

**** Cheap & Easy Scenery ****

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This way of constructing scenery can be used for model railway or any modeling diorama in any scale. The methods used are not original but have been modified from articles in various model railway magazines and books published over the last 30/40 years.

The materials used are those found in the home and around the garden. The items that may need to be purchased are: PVA glue, matt medium from art supplies, plaster of Paris, cheap artists acrylic paint, Woodland Scenics, Noch or Jordan flocks, static grass and ground foam

Steps for Constructing the Scenery

****LANDFORM CONTOUR FORMERS****

These can be cut from many materials - whatever is at hand! You can use corrugated cardboard, MDF, plywood, or even laminated cereal packet cardboard. After profiling the formers, glue in position on the baseboard or on the framing of an open top baseboard. Hot glue gun is the quickest and best method.

****LANDFORM BASE GRID****

Over the formers fix strips of cereal packet cardboard - 12mm to 20mm (1/2in to 3/4in) - to form a grid over the formers. Fix the horizontal strips, then the vertical strips, which can be attached using any glue, but a hot gun is the quickest method. Place strips about 50mm apart.

****GROUND COVER BASE - Method 1****

Cover the cardboard grid with 2 or 3 layers of newspaper roughly torn into pieces about 150mm or 6in square or smaller. Brush or dip the pieces in wallpaper paste or dilute, 1:1 PVA and water. Overlap each piece by a quarter or a third. If a bit of texture is required add a layer of toilet paper or kitchen towel dipped in the same glue. If ridges or strata are required squeeze the wet paper with your fingers. Allow this to dry. (3/4 days)

Next make a runny plaster mix coloured with a bit of cheap acrylic or water based artists paint of a suitable colour. Add a few drops of PVA when mixing the plaster. With a brush cover the paper base with neat or diluted PVA. Paint on the runny plaster mix with an old brush. The plaster can be textured with sawdust when being mixed.

When the plaster is dry cover with diluted PVA or Matt Medium and sprinkle sieved soil onto the wet glue. Do a small area at a time. Where grass is needed add a suitable colour static grass or ground foam onto wet glue. When dry vacuum off any loose material for re-use.

To save the above separate the vacuum tubes and place the foot of an old stocking into the tube. *Make sure it has no holes!*

****GROUND COVER BASE - Method 2****

A quicker method I have used for my latest exhibition layout is also lighter and reasonably flexible. This method uses only 1 or 2 layers of newspaper put on the cardboard grid using neat PVA or very slightly diluted PVA brushed onto the paper squares and overlapped by about a third. Once the grid is covered you don't have to wait for the glue to dry before brushing the paper with a bit more PVA or Matt Medium and quickly covering the surface with sieved soil or grass as in Method 1. When dry, if any spots have been missed, simply brush the area with PVA or Matt Medium and cover with more soil or grass.

If planting large trees or telephone poles into the landscape using the quick method, it is necessary to pass a pad of corrugated cardboard under the grid to keep the item vertical when the whole is pushed through the scenery and to give the glue a larger area to hold the tree or pole in position.

****GARDEN SOIL****

The sieved soil that is needed for landscaping needs to be very fine- like talc. To get very fine soil you need two empty small yogurt or cream containers. Stretch a piece of stocking over one; half fill with soil. Put containers together with the stocking between, turn over and shake the containers holding them together. What comes through the stocking is the fine material you need. Tip the fine material into a suitable container and use as required.

****ROAD WORKS****

Cut a cereal packet card to required width of road and glue down. If the road is to have a camber, cut another piece of cardboard to go over the first card layer. Before glueing down the top layer, glue a strip of the same card about 3mm wide down the centre line of the road base. Then put a bead of neat PVA on the edges and centre of the top layer and place over the base layer, press along edges and center and allow to dry.

Bitumen Roads

Paint with MATT BLACK enamel paint. When the paint is 3/4 dry, roughly sprinkle dry plaster of paris thinly over the paint. When the paint is dry use the edge of a piece of cardboard to rub along the road and brush and vacuum off the loose excess plaster. This gives a slight texture and weathered look to the road.

Gravel Roads

Use the same method as above for the base. Paint road with PVA or matt medium and sprinkle on a suitable colour of sieved soil. Let dry, give a light brush and vacuum off the loose material.

****TREES****

Grow your own. Find a sunny spot in the garden. Plant a SEDUM plant in early spring and harvest the dry flower head and stem in early winter. Trim as needed, shake off any loose bits, spray with a spray glue over the flower head, sprinkle on a suitable flock of desired colour. Trim stem to height required and plant on the layout.

I have also used suitable twigs and prunings or dry plants from the garden. Often if you turn a plant upside down the fine roots will make the branches for a tree.

On the bare twigs stretch, very thinly, WOODLANDS POLYFIBER #FP178 over the branches and fix with a very small dab of PVA. Spray a light coat of glue over the polyfiber and sprinkle a suitable fine flock or foam of a desired colour. If a thicker cover is required, add another light coat of glue or cheap hair spray and add more flock. Another light spray of hair spray will help secure the foliage.

For shrubs and small scrubby trees use broken pieces of the above trees. For black berries, hant an or briar bushes use fine lawn moss as it comes. Hold a clump with tweezers and fix to base with a dab of neat PVA. This stays green for years and can be touched up with dilute cheap water colour paint if and when required.

*Thanking you
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