to the next level, as Callum has done on his Cretan vessel, look out for the advanced guide in a future issue. *WiPrime* Members can see it already on the *Wargames Illustrated* website!

