

# BUILDING A STRAIGHT, ROUND FUSELAGE

by Mike Midkiff

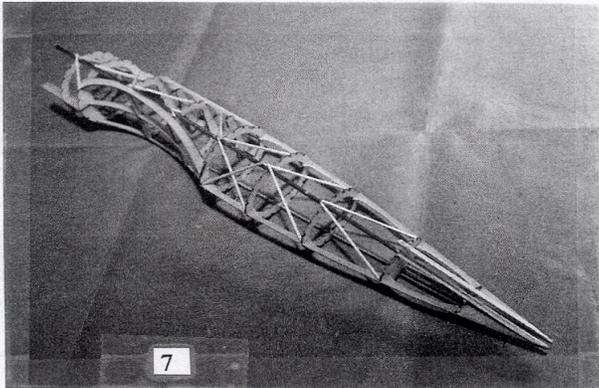
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Are you tired of banana biased fuselages? Do you stay away from Thunderbolts, Pfalzs and Lockheed Vegas as being just too difficult getting the fuselage right. Are your fuselage alignment jigs taking more time and material than building the model?

Here is a way to simply and effectively maintain alignment on keel/bulkhead fuselages:

Start with a good flat work surface, that means flatness within a 1/16 of an inch over the building area. Pin the top and bottom keels down in the conventional manner. Align all of the bulkheads perpendicular to the work surface using a small square and glue to the keels. Carefully inset the side keel starting from the rear, maintain bulkhead perpendicularity while gluing each one to the side keel. Now locate a bunch of scrap, useless 1/16 sq. strips that you've been saving for lord knows what and proceed as follows: Starting at the rear of the fuselage tack glue a 1/16 sq. piece from the top keel/former joint to the next (left) former's side keel joint. Repeat for the bottom keel/former joint to the next side keel joint. This should result in a "v" truss locking in that section. Working to the left complete all formers in like manner so that when you are done the left fuselage side looks like it has horizontal "vs" from front to rear. When all is dry remove the fuselage side from the board and notice how true and rigid the whole thing still is. Add all of the right half formers making sure of squareness to the keels and parallel with its mate. Install the right hand side keel again starting from the rear. Glue to each former after assuring its alignment. You may want to add a few stringers to both sides to further hold everything before removing the "v" bracing. Cut away all of the bracing sticks and viola!! A fuselage that doesn't compete with the Chiquita Banana. This sure beats the old fashion ways to achieve a true fuselage without all that non-productive work.

Let's see where did we put those plans for that Martin Marauder?



Ed. Note: You can get a terrific jig for building round fuselages from Rocky Top Models, at 615-452-4157 or [www.rockytopmodels.com](http://www.rockytopmodels.com)