

Italeri Acrylic Paint

Italeri's new line of acrylic paints comes in 20ml (approx. ¾-ounce) plastic bottles with flip-top lids and dropper-style dispensers. There are 87 colors in the range as well as clears — gloss, semigloss, and flat — in 35ml (approximately 1½-ounce) bottles, and thinner in a 60ml (about 2-ounce) bottle.

The colors include basics such as red, green, white, and black, as well as specific military shades identified by name and Federal Standard number. Included are colors for U.S. Navy, Air Force, and Army vehicles and aircraft, German aircraft and armor, British air force and navy, and Italian aircraft. There are also metallic shades: gold, brass, aluminum, silver, steel, and gun metal.

Each bottle is labeled with the color name and FS number as well as a number within the Italeri range. Helpfully, this latter number matches the numbers of Testors Acryl paints to make finding the right paints easier throughout various sets of instructions.

However, these paints are not Testors Acryl rebottled. They bear a closer resemblance to paints manufactured and sold by Acrylicos Vallejo.

If you are familiar with Vallejo paints, you should have no problems using these new Italeri acrylics.

The first thing you'll notice is that the paint is thick — much thicker than other paints you may have used. The thinner looks odd on first glance, too — milky and thick.

These paints hand-brush beautifully. I squeezed a little blob of paint onto a palette next to a small pool of thinner. After dipping the brush in thinner to wet the bristles, I dipped it in paint and applied it to the surface in smooth, light strokes. The paint covers well and levels beautifully, rendering the brush strokes virtually invisible.

Airbrushing Italeri's acrylic takes practice and work to master, but the results are worth the effort. As stated, the paints are thick and need to be thinned for spraying. I recommend practicing to get the thinning ratios right for each application. Don't thin the paint to that usual "2-percent milk" consistency — that makes it too thin, and the paint will tend to spider.

I had the best luck thinning the paint 30–40 percent, but found I needed slightly higher than normal pressure to get the paint to move well.

After coating Tamiya's Panzer III Ausf L with Vallejo black primer, I airbrushed Italeri dunkelgelb (No. 4796AP). The paint covered well, leveled so that any spraying imperfections disappeared, and dried dead flat. I had some minor tip buildup and drying in the airbrush; keep a cotton swab and some thinner handy to wipe residue from the tip of your airbrush.

The next day, I thinned Panzer olivgrun (No. 4798AP) about 50 percent to airbrush the green camouflage on the tank. Other than a few spatters from paint buildup, the paint sprayed well.

Cleanup was easy with soap and water.

Don't use alcohol; the paint will gum up the brush.

Once the decals were on, I airbrushed the model with flat clear (No. 4636AP) also thinned about 40 percent. The finish was dead flat.

Like most acrylics, Italeri's new paints come with a bit of a learning curve. But the difficulties are not insurmountable for anyone willing to take the time, and the results are well worth the time spent.

— Aaron Skinner



Manufacturer: Italeri, 39-051-3175211, www.italeri.com, from Model Rectifier Corporation, 732-225-2100, www.modelrec.com **Price:** Colors, \$4.59/20ml bottle; clears, \$5.29/35ml bottle; thinner, \$5.49/60ml bottle **Comments:** Acrylic paint, 87 colors, three clears, thinner **Pros:** Great coverage and color density; smooth finish; easy cleanup; no fumes; clearly marked color names **Cons:** Takes work to master thinning and airbrushing

