

# Tips on Tissue Covering

by Homer Smith

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It is very difficult for me to get the perfect tissue covering job I see others get. There are a few things that I have learned from the mailing lists that have helped and maybe it will help you if you will indulge me the time.

The UHU purple glue stick has come to be my adhesive for tissue and is used almost exclusively. For small models I use two techniques. For the underside of wings and the tail feathers I use pre-shrunk and Kryloned tissue. Take a piece of cardboard and cut out a hole in it a little larger than the part. At least a quarter inch over but a half inch won't hurt. Be sure to cut left and right holes for wing and tail feathers. Glue tissue to the cardboard hole and let the glue dry. Spritz the tissue with water or alcohol from a small hair spray bottle (fine mist) and let it dry. When you are happy with the amount of shrinkage, hit it with a fog of Krylon. Krylon will shrink some over a day or more so let it dry good. Apply glue stick to one side of the part and press against the tissue being sure you have the correct side on top. Press it down with your fingers and let it dry at least 24 hours. Before cutting the part from the frame be sure that the tissue is stuck down all the way around. Cut it out and go on to the other side of the part. If it needs more Krylon, pin it down after hitting it with another fog and remember to put on more next time when it is in the cardboard frame.

Over time it has become obvious that I was not letting the material or parts dry long enough at each stage. If you don't let it dry it will pull from the framework and leave wrinkles or sags.

For parts with only a two dimensional curve like the top of the wing on the FA Moth I do about the same thing but cut the tissue from the frame when dry and apply over the top of the wing. Put on a generous coat of glue stick and get the pre-shrunk and Kryloned tissue set over the top of the wing panel. Press the tissue down at the root rib and end rib in the center of each and get the tissue fairly taut. Don't try to do the top of the wingtip at the same time - use a separate piece. Now work your way from the center of the trailing edge and leading edge toward the tips working the tissue taut with your fingers. If the tissue refuses to move or you have to go back over a place just dampen your finger with a little water and continue to work with it. The glue stick will soften and let you move the tissue for several hours after initially applied. Keep going in one sitting till you get all the wrinkles out. Pin it down and leave it for 24 hours.

For three dimensional parts like the fuselage of a Zero, I use raw tissue in the conventional manner. Let each gore dry well before going to the next gore. Letting the tissue dry between strips will keep you from denting or loosening the tissue by handling while doing the next gore. My biggest problem is moving the tissue before the glue dries after I have it all smoothed out.

By the way, I use only Japanese tissue because most domestic tissue has no water strength and the color will run.

The only domestic tissue I have found that does not fall apart when hit with water or color run is Hallmark and Aleene's tissue. Both are heavier than Esaki. My tissue jobs have improved quite a bit using this approach.